



Enhanced statistics of employment and unemployment with model questionnaires

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Abstract

The standards for international statistics of employment and unemployment are the concepts and definitions set by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). However, there are no harmonised questionnaires to collect ILO concepts. Because ILO concepts are not asked directly to the survey respondents but are indirectly derived from answers to simple questions, even small differences in interview aspects like wording of questions and interview flow can make a visible difference in the statistical results. In Europe, ILO employment and unemployment statistics are collected in the European Union Labour Force Survey (EU LFS). The use of common variables and definitions in the EU LFS ensures a good level of comparability. It is however not a fully standardised survey as countries have their own national questionnaire and sample design. Eurostat and the European Statistical System are presently engaged in defining and agreeing model questionnaires for use in the EU LFS as a way to further enhance comparability across Europe. This harmonisation approach is relevant not only in Europe but in the rest of the world too.

Keywords: official statistics ; international comparability ; employment ; unemployment ; questionnaire ; survey making.