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POINT 4.8: UPDATE ON EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING STATISTICS

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SUMMARY

This document presents the state of play in education and lifelong learning statistics (LLL).

Several activities are ongoing, including work on a number of Commission regulations. In several countries, education and LLL statistics are not (totally) under the responsibility of the director of social statistics, or sometimes even not carried out by the NSI. Furthermore, education and LLL statistics are based on a mixture of different data sources (administrative data, individual surveys and enterprise surveys) and in some countries, different bodies are responsible for different part of these statistics.

Therefore this document intends to summarise the main significant on going activities:

- the ISCED review that impacts on all the data sources and is a world level exercise to which Eurostat with Member States participates actively;
- The on-going finalisation of the implementing regulation on the UOE (UNESCO, OECD, Eurostat) data collection on education systems;
- The approach proposed by Eurostat to consider the complementarities between the three surveys addressing the question of lifelong learning (CVTS, LFS and AES). This approach will have an impact on the implementing regulations of the three surveys.

The Strategic Development Group in its meeting of June 2009 expressed its overall support to EUROSTAT's strategy and efforts to ensure consistency of the sources. It was noticed as well that some remaining issues should be dealt with: the AES timetable, the need to review carefully the CVTS and the potential additional burden on NSI due to the proposed legal act on statistics as regards education systems (covering the existing UOE data collection).

The DSS is invited to comment on:

- the directions taken in regard to the ISCED review;
- the overall strategy for EU statistics on lifelong learning as well as on the corresponding planning;
- the advancement of work regarding the proposed Commission regulation on education and training systems statistics and the revised Commission regulation on the Continuing Vocational Training Survey;

1. THE ISCED REVIEW AND THE COMMISSION REGULATION ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM STATISTICS.

1.1. THE ISCED REVIEW

The UNESCO General Conference decided in autumn 2007 to review the 1997 version of the International Standard Classification for Education (ISCED). This review should be completed by autumn 2011 for presentation to the 2011 UNESCO General Conference.

The UIS, UNESCO's Institute of Statistics is in charge of this review which may lead to a revision of ISCED.

UIS-UNESCO, OECD and Eurostat have for some years been working closely together to improve the implementation of ISCED 1997. OECD and Eurostat are therefore actively engaged in the process of reviewing ISCED.

The ISCED Technical Advisory Panel has been created by UIS to support the activities relating to the ISCED review. The first meeting was held in the UNESCO Institute for Statistics premises in Montreal on 19-20 January, 2009 with 15 participants. The following regions were represented at the meeting: Africa (Francophone and Anglophone), Asia (South West and East), Europe and Latin America, - as well as OECD and Eurostat.

The 1st meeting's objectives were reviewing existing ISCED issues, identification of new ones and prioritize them. Secondly, a strategy for the ISCED review towards presenting recommendations to the UNESCO General Conference in 2011 was set up.

The first meeting resulted in Eurostat taking on the following main responsibilities:

- To look at the scope of education covered by ISCED (in particular as concerns non-formal education as defined in CLA (the Classification of Learning Activities))
- To further investigate ISCED level 4.
- To provide guidelines for measurement of educational attainment.

In addition, Eurostat is assisting on other issues where relevant.

The second meeting of the ISCED TAP took place in July 2009. All three subjects as outlined above were discussed at this meeting. This meeting also helped UIS in preparing a progress report for the 2009 UNESCO General Conference as well as supporting documents for regional consultations/conferences to be held in autumn 2009 and spring 2010.

In regard to the review of post-secondary and tertiary levels of education (ISCED levels 4, 5 and 6); the Bologna process as taking place in a large number of European countries (46 at the moment) is influencing the demand for reviewing the ISCED structures to obtain comparability with the three cycle bachelor, master and ph.d. structure. OECD and Eurostat have advanced significantly in their work on this and UIS will use this work in their regional consultations on ISCED which will be initiated shortly (planned for end September 2009). A 2009 UOE pilot collection of enrolment and graduate data following the Bologna structures has also been agreed between UIS, OECD and Eurostat. It is expected that this pilot collection will also give useful feedback to the ISCED review.

In regard to the measurement of educational attainment, a proposal has been elaborated by the Task Force EVHoS (improvement of the quality of educational variables in the LFS and other social household surveys) with the collaboration of the OECD INES network on learning outcomes. After consultation of all EU-Member States, the proposal was transmitted to the UIS and the ISCED TAP for discussion in its July 2009 meeting. The ISCED TAP agreed on the proposal but asked for more explanations in the document concerning illustrating the measurement of educational attainment in sample surveys. A slightly revised version has been prepared by Eurostat and UIS accordingly.

One day will be devoted to the ISCED review during the United Nations Statistical Division meeting of 1-4 September 2009 (New York). UIS will present the proposal on the measurement of educational attainment in co-operation with Eurostat and the OECD INES network on learning outcomes while UIS will ensure the reporting on the other items. More information on the work of the EVHoS Task Force on educational attainment is provided in the document on core variables in social surveys.

1.2. COMMISSION REGULATION AS REGARDS STATISTICS ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEMS.

The work on the proposed Commission Regulation as regards statistics on Education and Training Systems started during spring 2008 with two Task Force meetings. This Task Force

discussed the first proposals for the Commission regulation and advanced its recommendations to the October 2008 Education and Training Statistics Working Group.

The Working Group did not agree on the proposal made and asked Eurostat to elaborate a further proposal taking into account the comments of the ETS delegates. The updated proposal was sent in country consultation during August 2009 where all relevant countries as well as Commission DGs have had the possibility to comment on the updated proposal. The results of this country consultation as well as the updated legal text are submitted for discussion and approval by the September 2009 Education and Training Statistics Working Group (28-29 September).

The proposed Commission regulation will be forwarded to the ESSC as soon as possible after the ETS Working Group has given the green light for the proposed text. Ideally this should happen during early 2010. The text should also be approved by the Commission in an inter-service consultation.

The proposed Commission Regulation as regards statistics on Education and Training Systems covers the existing UOE (UIS-UNESCO, OECD and Eurostat) data collection on education systems. It therefore does not impose new data collections on the Member States but merely regulate an already existing data collection.

Given the scope of the UOE data collection, the proposed regulation proposes some tables to be obligatory and others to be optional. The proposed obligatory tables have been identified following policy requirements at EU level. This is, for example, why the tables relating to student mobility are proposed to be obligatory. Also the emphasis on tertiary education at EU level is reflected in the proposal.

Overall the variables and breakdowns which are proposed to be made obligatory covers most domains of the present UOE collection as data on enrolments, entrants, graduates, personnel and education expenditure. Also regional enrolment tables and well as tables on language learning are proposed to be made obligatory.

Given the on-going ISCED review, the breakdowns by educational level and field of education have been kept as they are in the current UOE data collection. However, the regulation should be adapted if the present ISCED review leads to changes in the UOE data collection at a later stage.

The ETS WG in October 2008 requested that countries would get time to adapt their systems to the proposed legal act. It is therefore suggested that the legal act would only be applicable from the data collection year 2012.

The main reason for this period of adaptation is that, as the UOE data collection has been carried out on a voluntary basis up until now, then missing data is a problem. Eurostat has since 2006 embarked on a number of quality improvements of the data in this regard.

As something new in the UOE context, the legal act also proposes to use a quality reporting framework for providing meta-data and quality information relating to the data.

2. LIFELONG LEARNING STATISTICS

2.1. OVERALL STRATEGY FOR EU LIFELONG LEARNING STATISTICS

The two historical sample surveys providing results on participation in education and training – the LFS and the CVTS - are being reviewed during 2009 and 2010 along with the evaluation of the pilot AES results: a revision of the implementing acts is planned for the CVTS in 2010 (field work in 2011) and for the LFS in the period 2010-2013 in order to ensure coherence with the future 2011 AES survey and the accompanying implementing act.

The AES is foreseen to be carried out every 5 years and is designed to give detailed information on the participation of individuals in education and training activities. The LFS should provide annual evolutions for a limited set of indicators and the CVTS should complete the AES results each 5 years focussing on enterprise strategies for employee skill developments. A reduction of burden on households for the LFS and on enterprises for the CVTS is discussed in this context. The objective of the three sources can be summarised as follows:

Survey	Main use	Reference period
AES	Provides detailed information on the participation of individuals in education and training activities	12 months
LFS	Provides annual evolutions for a limited set of indicators (e.g. structural indicator 'lifelong learning')	4 weeks
CVTS	Focuses on enterprise strategies for employee skill developments	12 months

Obviously the LFS, given its sample sizes, provides also a wide set of information on the participation in education and training of specific groups of persons especially for those with low representativeness in the AES sample or specific characteristics (e.g. unemployed according to the ILO concepts, migrants or disabled people through ad-hoc modules).

2.2. IMPACT ON THE SURVEYS

The improvements on the coherence and simplification of the surveys have an obvious impact on each survey starting with the harmonisation of the concepts around the Classification of Learning Activities (CLA, i.e. distinguishing formal education, non-formal education and training, informal learning) as already used in the pilot AES. The list of the main changes required in the surveys is discussed in three Task Forces running over the year: the TF EVHoS (improvement of the quality of educational variables in the LFS and other social household surveys), the TF CVTS 4 on the preparation of the 2010 survey (see annex 1) and the TF AES (see annex 2).

Impact on the LFS

- a) Implementation of the distinction between formal education and non-formal education and training (minor impact)
- b) Improvement of coverage of non-formal education and training activities
 The TF proposed clear identification and recommendations on questions on different types of non-formal education and training activities as well as explicit exclusion of the guided on the job training. Being in line with the CLA, the changes should also improve coherence between the AES and the LFS and the comparability among countries.
- c) Reduction of the scope of the variables on education and training
 The availability of AES results would allow for a reduction of the scope of the variables characterising the participation in the LFS (e.g. fields of the education and training in the last 4 weeks).

Beside this, the TF EVHoS also discusses the possible use of a 12 months reference period for the LFS educational variables on participation in education and training (i.e. 4 weeks

prior the interview and/or 12 months). The discussion covered the sampling schemes of the LFS (rotation pattern each 3 months) in order not to increase the burden on respondents.

A consultation to the LAMAS and ETS working groups on these topics was launched between 3rd July and 10th of August 2009. The countries generally supported the overall strategy of improving variables on participation in education and training and the harmonisation of concepts and information coming from different surveys. The majority of of Member States also welcomed the proposal of testing issue addressed above.

- The implementation of the distinction between formal and non-formal in the LFS was supported. Some clarifications on the duration criterion for formal education and the categories of non-formal education and training covered by the LFS variable COURATT will still have to be given.
- Countries reacted also on the proposal on the improvement of the coverage of non-formal education and training activities via a better characterisation of education and training activities. This needs still to be elaborated as it depends to some extent also on the decision on the reference period.
- The proposal of investigating the use of a 12 month reference period for the variables on participation in education and training was welcomed as it would be useful for labour market analyses especially on employability. Some reservations on the topic concerned mostly the increase in burden, memory effect and quality of data in case the information is collected by proxy answers. Some of the problems could be possibly solved by adapting method of interviewing and using the sample rotation pattern. The issue requires however deeper studies and discussions on particularity of sampling plans in different countries.

The ETS and LAMAS WG will further discuss these issues in their September and December 2009 meeting respectively. Beforehand the TF EVHOS will further elaborate the proposals for the tests which would be carried out in 2010 and 2011. This will be done taken into account the comments received as well as the policy needs. A discussion on the scope of the changes in the LFS education and training variables would take place in 2012 for implementation by 2014. A more detailed calendar of work can be found in the section 2.3 below (indicative timetable).

Impact on the CVTS4

d) Simplification of the CVTS questionnaire

The simplification concerns the restriction to variables which can not be obtained from the AES and which do not need to be cross-tabulated within the CVTS micro-datasets, as well as some adaptations on the questions on Initial Vocational Training. The restructuration of the questionnaire covers a review of the coherence with CLA (with a minor impact since the goal of the CVTS is not to report on detailed sub-categories of education and training but to ensure a consistent coverage of the activities).

e) Focus on strategic issues (including few additional questions on "skill needs")

f) Recommendation on the extension of the NACE sectors covered

The extension concerns the sectors of public administration, education and health (Sectors L, M, and N in NACE Rev 1 = O, P, and Q in NACE Rev 2). However the TF proposed not to turn this extension into mandatory since the sample size would need to be increased significantly. An assessment of the impact on the sample design will have to be carried out by Member States to prepare the extension possibly for CVTS 5. However

Eurostat would collect the information already available in some Member States for CVTS 4.

Impact on the AES

The impact on the AES of the changes proposed above for the LFS and CVTS are presented below together with the main features of the draft AES Commission Regulation (status as of mid-August 2009):

g) Survey characteristics (reference period and sample)

It is proposed that the AES data collection period should take place between July 2011 and June 2012. The intention is to accommodate as many as possible of the countries which have expressed that they can carry out the survey either at the end of 2011 or at the beginning of 2012 (the latter would correspond to the majority of countries).

As for the data transmission deadlines, it is proposed to transmit the micro-data 6 months after they have been collected. The quality reports (very similar to the current format used in the pilot survey) are proposed to be due three months after the micro data files have been transmitted.

- Extension of the survey to individuals aged 18-24 and 65-69

The focus of the LFS on trends and improvement on coverage of non-formal education and training activities implies a possible reduction in the number of LFS variables on education and training variables (e.g. fields of the education and training in the last 4 weeks). This should be offset by a better coverage in the AES of the younger age groups for both formal and non-formal activities. Since any change in the LFS will not be implemented before 2014 and since an age extension in the AES would require an increase in the sample size, it is proposed to collect the information on the ages 18-24 and 65-69 on an optional basis. The discussion would however go on for the next AES.

h) Main changes in the variable list compared to the pilot survey

Exclusion of the modules of the pilot AES: ICT, language skills, cultural and social participation. Some ICT questions may be preserved due to their importance in lifelong learning issues.

The AES covers most of the suggested **core variables in social surveys**. A few changes will be done to ensure that all the core variables can be extracted from the data.

The **selection of activities for detailed information**: at the first level, the total number of activities is recorded without any extra information. At the second level, 3 activities are randomly selected for more detailed information. An additional question on all the selected activities is planned (job related or not) and different options are being considered for obtaining the detailed information. The number of activities for which detailed information should be obtained is being considered.

The **measurement of outcome of education and training** measures skills on two levels (activity leading to a certificate required for the execution of an activity, use of the skills or knowledge acquired). Two additional variables are foreseen on the evaluation of the activity and the extent to which the acquired knowledge or skill helped the respondent.

The obstacles to participation in education and training: from the four categories of the pilot questionnaire, two categories will be kept: those who participated and those who did not participate.

i) Variable required for the coherence with the changes foreseen in the LFS

In the context of the ISCED review and the transition into annual averages of the structural indicator 'early school leavers', the EVHoS TF highlighted the need to produce complementary statistics on drop-outs, i.e. on persons having attended a given education programme without successfully completing it. Therefore the 2007 AES question BG14 (did you ever start a level of education higher than the level you mentioned in BG 10¹ but had to abandon it?) is of high interest especially for the age group below 25.

j) Variables required for the coherence with CVTS

The CVTS measures continuing vocational training in enterprises with 10 employees or more in selected economic sectors (at EU level). The coherence with the AES results is not fully ensured for breakdowns by enterprise types since the economic sector and establishment size refers to the local unit in household surveys. However the following items need to be taken into account in the AES to ensure coherence in the scope of the CVTS training activities and allow using the AES for certain CVTS related breakdowns (e.g. age and sex, participants by field of education and training):

- The training activity should be financed in total or at least partially by the enterprise. It is not sufficient to know whether the training activity took place during working hours. This implies that an AES question is implemented on the full or partial payment of the education or training activity by the employer if the activity takes place outside working hours.
- Trainees and apprentices should be isolated since they are logically excluded from the core questionnaire of the CVTS

Beside these features, other articles are required in the AES regulation (transmission procedure, format of the quality report) but without significant changes compared to the pilot survey.

2.3. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

The AES and CVTS draft Commission Regulations were discussed in the task force meetings in June 2009. The proposals were circulated to the ETS working group during the summer for replies beginning of September.

The results of the consultation will be presented to the ETS WG and DSS meetings of September 2009.

The AES and CVTS task force meetings of November 2009 will incorporate the comments in a final proposal.

At this stage, a written consultation of the DSS and the ETS Working Group on the final AES and the CVTS draft Commission Regulations is being considered for the period December 2009 – January 2010 in principle to allow for adoption by the 2010 May European Statistical System Committee.

The table below presents the main dates related to the decision process for the AES, LFS and CVTS. It is proposed to test the adaptations of the LFS education variables together with the preparation of the next AES from September 2010 through a common set of grants. This would ensure the coherence of the implementation in both surveys. The tests should also allow for the comparison of the indicators on participation in education and training coming from both AES and LFS.

¹ BG10: highest level of education or training successfully completed

Adaptation of the AES, LFS and CVTS: timetable for the summer 2009

4-5 June 2009	First meeting of the AES Task Force on the draft AES Commission Regulation (discussion on the variables to be included for the future survey)
15-16 June 2009	LAMAS WG meeting: Progress report of the work of EVHoS TF
17 June 2009	Strategic Development Group meeting: Progress report of the work of the AES, EVHoS and CVTS TF
29 June – 1 July 2009	Second meeting of the 2010 CVTS TF and CVTS workshop organised by the CEDEFOP
3 July -10 August 2009	Written consultation of the LAMAS and ETS WG on the first proposal of adaptation of the educational variables in the LFS
3 July – 2 September	Written consultation to the AES delegates regarding the content of the next AES questionnaire
24 August – 16 September	Written consultation to the CVTS delegates regarding the content of the revised CVTS Commission Regulation

Adaptation of the AES, LFS and CVTS: indicative timetable for the autumn 2009

24-25 September 2009	DSS meeting: lifelong learning statistics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation of the first recommendations of the AES TF for a draft Commission Regulation - Presentation of a draft Commission Regulation for the 2010 CVTS
28-29 September 2009	ETS WG meeting. Presentation of the DSS document and DSS recommendations on lifelong learning statistics: AES, LFS, CVTS.
13-14 October 2009	EVHoS TF meeting. Elaboration of a proposal for the tests on the adaptation of the LFS education variables.
12-13 November 2009	Third meeting of the CVTS Task Force on the 2010 CVTS (final draft Commission Regulation).
23-24 November 2009	Second meeting of the AES Task Force on the draft AES Commission Regulation.
15-16 Dec 2009	LAMAS WG meeting. Presentation of the proposal for the tests on the adaptation of the LFS education variables.

Adaptation of the AES, LFS and CVTS: indicative timetable for 2010+

December 2009 – January 2010	Written consultation of the DSS and ETS WG on the draft proposal of Commission Regulation for the AES and CVTS
May 2010	ESS Committee Presentation of the draft proposal of Commission Regulation for the AES and CVTS for approval
From September 2010	Start of the actions for the grants on the implementation of the AES and tests on the LFS education variables ²
First half of 2012	LAMAS and ETS working groups: consultation on a proposal of adaptation of the educational variables in the LFS Commission Regulation for implementation in 2014.

2.4. OTHER ISSUES DISCUSSED IN THE EVHoS, AES AND CVTS TASK FORCE MEETINGS

More information on the AES is provided in the annex 2 (main elements of the draft Commission Regulation). An improved draft will be discussed in the 28-29 September ETS Working Group meeting.

Besides the simplification of the CVTS questionnaire, the CVTS task force is also discussing the relevance of the survey to cover a limited part of the information requirements on “skill needs” as well as the extension of the survey to the sectors of public administration, education and health (Sectors L, M, and N in NACE Rev 1 = O, P, and Q in NACE Rev 2): see annex 1.

As the Directors of Business Statistics are actually reviewing all enterprise based surveys, the DSS are invited to ensure the coordination with their counterpart at national level especially at the occasion of the two consultations on the CVTS draft Commission Regulation which will take place in September 2009 (i.e. DSS and ETS Working Group meetings) and in December 2009 (written consultation to the ETS Working Group). This would avoid any delay in the adoption of the Commission Regulation by the ESS committee (May 2010) and ensure a smooth transition to a simplified CVTS.

The work of the EVHoS task force also covers the review of the calculation method of the structural indicator on early school leavers from the second quarter data into annual averages, excluding students on holidays since it is possible from 2006. The proposal is based on a non-participation in any type of formal or non-formal activity (as the current results) and allows for additional breakdowns, especially by employment status. The consultation of all National Statistical Institutes is taking place from end August until 2 October before the publication foreseen mid October 2009.

² The tests could possibly cover the years 2011-2013 in order to allow estimation of the time series using an old and new methodology.

Annex 1: main elements of the revised CVTS Commission Regulation

This annex presents the progress towards a revised Commission Regulation for the Continuing Vocational Training Survey. It reflects the conclusions of the first and second meeting of the Task Force on the preparation of the CVTS 4 (TF CVTS 4) as well as additional Eurostat proposals.

The second meeting of the TF CVTS 4 took place after the CVTS workshop organised by CEDEFOP which allowed giving further feedback:

- From employer representatives on the improvement of the survey as regards the field work and the burden on enterprises for certain questions
- From DG EMPL, DG EAC and CEDEFOP on the relevance of CVTS for EU policy, especially for the initiative ‘new skills for new jobs’ and information requirements on future skill needs;
- From Statistical Offices on the major issues faced in CVTS 3 as well as good practices and recommendations to consider for CVTS 4.

This document is now circulated among all Member States for comments from 24 August until 15 September 2009. It serves as a basis for the discussion in the DSS and ETS WG in September for guidance on the next steps. A synthesis of the comments received will be presented during these meetings.

The 3rd meeting of the TF (tentative date: 12/13 November 2009) will review the conclusions of these WG meetings and propose a final draft Commission Regulation³ for a last round of consultation among the ETS WG in December 2009. The draft Commission Regulation to be proposed for voting in the ESS Committee of May 2010 is expected to be ready in January 2010.

The discussion on the draft AES Commission Regulation follows the same approach. At this stage, a written consultation of the DSS and the ETS Working Group on the final AES and the CVTS draft Commission Regulations is being considered for the period December 2009 – January 2010 in principle to allow for adoption by the 2010 May European Statistical System Committee (see section 4).

Other methodological issues still to be discussed in the 3rd CVTS4 TF meeting. A 4th CVTS4 TF meeting would most probably be necessary to finalise the guidelines for the field work (outside the strict terms of the proposal of revision of the Commission Regulation).

The document has the following structure:

1. Main changes proposed for the revised Commission Regulation
2. Overview of the changes proposed in the CVTS variable list
3. Transition to NACE Rev 2 and extension to 3 sectors
4. Next steps

³ The current CVTS Commission Regulation is available at :
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:032:0015:0033:EN:PDF>

1. Main changes proposed for the revised Commission Regulation

This section summarises the scope of the changes proposed in a revised Commission Regulation for the CVTS.

Eurostat overall strategy for lifelong learning statistics (AES, LFS, CVTS) is already described in the core document from page 4. Although this already mentioned in that document, the necessary reduction of burden on enterprises should be kept in mind.

As regards the implication of the discussion on legal acts, only the CVTS Commission Regulation would need to be revised. After consultation with Eurostat legal services, the proposals would indeed not imply any change of the EP/Council regulation but a proper justification of the changes foreseen.

The actual CVTS Commission Regulation is composed of 9 articles, 5 of them are then detailed in 5 annexes:

- Annex I: Draft questionnaire (to be transformed as a variable list for the Commission Regulation)
- Annex II: Sample characteristics (stratification with NACE Rev 2)
- Annex III: Imputation procedures (selection of “core variables” not to be imputed)
- Annex IV: Transmission procedures (as in the current Regulation)
- Annex V: Quality reports (as in the current Regulation)

The annexes IV and V as well as the articles without annexes do not need to be revised. It is therefore proposed to repeal of the current CVTS Commission Regulation with a new one but keeping the same structure and revising only three annexes, i.e.

- New annex I on the variable list (with minor impact on annex III on imputation principals and record weighting) and,
- New annex II on the sample characteristics (due to the implementation of NACE Rev 2 and additional recommendations for large countries).

2. Overview of the changes proposed in the CVTS variable list

The proposal takes into account the agreements achieved during the CVTS4 TF meetings of April and June 2009 as well as a written consultation of the TF in July 2009.

2.1 Reduction of the quantitative information requested to enterprises

a) Gender breakdowns

It is obvious that these breakdowns are highly relevant at policy level but constitute a difficulty as regards the data collection meanwhile the LFS and the AES can deliver similar results. The TF members expressed different views on the reduction of the number of breakdowns on gender in the questionnaire. The best compromise would be to keep only the breakdowns on the number of persons employed and participants. This would still ensure raising enterprises vigilance on training equal opportunities for men and women, allow profiling enterprises with less gender equalities while minimising the burden on the most difficult questions (hours of work and hours of training by gender – Only number of participants would remain as a relatively burdensome question). The analyses on hours of training would still be possible using the LFS and AES results.

b) Age breakdowns and training for disadvantaged groups or specific contracts

As regards age breakdowns, most of the TF members advised to drop the breakdowns due the high burden it constitutes for enterprises and the relative similar information available from the AES and the LFS. For the questions C9 and C10 on specific training for disadvantaged groups or

people with specific contracts, the AES and the LFS (through its ad-hoc modules on migrants and disabled people which offer much better and harmonised results) were also perceived as much more appropriate data sources. Therefore it is proposed to drop these questions from the next CVTS.

c) Details on the hours of training by fields and participation in other forms of CVT

Regarding fields of education and training, the same would apply since the data is hardly available in enterprises in the format requested in CVTS 3. It is proposed to use a list of skills instead. This would lower the burden since such lists correspond better to the enterprise environment (i.e. when seeking or planning for training). Beside this, the current fields are rather academic. Even though the most frequent fields could be proposed using AES results, no improvement will be possible before CVTS 4⁴. For the dissemination, a relatively good link between skills and fields can be established. The list will be further discussed in the 3rd TF meeting using the AES results and the UK experience.

In any case, one important quantitative element to consider is the distinction between compulsory training (to the enterprise: e.g. health and safety) and other training activities (new question C4). For the other categories, it is proposed to collect qualitative information on the main categories provided to employees, by occupational groups (see section 2.3 below).

Regarding other forms of CVT, it is proposed to ask qualitative information the CVTS 3 'other forms' (yes or no) and ask for quantitative information in three main groups (guided-on-the-job-training, other non-formal activities and informal activities, without using this terminology in the questionnaire): see the section 2.5 on the coherence with the Classification of Learning Activities below. This would allow reducing the burden and clustering enterprises by kind of activity in a similar way as in the AES or LFS (i.e. for instance using participation in formal + non-formal activities without on-the-job guided training to start with).

d) Details on the hours of training for providers and IVT costs (both optional)

For providers, Eurostat proposes to collect only the three main providers (without quantification). It should be recognised that quantitative information might not be difficult to obtain at national level but their use for EU policy is more limited than at national level. The quantitative information would therefore be collected on an optional basis.

For Initial Vocational Training (IVT), the task force acknowledged the difficulties of implementation and burden of the variables on IVT costs for enterprises although their relevance is still high. In order to leave more time for the improvement of the variables, it is proposed to collect the cost data which would be collected in some MS on an optional basis for two variables (F2 and F3) and continue the discussions for CVTS 5. The data available from the Labour Cost Survey is also to be further investigated. Qualitative information on the enterprise strategies on IVT would be collected instead (question F4 see section 2.2 below) as well as a breakdown of participants between apprenticeship, paid and unpaid trainees. The questions would avoid the terminology 'IVT' and use "apprentices and trainees" instead.

2.2 Review of the sections D and F of the current variable list for a focus on enterprise strategies

The TF discussed a number of adaptations of the variables of these two groups as follows:

- a) Questions more focussed and rephrased for a more direct understanding by enterprises. This concerns especially the questions D8-D11, D13 and D14. Some breakdowns of D2, D3-D5 are deleted.

⁴ Eurostat has planned to start reviewing the list in the coming months but the work will not be finalised for CVTS 4.

- b) Few questions on the objectives of CVT carried out in 2010 using a list of key skills and competences with additional information on future skill needs in the short or medium term (new section G). This implies a use of skills instead of fields as proposed above in section 2.1 (item c). Alternatives for questions on skill needs are also presented in appendix 2. The main users were invited to check the level of details proposed in these new questions.
- c) As highlighted in section 2.1, it is proposed to restrict the IVT section to the strategies of enterprises in IVT and to the number of participants using a breakdown apprentices, paid and unpaid trainees. A set of criteria to ensure a better implementation in Member States will be soon available in the context of the EVHoS TF on LFS education variables. The question on the strategies of enterprises was not discussed during the 2nd CVTS4 TF meeting. The ETS Working Group members are welcome to add elements to the list proposed in the annex I (new question F4).
- d) All questions of the section D would now be asked to all enterprises (training or not, as in CVTS 2) since non-training enterprises should also be interviewed on most of these topics (except the new D8, the new D14b and D15).

2.3 Occupational breakdowns

The characteristics of vocational training offered to employees vary significantly according to the occupational group. In that context, it is proposed to add some occupational breakdowns in few questions of the CVTS using four groups.

- Managers, professional staff and technicians (ISCO 1-3)
- Clerks, service and sales workers (ISCO 4-5)
- Skilled manual workers (ISCO 6-8)
- Unskilled employees (ISCO 9)

The four groups should be those easily identifiable by enterprises. They also correspond to the groups with significant differences in participation in education and training. The purpose is NOT to quantify precisely the distribution of staff by occupations through the CVTS (there are other sources for this) but to enhance the use of CVTS for cluster analyses on education and training activities and skill needs. Each country should choose the most suitable wording for an easier implementation in the field work (e.g. using usual job titles or contracts as long as they can be considered as good proxies to the ISCO). The classification to be used would be ISCO 2008 as for all other social surveys from the data collection to be held in 2011 and onwards.

The variables which would be concerned by such breakdowns were not discussed in depth during the CVTS4 TF 2nd meeting. Eurostat proposes that Occupational breakdowns would replace the age breakdowns (questions A3, C2 – quantitative estimates) and be asked for the new categorical questions related to skills (,new C4, new C5, new G2, new G3, new G4).

2.4 Slight improvements and identification of good practices in parts B and C

- a) Cost elements not yet covered

As for most variables, the TF wished to keep the comparability of the section on costs. It was however highlighted that there might be room for improvements as regards additional but significant costs not yet covered. A category 'e' could be created to list the latter (based on the proposals of all Member States, to be collected through the consultation until mid September 2009). The TF would study the feasibility of the elements collected in its 3rd meeting keeping an overall objective of comparability among Member States (i.e. a category 'e' would be added only if clear and significant components can be isolated).

b) Guidelines for the data collection

Some Member States highlighted good practices already implemented at national level for the collection of quantitative data. These guidelines do not have a direct impact on the Commission Regulation. This concerns also the definition of the number of employees (possibilities of using registers to obtain an average over the year). This will be re-discussed in the next TF meetings.

c) Improvement of the wording of some questions

For part B, the phrasing can still be improved: for instance instead of “designed and managed” it might be better to use “organised and provided”. For external courses, examples might also help. Clarifications on the reference to paid working hours should also be avoided (consistency need to be rechecked in the whole questionnaire). Asking separately for “participants” in external and internal courses might be proposed too since enterprises have to distinguish the “hours” in any case (i.e. they have to use this information).

2.5 Coherence with CLA, with the AES and with the CIS

a) Coherence with CLA (questions on other forms of CVT)

As concerns "other forms of CVT", there is a need to review slightly the list of components to be in line with the Classification of Learning Activities and get the coherence with the main sub-groups formal⁵ and non-formal education and training activities on the one hand (with guided-on-the-job-training isolated) and informal activities on the other hand. This would not have a significant impact but needs to be done. The proposal will be re-discussed in the 3rd meeting of the TF (e.g. guided-on-the-job-training or trade fairs probably to be placed in a different group).

A separate issue is the information needs about the total participants and breakdowns of "other forms of CVT". The same questions as for gender apply: what can AES provide? What is needed from an enterprise strategy point of view (total versus breakdowns) and from an analytical point of view (micro-data for cluster analyses for instance)? Should we ask for the total only? For the two sub-categories corresponding to non-formal and informal activities⁶? for all categories as in CVTS 3 or some sub-groups?

The key question guiding this choice is actually whether we need the number of participants in at least one of the categories or in each category taken separately. A coherent dissemination policy with AES or LFS results would be to publish on the one hand participation rates in formal and non-formal activities without guided on-the-job training (for "main rates") and on the other hand complementary information on the other activities (guided on-the-job training and other activities separately). This could reply both to a concern of publishing robust and comparable information across the EU while ensuring coherent information with all three main surveys. This issue was not discussed in depth during the TF meeting. The proposal presented in the annex I is a compromise between the comparability with CVTS 3, burden and analytical needs.

b) Coherence with CIS

There are two main issues to distinguish for a better coherence with the Community Innovation Survey (CIS):

- Validity of the current question: a change of the reference period would a priori needed: from the reference year to the last three years. In that case the link with the 2010 CVT activities might need to be checked.
- Additional questions on other innovative processes might be asked as it was also advised in the CVTS workshop (variables characterising the enterprises besides NACE and size). This concerns organisational and marketing innovation.

⁵ Of non negligible importance in some Member States for CVTS

⁶ The TF would discuss about the categories “b” to “e” (of other forms of CVT) to group together in its 3rd meeting

The coherence with the CIS as well as question on future skills imply the use of several reference periods (2008-2010, 2009, 2011, 2011-2012) which should be compatible with the questions B3 and G1 to isolate "occasional training enterprises" and be useful for the reporting on "future" skill needs taking into account the timeliness of CVTS results (i.e. results published in 2012). A re-discussion of the reference years for the questions on future training needs (group G) will however be needed. At this stage the TF recommended to keep this part of the CVTS unchanged.

3. Transition to NACE Rev 2, extension to 3 sectors, stratification

The TF started to discuss two topics related to the economic sectors covered in the CVTS: the implementation of NACE Rev 2 and the possible extension to the survey to the sectors 'public administration', 'health' and 'education'.

3.1 Transition to NACE Rev 2, stratification

- a) The implementation of NACE Rev 2 has obviously an impact on the design of the CVTS as concerns the sample strata to be considered. Eurostat proposal is presented in the appendix 2 (annex II of the draft Commission Regulation). Each ETS Working Group member should check the coherence of the proposal using national data on NACE Rev 1 and NACE Rev 2 (number of enterprises as well as homogeneity in CVT activities if possible).
- b) Improvement of the stratification in the larger countries: six size classes instead of three would be feasible for the larger countries thanks to a larger sample size and can improve the quality of the results in these countries as well as for EU aggregates. All larger countries as well any other country interested in this option should review the proposal.
- c) Comparability of the results crossed tabulated by economic sectors using NACE Rev 1 (used in CVTS 3) and NACE Rev 2 (used in CVTS 4): the comparability would a priori be low but it would still need to be assessed for the 6 or 20 NACE codes used for the publication of CVTS results.

3.3 Extension to 3 sectors

The TF recognised the high relevance of an extended coverage of the CVTS for the 3 sectors on public administration, health and education. Eurostat would propose to promote the extension even through pilot surveys for CVTS4 (e.g. by exchange of good practices at national level) although no financial support can be provided. The work would go on at EU level for CVTS5 to reply to three main issues:

- a) Practical issues: the extension of the coverage in other business surveys might not guarantee an easy transposition to the CVTS due the subject of the survey: public enterprises as a statistical unit might not be the natural contact unit to contact. In some countries, most local units working in the field of education might also fall into the sector of 'public administration' when considering the enterprise as a statistical unit.
- b) Costs: the sample size would need to be increased⁷ and the questionnaires might need to be adapted to cover these sectors in certain countries.
- c) The stratification would need to be reviewed (see section 3.1)

⁷ about 15% of enterprises are in these 3 sectors in the UK for instance

4. Next steps

Beside the adoption of the Commission Regulation, the CVTS4 TF will need to review the following topics in its 3rd meeting (and 4th meeting if possible):

- the recommendations from various fora as regards the implementation (field work): either from the 1st TF meeting, from the national CVTS quality report or from the CVTS workshop organised by the CEDEFOP in June 2009
- the EU manual and the other technical requirements to ensure the timeliness of the data transmission
- the identification of good practices in the data collection

The meetings having a direct or indirect impact on the discussion on the CVTS are presented in the section 2.3 of the core document.

Annex 2: main elements of the draft AES Commission Regulation

1 Introduction

This annex presents the status of the preparation of the next Adult Education Survey with emphasis on the draft Commission regulation, AES manual and questionnaire as well as plans and procedures for further work.

The pilot Adult Education surveys conducted between 2005 and 2008 have been completed and data from 24 countries are published covering participation in formal and non formal education and training. Data are still to be published for a few countries (DK, MT, RO and CH).

2 Draft Commission Regulation

Eurostat is currently working on a draft Commission regulation for the implementation of the next AES. The draft Commission regulation was presented to the last Task Force meeting 4-5 June 2009. Three annexes are being prepared to complement the set of articles.

- Annex I Variables and their breakdowns
- Annex II Sampling and precision requirements
- Annex III Quality report requirements

The draft proposal for an AES implementing act is composed of 9 articles as follows⁸:

COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) No XXX/2010 of XXXX
implementing Regulation (EC) No 452/2008 of the European Parliament and the Council concerning the
production and development of statistics on education and lifelong learning
as regards statistics on the participation of adults in lifelong learning;
(Text with EEA relevance)

Article 1

The data collection for the first Adult Education Survey (AES) shall take place between July 2011 and June 2012. The reference period for which the data are to be collected shall be the 12 months prior to the data collection period.

Article 2

~~The population age range to be covered shall be 15 to 64 years.~~ The population age range shall be 18-69. The age groups 18-24 and 65-69 shall be covered on an optional basis.

Article 3

The variables concerning the subjects covered by the survey specified under Domain 2 of Regulation (EC) No 452/2008 shall be transmitted to the Commission (Eurostat) as indicated in Annex I to this Regulation.

Article 4

The data sources and sample size are specified under Domain 2 of Regulation (EC) No 452/2008. Sampling and precision requirements needed to meet these requirements are detailed in Annex II to this Regulation.

⁸ This proposal is being finalised at the moment (early September 2009) and is shown here as illustration. The next version of the proposal is scheduled to be discussed in the ETS Working Group meeting 28-29 September.

Article 5

Member States shall transmit to the Commission (Eurostat) a quality report on statistics on participation of adults in lifelong learning according to the quality criteria referred to in Article 4 (1) (d) of Regulation (EC) No 452/2008 and the further requirements specified in Annex III to this Regulation.

Article 6

Member States shall transmit data to the Commission (Eurostat) by the means and in the format as specified in Annex IV to this Regulation.

Article 7

With a view to achieving a high level of harmonisation of the survey results across countries, the Commission (Eurostat) in close cooperation with Member States, shall propose methodological and practical recommendations and guidelines for the implementation of the survey in the form of an 'Adult Education Survey Manual' including a standard questionnaire.

Article 8

Member States shall transmit to the Commission (Eurostat) clean micro-data files according to specifications given in Annex I and III within 6 months after the end of the data collection period. ~~and before end of September 2012.~~

Member States shall transmit the quality report to the Commission (Eurostat) within 3 months after the delivery of the micro-data files.

Article 9

This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

3 Explanatory notes to the articles in the draft regulation

▪ Articles 1 and 8

Article 1 proposes that the AES data collection period should take place between July 2011 and June 2012. The intention is to accommodate as many as possible of the countries which have expressed that they can carry out the survey either at the end of 2011 or at the beginning of 2012.

Article 8 proposes the data transmission deadlines for the micro-data files as well as for the quality reports. For the data files it is proposed to transmit the data 6 months after they have been collected. The quality reports are then proposed to be due three months after the micro data files have been transmitted.

Below are examples of survey and data transfer schedules:

Start of data collection period	End of data collection period	Recording period	Deadline for transmission to Eurostat	Data delay in months
July 2011	December 2011	July 2010-November 2011	End June 2012	6
September 2011	November 2011	September 2010-October 2011	End May 2012	6
September 2011	September 2011	September 2010-August 2011	End January 2012	6
December 2011	February 2012	December 2010-January 2012	End July 2012	6
February 2012	May 2012	February 2011-April 2012	End November 2012	6
January 2012	June 2012	January 2011-May 2012	End December 2012	6

Discussions during the Task Force meeting June 2009 and results from consultations so far from the Member States indicate that [countries plan](#) to conduct the survey [at the end of 2011 or during](#) the first half of 2012. Below is a table showing when countries would like to conduct the survey (status as of [middle September](#) 2009). Responses from the consultation indicates that most of the countries who have so far answered would prefer 6 months deadline for transmission of data files to Eurostat irrespective of when the data is collected.

SURVEY PERIOD	COUNTRIES
Second part of 2011	NL, ES, SI, BE, FI, CZ, GR, LV, EE, BG, AT
First part of 2012	DE, FR, CY, MT, HU, ES, LT, UK, NO, CH
Not sure	PT, PL, IS
No reply provided yet	SE, DK, LU, IE, RO, SK, IT, HR, TR

▪ **Article 2 and 4**

Article 2 proposes to maintain the age range from the pilot survey (25-64). This is to avoid problems of sample sizes and precision requirements. It is however recommended that on a voluntary basis, Member States extend this range to cover persons 18-24 and 65-69. This will help capture lifelong learning aspects of the younger generations and persons above age 64. The data on the younger age group will equally help in getting information on early school leavers and drop-outs.

Article 4 proposes the data sources and sample size are specified under Domain 2 of Regulation (EC) No 452/2008. The AES is a sample survey but data from registers can be used to reduce the burden on respondents. Details about precision requirements and sample sizes will be included in the AES manual. The AES manual is currently being revised and will be available by the time the Commission Regulation is adopted.

▪ **Article 3**

Article 3 says that the variables are specified in annex I.

Work on annex I is not yet completed. Annex I will be self-explanatory. This means that the variable names, their breakdowns and their codes will be included in a structure which basically mirrors the standard questionnaire to be developed but without the explanatory comments. Routings and filters will also be indicated in the variable list as is done for example for the implementing acts for the Labour Force Survey.

A version of the questionnaire with a number of annotations has been sent to the Member States for consultation during the summer 2009. A new variable list will be made available based on the final draft version of the questionnaire after all comments and suggestions have been received beginning of September.

The pilot AES has provided a lot of material to be used for the first AES and the approach is to use this material as far as possible for developing the AES manual and the standard questionnaire. There are however a few significant changes that are envisaged in the next standard questionnaire for the AES. The main is the reduction of the respondent burden through reducing the size and length of the questionnaire.

At the same time efforts are being made to include a few important questions/variables that were not included in the pilot survey.

Exclusion of the modules

Four modules were included in the pilot AES – ICT, language skills, cultural and social participation. These modules will not be part of the next AES. Some of the language skills and ICT may be preserved due to their importance in lifelong learning issues.

Core variables in social surveys

The AES covers most of these variables but a few changes will be done to ensure that all the core variables can be extracted from the data. This includes new classifications of existing variables and introduction of new variables.

Selection of activities for detailed information

The present questionnaire has 2 levels of selection of activities. At the first level, the total number of activities is recorded without any extra information. At the second level, 3 activities are randomly selected for more detailed information. Suggestions for the new questionnaire include the introduction of an additional question on all the selected activities: whether the activity is job related or not job related. It is also suggested that the number of activities for detailed information are reduced.

Measurement of outcome of education and training

The current pilot questionnaire measures skills on two levels: The first question (NFE7Y) asks whether the activity leads to a certificate required by law or the employer for the execution of a current or planned activity. The second question (NFE21Y) is about how much the respondent has used or expects to use the skills or knowledge acquired.

For the next AES questionnaire, two additional questions are proposed: The first is about evaluation of the activity in the form of how satisfied the respondent is with the education or training activity: Yes and No and if the answer is no then a reason is required. The second question is to what extent has the acquired knowledge or skill helped the respondent. Five main categories are provided for the respondent to choose from: Getting a new job/profession, promotion in present job, higher salary/wages, new tasks, better performance of present tasks, other (required to specify).

Obstacles to participation in education and training

Four main categories are included in the current pilot questionnaire: those who participated and wanted to participate more, those who participated but did not want to participate more, those who did not participate and wanted to participate and those who did not participate and did not want to participate. In the next AES, all these groups will be simplified and only two categories will be left: those who participated and those who did not participate.

▪ Other articles

The quality report format is also being revised but will be in all likelihood be very similar to the current format used in the pilot survey. Some of results from the survey included in the result/control tables will however be excluded from the quality report and more definitions and information about quality requirements will be provided.

The micro-data are to be transmitted by means of a secure data transmission application recommended by Eurostat example through the eDamis system used in the pilot survey.

4 Meetings and procedures

The plan is to have the questionnaire and the annexes of the draft Commission regulation ready for the ETS meeting of 28-29 September 2009.

The second AES Task Force meeting will take place in the later half of November 2009 and will be devoted to the AES questionnaire and manual plus the AES Commission Regulation.

During winter 2009-2010 the proposed AES Commission Regulation would be sent in a written consultation with the ETS Working Group members. The aim is to follow the same deadlines as for the CVTS revised Commission Regulation.

In May 2010 both the AES and CVTS draft Commission Regulations should be presented for adoption to the ESS Committee meeting. At that stage there will be translation of the text into all Community languages. An internal inter-service consultation in the Commission will have to take place beforehand.