



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

**MARCH 1, 2020
NEW YORK, USA**

MEETING MINUTES

Introduction

The sixth meeting of the International Comparison Program (ICP) Governing Board took place on March 1, 2020, in New York, USA. The main objectives of the meeting were to review global and regional progress with the ICP 2017 cycle activities, ICP 2020 cycle launch activities, and ICP 2017 results release, 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

Governing 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 members and observers. He invited Ms. Haishan Fu, Development Data Group Director, World Bank, to deliver opening remarks. She welcomed attendees and thanked the implementing agencies at national and regional levels for their hard work and success in meeting the final deadlines. She noted that the ICP was at an important stage, with the imminent release of results from the 2017 cycle, and activities launching the 2020 cycle underway. She also highlighted that there will be an emphasis on promoting the use of ICP results and data to policy makers and other users over the coming year.

Mr. Srivastava noted that the ICP Technical Advisory Group (TAG), per the ICP Governance Framework, had reviewed and cleared the ICP results, and that the Governing Board will discuss their release and related communication activities. He then invited the Board to adopt the meeting agenda.

The Governing Board adopted the proposed meeting agenda.

Progress with ICP 2017 cycle, ICP 2020 launch, and results release plans

Ms. Nada Hamadeh, ICP Program Manager, World Bank, briefed the Board on the overall progress with both the ICP 2017 and 2020 cycle activities, and plans for the release of the global results for the 2017 cycle. The accompanying presentation is available [here](#).

Ms. Hamadeh reiterated that the ICP 2017 cycle results cover the revised 2011 results, 2017 results and annual results for the years in between the 2011 and 2017 benchmark comparisons. The annual results

maintain fixity of the regional results for those regions that have conducted regional comparisons between the global benchmark years. The results, calculated by independent experts within the Computation Task Team, were presented to the TAG during its fifth meeting on February 20-21, 2020.

Mr. Paul Schreyer, TAG Alternate Chair and Acting Chief Statistician, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) was invited to deliver a few key messages from the fifth TAG meeting. These included the TAG's assessment that the quality and plausibility of the results had improved sufficiently to proceed with their publication, and that this warranted an expansion in the publication level from previous years to cover additional analytical categories and details, thus meeting increasing user demand. In particular, the improvements realized by countries following the System of National Accounts 2008 were noted. As the purchasing power parities (PPP) estimation methodology remained mostly unchanged since the previous 2011 cycle, there was no clear systematic (upward or downward) drifts between ICP 2017 PPPs and 2017 PPPs extrapolated from ICP 2011, unlike in previous comparisons between successive cycles. He also noted that the TAG recognized actual individual consumption (AIC) per capita, and not GDP per capita, as a measure of material well-being.

When asked about the potential effect of the new PPPs on the international poverty line (IPL), Ms. Hamadeh noted that the revised 2011 PPPs were unlikely to have any significant impact on the current IPL of \$1.90 a day at 2011 PPPs, and that a dedicated Task Force on PPPs and Global Poverty Measures was exploring the impact of the 2017 PPPs on the IPL.

Ms. Hamadeh briefed the Board on the release of the 2017 results to users scheduled for April 28, 2020. The release will include press releases, the final report with the results, and online curated tables and database via the World Bank's Data Portal and ICP website. Moreover, blogs, data stories and frequently asked questions (FAQs) will accompany the release. An ICP session was proposed to the UN World Data Forum 2020, at which ICP stakeholders and users could discuss the latest results from the program. A "Visual Compendium of Uses", compiled over the coming year with custodians of indicators using PPPs and users of ICP data, would illustrate the uses and applications of PPPs.

Ms. Hamadeh reported that ICP 2020 activities had started, with global and regional item lists finalized and price collection launched. Current challenges were the global spread of the Covid-19 virus delaying and curtailing activities, and the competing demands of population censuses in many countries.

The Regional Implementing Agencies briefed the Board on the progress made in implementing the ICP 2017 cycle, launch activities for the 2020 cycle, and plans for the release of regional results.

Africa

Mr. Charles Lufumpa, Statistics Department Director, African Development Bank (AfDB), reported that results for 50 economies in the Africa region will be published for 2017, and that together these represent around 30 percent of the global economies participating in the ICP. Data quality for some economies were initially a concern, but that there had been a significant improvement in the later stages of the cycle through national, regional and global efforts. Summary results for Africa will be released in May 2020, and presentations will be made to African Ministers and others at events throughout the region, as well as to the AfDB Board. A decision on funding the 2020 cycle will be taken by the AfDB Board by June 2020.

Asia and the Pacific

Mr. Kaushal Joshi, Principal Statistician, Asian Development Bank (ADB), briefed the Board on the finalization of data and results from the 2017 cycle, the adoption of regional 2017 and revised 2011 results, their dissemination through an improved website and data access, and lessons learned. He also highlighted the activities and pre-survey preparations for the 2020 cycle, expected country participation and survey schedule, funding, and risks and mitigation measures. The accompanying presentation is available [here](#). Mr. Joshi highlighted the synergies between CPI and ICP activities in the Asia region, improvements made in the special surveys, and the benefit of capacity building activities. He noted ICP 2020 funding in the region was anticipated to be slightly less than that of the 2017 cycle.

Eurostat and OECD

Mr. Gallo Gueye, Deputy Director-General, Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat), reported that Eurostat and OECD are planning to issue a press release on the ICP results simultaneous with the global release. The ICP 2020 cycle activities are being conducted according to the established Eurostat-OECD PPP Programme timetable.

Commonwealth of Independent States

Mr. Andrey Kosarev, Deputy Chairman, Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT), thanked the Global Office for their efficient organization and oversight of the 2017 cycle. He also thanked the OECD for their collaboration with regards the dual participation of the Russian Federation. He noted that the 2017 cycle had been carried out per the agreed timetable in the region and reported that Uzbekistan's partial experimental results will be included in the regional set of results for the first time in 17 years. Regional results from the 2017 cycle will be disseminated through a summary booklet in March 2020, and through a longer report in June 2020, as well as via the CIS-STAT website. A number of events with universities and at conferences are planned to engage users. Nine countries, including Uzbekistan, are anticipated to join the 2020 cycle.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Mr. Rolando Ocampo, Director of the Statistics Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-ECLAC), briefed the Board on the ICP in the LAC region. The accompanying presentation is available [here](#). The regional results are planned to be published at the same time as the global results. Mr. Ocampo emphasized the need to ensure visibility of the ICP results, in order to ensure strong country participation and commitment. Furthermore, he noted that more UN-ECLAC staff will be involved in the ICP and that continuation of external funding for the program is essential. The ICP 2020 cycle activities are underway and an uptick in technical assistance, especially in national accounts, was planned for the Caribbean countries.

Western Asia

Mr. Juraj Riecan, Statistics Department Director, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA), briefed the Board on ICP activities in that region. The accompanying presentation is available [here](#). Mr. Riecan reported that results for the 2017 cycle for the region will be published following the global release. He also noted that integrating CPI and ICP processes resulted in cost savings, synchronization of data collection, and improved data quality. The 2020 cycle in the region launched in January 2020, with Tunisia and Lebanon on board as new participants. Libya, Mauritania, Syria, and Yemen remained possible participants. However, collection of nationally representative data was extremely challenging in conflict affected countries. The use of scanner data and web scraping was piloted as a price collection mean, with the latter method now being used alongside traditional methods in

selected countries. The region will seek funding in order to implement the ICP 2020 cycle, and it was noted that national implementing agencies in Western Asia cover the cost of their price collections.

The Board:

- ***Took note of the overall progress in implementing the ICP 2017 cycle, thanked the Nation, Regional and Global agencies for their efforts for completing the cycle and the donors for funding the cycle.***
- ***Endorsed the release of the ICP 2017 cycle results per the ICP communication strategy, encompassing pre-release, release and post-release activities.***
- ***Reiterated the need for national, regional and global agencies to incorporate the ICP into their regular statistical work programs, to ensure its sustainability as a permanent program.***

Any other business

Ms. Hamadeh noted that, as the 2017 cycle was coming to an end, the membership of the Governing Board will be revisited in liaison with the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC). It was also proposed that the TAG Alternate Chair join the Board as an observer.

The Board:

- ***Took note of the need to revisit the ICP Governing Board membership after the conclusion of the ICP 2017 cycle, in liaison with the UNSC.***
- ***Agreed to have the TAG Alternate Chair join the Board as an observer.***

Closing remarks

Mr. Srivastava closed the meeting by thanking the Board members and observers for their participation and contributions, and the Regional, National and Global Agencies for their hard work in bringing the 2017 cycle to a successful close.

Annex 1: Meeting Agenda



International Comparison Program (ICP) Fourth Meeting of the Governing Board

March 1, 2020

New York, USA

Meeting Chair: Secretary and Chief Statistician of India,
Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

Proposed agenda

05:00 – 05:15 pm	Opening remarks and adoption of the agenda, <i>Meeting Chair</i>
05:15 – 05:45 pm	Overall progress with ICP 2017 cycle, ICP 2020 launch, and global results release plans, <i>ICP Global Office</i>
05:45 – 06:00 pm	Coffee/tea break
06:00 – 06:45 pm	Regional progress with ICP 2017 cycle, ICP 2020 activities, and regional results release plans, <i>Regional Implementing Agencies</i>
06:45 – 07:00 pm	Closing remarks, <i>Governing Board Co-Chairs</i>

Annex 2: List of Participants

Country / Organization	Participant
India (Chair)	Pravin Srivastava, Chief Statistician and Secretary of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
Austria	Ingolf Boettcher, Head, Prices and Purchasing Power Parities Unit, Directorate Macro-economic Statistics
India	K.S. Rejimon, Director, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
Saudi Arabia	Mohammed Alfarraj, General Director of Economic Statistics, General Authority for Statistics
Senegal	Babacar Ndir, Director General, National Agency of Statistics and Demography and Statistics, Senegal
South Africa	Risenga Maluleke, Statistician-General and Head of Statistics, National Agency of Statistics and Demography and Statistics South Africa
South Africa	Nthabiseng Makhatha, Deputy Director-General, Statistics Department, 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	Elaine S. Tan, Head, Statistics and Data Innovation Unit, Economic Research and Regional Cooperation Department
Asian Development Bank	Kaushal Joshi, Principal Statistician, Statistics and Data Innovation Unit
CARICOM	Philomen Harrison, Director, Regional Statistics
Eurostat	Gallo Gueye, Deputy Director-General
International Monetary Fund	Louis Marc Ducharme, Chief Statistician and Data Officer
International Monetary Fund	James Trebrake, Assistant Director
Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States	Andrey Kosarev, Deputy Chairman
OECD	Paul Schreyer, Acting Director and Chief Statistician
United Kingdom's Department for International Development	Neil Jackson, Chief Statistician
United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	Rolando Ocampo, Chief of the Economic and Environment Statistics Unit, Statistics Division
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 Statistics Division	Ivo Havinga, Assistant Director

Country / Organization	Participant
World Bank	Haishan Fu, Director, Development Data Group
World Bank	Nada Hamadeh, ICP Program Manager, Development Data Group
World Bank	Marko Rissanen, ICP Global Office, Development Data Group
World Bank	Edie Purdie, ICP Global Office, Development Data Group
World Bank	Bala Bhaskar Kalimili, Development Data Group
World Bank	Nancy Kebe, ICP Global Office, Development Data Group