

Methodological Research

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Guidelines on the Measurement of Subjective Well-being

Purpose

To prepare a set of guidelines on the collection and use of measures of subjective well-being (SWB) that will be the recognised standard adopted by national statistical agencies and other producers and users of survey-based subjective well-being data.

Objectives and outputs

This activity was endorsed by the OECD Committee on Statistics in 2010. The main purpose is the development of a set of guidelines on the collection and reporting of subjective measures of well-being. The guidelines will include prototype survey modules for different types of survey.

Main Developments for 2011

General aspects:

2011 will see a draft set of prototype survey modules developed and circulated to Eurostat and other statistical agencies involved in the project. A draft handbook will be developed during the course of the year, but the final version will not be completed until early in 2012. However, a progress report will be presented to CSTAT in June 2011.

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Human Capital Accounts

Purpose

To develop an agreed methodology for producing numerical estimates of Human Capital for the purposes of international and inter-temporal comparisons.

Objectives and outputs

The project was endorsed by CSTAT in June and started in October 2009. An OECD database has been set up with all essential information needed to measure human capital for each participating country (16 OECD member and 2 non-member countries). The preliminary estimation results have shown the feasibility of measuring human capital for comparative analyses, based on common methodology and assumptions, and even by using categorical data.

Non-member countries involved in the activity:

Romania, Russian Federation

Main Developments for 2011

General aspects:

A working paper that summarises the outcomes of the first phase of the project will be released in early 2011. In addition, efforts will be put on improving estimates and extending country coverage if possible. Work on constructing an accumulation account that explains the changes in human capital is also envisaged.

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Journal of Business Cycle Measurement and Analysis

Purpose

To exchange knowledge and information on the theoretical and operational aspects of business and economic cycle research, involving both measurement and analysis.

Objectives and outputs

The Statistics Directorate gives the associate editor and chairman of the editorial board of the Journal; provides liaison between the publication system (PAC) the editor in chief located in Zurich (CIRET) and the editorial board.

The journal is a peer-reviewed scientific journal focusing on business cycles. The themes covered by the Journal comprise: analysis and explanation of cyclical fluctuations; business cycle specification, definition and classification; statistical approaches to the development of short-term economic statistics and indicators; business tendency, investment and consumer surveys; use of survey data or cyclical indicators for business cycle analysis.

Each volume has two regular issues with 4-5 articles, and occasionally special editions. The Journal also provides a calendar of conferences, along with e-information and book reviews which are of interest and within its scope.

Main Developments for 2011

General aspects:

Extension, renewal of the editorial board.

Improved and corrected iLibrary appearance.

New issues automatically exported to RePeC.

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Statistics for Sustainable Development

Purpose

To identify good concepts and practices in order to assist national governments and international organizations in the design of sustainable development indicator sets and in the development of official statistics in the area.

Objectives and outputs

A Task Force on measuring sustainable development indicators, established under the aegis of the OECD, Eurostat and the UNECE Conference of European Statisticians (CES), was established in February 2009, following the release of the report of the Working Group on Statistics for Sustainable Development in late 2008.

The objective of the new Task Force should be to further pursue the conceptual development of the capital approach in identifying indicators to present the long-term dimensions of sustainable development; to consider the distributional aspects under each capital indicator; and to focus on those indicators where further research is more likely to result in improved statistical concepts or methods.

The second meeting of the Task Force was held in November 2010, to discuss first draft of the various chapters to be included in the TF report. The TF agreed that it will not be possible to deliver a full report by June 2011, and will seek a formal extension of its mandate to June 2012. A third meeting of the TF is planned in May 2011.

Main Developments for 2011

General aspects:

The final report will discuss in more detail the measurement of human and social capital final, as well as additional items (e.g. international dimensions, biodiversity indicators, risks and uncertainties) not considered in the 2008 report.