

Part of correspondence in March 2024 between Mr Peels/ILO and Eberhard Stüber about SDG 8.5.1

24-03-14 Mr Peels/ILO to Eberhard Stüber

Dear Eberhard,

Please find here the answer of our stats department:

Regarding the selection of SDG 8.5.1, organizing data by occupation provides a straightforward method of grouping similar workers together. The concept of occupation is defined as a “set of jobs whose main tasks and duties are characterized by a high degree of similarity”. While it may not perfectly represent "equal work" within each occupational category, it remains a practical approach for comparison purposes. Further cross-tabulations (e.g. characteristics of the establishment) could be explored but may compromise data reliability.

Please also bear in mind that there were various criteria for selecting SDG indicators. These included measurability, meaning that data needed to be available or feasibly collectible to track progress over time (with preference for indicators in alignment with internationally agreed definitions and standards and baseline data already available), and feasibility, meaning indicators should be feasible to measure at the national level while considering factors such as data availability, statistical capacity, and resources (with preference given to nationally collected/produced data over econometric models).

Kind regards,

24-03-14 Eberhard Stüber to Mr Peels/ILO

Dear Mr Peels,

Thank you for the response that I received today. I do agree that the SDG 8.5.1 relates to a method of grouping jobs that are characterized by a high degree of similarity. As I pointed out in my letter to the ILO from 21 February 2024, equal pay relating to the same ISCO-code is not always coherent with, or equivalent, to the term *equal work*, as the range or spread within an ISCO-code is wider and may entail jobs with work demands at different levels. However, these two concepts come close.

From your answer, I ask myself if you are aware of the fact that you never answered my question related to the problem that I was describing in the document from 21 February 2024? *The contradiction I am pointing at in my letter, is that the underlying statistics to SDG indicator 8.5.1 do not relate to work of equal value*. I believe that you are familiar with the difference between, on the one hand, equal work (which comes pretty close to jobs relating to the same ISCO-code) and, on the other hand, work of equal value.

I understand that the issue of measurability is of importance and the system with collecting pay data related to ISCO-codes is well established. Hence, the indicator should be about equal work and not work of equal value!

Perhaps no one at the ILO is able to give an answer to my question? In fact, I wrote a letter to the ILO in spring of 2021 while I was working with a report for the Swedish Gender Equality Agency. That time, I received on 15 Juni 2021 a quite similar answer from the Head of Data Production and Analysis Unit, Mr Steven Kapsos. His answer only related to the issue of equal pay for equal work. Similarly to your letter, Mr Kapsos was not able to explain the missing linkage between the underlying statistics to

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the indicator 8.5.1 and the aim with the indicator, namely to say something about the development towards equal pay for work of equal value.

If we cannot sort out this issue any further, my writing about SDG 8.5.1 will reflect these two quite similar answers that I have received from the ILO. However, I will draw attention to one Norwegian and one Swedish project in the report. Both deal with the task of constructing an indicator at national level that works in the sense of SDG 8.5.1, namely to measure a gender pay gap in relation to work of equal value.

Thank you for taking your time,
Sincerely
Eberhard Stüber