SDG indicator metadata

(Harmonized metadata template - format version 1.1)

0. Indicator information (SDG_INDICATOR_INFO)

0.a. Goal (SDG_GOAL)

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

0.b. Target (SDG_TARGET)

Target 5.4: Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate

0.c. Indicator (SDG_INDICATOR)

Indicator 5.4.1: Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location

0.d. Series (SDG_SERIES_DESCR)

SL_DOM_TSPD - Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic chores and care work [5.4.1]

SL_DOM_TSPDCW - Proportion of time spent on unpaid care work [5.4.1]

SL_DOM_TSPDDC - Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic chores [5.4.1]

0.e. Metadata update (META_LAST_UPDATE)

2026-03-27

0.f. Related indicators (SDG_RELATED_INDICATORS)

Time-use information collected and analyzed around the world has shown that there is a very close link between economic poverty (SDG 1) and time poverty; most of health care is provided by households (SDG 3) and these activities are socially allocated to women in general; the provision of early childhood education services (SDG 4) not only prepares children for primary education but also frees up time for their caregivers; the sexual division of labour is a structural challenge of gender inequalities (SDG 5, 8 and 10); and the lack of services such as drinkable water, electricity or transport infrastructure increases unpaid work time and disproportionately affects women (SDG 6, 7, 9,11). Please see the section "Time-use data crucial for monitoring the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: going beyond SDG 5" of the *Policy relevance: Making the case for time-use data collections in support of SDGs monitoring paper submitted to the SC* of 2020[1].

0.g. International organisations(s) responsible for global monitoring (SDG_CUSTODIAN_AGENCIES)

UN Statistics Division (UNSD) and UN WOMEN

1. Data reporter (CONTACT)

1.a. Organisation (CONTACT_ORGANISATION)

UN Statistics Division (UNSD)

2. Definition, concepts, and classifications (IND_DEF_CON_CLASS)

[1] https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/51st-session/documents/BG-Item3m-PolicyRelevance-E.pdf

2.a. Definition and concepts (STAT_CONC_DEF)

Definition:
This indicator is defined as the proportion of time spent in a day on unpaid domestic and care work by men and women. Unpaid domestic and care work refers to activities related to the provision of services for own final use by household members, or by family members living in other households. These activities are listed in the International Classification of Activities for Time-Use Statistics 2016 (ICATUS 2016)[2] under the major divisions "3. Unpaid domestic services for household and family members" and "4. Unpaid caregiving services for household and family members".

Concepts:
Unpaid domestic work refers to activities including food and meals management preparation, cleaning and maintaining of own dwelling and surroundings, do-it-yourself decoration, maintenance and repair of personal and household goods, care and maintenance of textiles and footwear, household management, pet care, shopping for own household and family members and travel related to previously listed unpaid domestic services.
Unpaid care work refers to activities related to childcare and instruction, care of the sick, elderly, or disabled household and family members, and travel related to these unpaid caregiving services.

Concepts and definitions for this indicator are based on the following international standards:

- International Classification of Activities for Time Use Statistics 2016 (ICATUS 2016)
- System of National Accounts 2008 (SNA 2008)
- The Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment, and labour underutilization, adopted by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) at its 19th Session in 2013

As much as possible, statistics compiled by UNSD are based on the International Classification of Activities for Time Use Statistics 2016 (ICATUS 2016), which classifies activities undertaken by persons during the survey period. ICATUS 2016 was adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission for use as an international statistical classification at its 48th session, 7-10 March 2017.

2.b. Unit of measure (UNIT_MEASURE)

Percent (%) (proportion of time in a day)

2.c. Classifications (CLASS_SYSTEM)

The data for SDG 5.4.1 is as much as possible, in line with relevant international standards, including
▪ The International Classification of Activities for Time Use Statistics 2016 (ICATUS 2016)
▪ System of National Accounts 2008 (SNA 2008)
▪ Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment, and labour underutilization, adopted by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) at its 19th Session in 2013

3. Data source type and data collection method (SRC_TYPE_COLL_METHOD)

3.a. Data sources (SOURCE_TYPE)

[2] https://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/timeuse/23012019%20ICATUS.pdf

Most data on time use are collected through dedicated time use surveys or from time-use modules integrated into multi-purpose household surveys, conducted at the national level.

Data on time-use can be collected through a 24-hour diary or a stylized questionnaire. With diaries, respondents are asked to report on what activity they were performing when they started the day, what activity followed and the time that activity began and ended (in most cases based on fixed intervals), and so forth through the 24 hours of the day. Stylized time-use questions ask respondents to recall the amount of time they allocated to a certain activity over a specified period, such as a day or a week.

3.b. Data collection method (COLL_METHOD)

Data are collected by national statistical offices, the official counterparts at the country level. Data are compiled and validated by UNSD. If there are inconsistencies or issues with the data, UNSD consults the focal point in the national statistical office. The data for SDG 5.4.1 is, as much as possible, in line with relevant international standards, or properly footnoted. International standards include:

- The International Classification of Activities for Time Use Statistics 2016 (ICATUS 2016)
- System of National Accounts 2008 (SNA 2008)
- Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment, and labour underutilization, adopted by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) at its 19th Session in 2013
- Guide to Producing Statistics on Time-Use: Measuring Paid and Unpaid Work

3.c. Data collection calendar (FREQ_COLL)

Once national time-use data become available, they are added to the UNSD database.

3.d. Data release calendar (REL_CAL_POLICY)

Data are released regularly as soon as they are updated

3.e. Data providers (DATA_SOURCE)

National Statistical Offices

3.f. Data compilers (COMPILING_ORG)

United Nations Statistics Division

3.g. Institutional mandate (INST_MANDATE)

The United Nations Statistics Division is committed to the advancement of the global statistical system. UNSD compiles and disseminates global statistical information, develops standards and norms for statistical activities, and supports countries' efforts to strengthen their national statistical systems. UNSD facilitates the coordination of international statistical activities and supports the functioning of the United Nations Statistical Commission as the apex entity of the global statistical system. The Social and Gender Statistics Section of UNSD works on migration statistics, gender statistics, and time use statistics.

The Global Gender Statistics Programme is mandated by the United Nations Statistical Commission, implemented by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD, and coordinated by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS).

The Programme encompasses:

- improving coherence among existing initiatives on gender statistics through international coordination
- developing and promoting methodological guidelines in existing domains as well as in emerging areas of gender concern
- strengthening national statistical and technical capacity for the production, dissemination, and use of gender-relevant data
- facilitating access to gender-relevant data and metadata through a gender data portal[3].

UNSD serves as the Secretariat of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS), the coordinating, and guiding body of the Global Gender Statistics Programme. The IAEG-GS was first convened in 2006, meets annually and functions through advisory groups. Presently, the main advisory group's work concentrates on examining emerging and unaddressed key gender issues and related data gaps with the aim of developing proposals on how to fill these gaps.

In addition, UNSD serves as Secretariat of the United Nations Expert Group on Innovative and Effective Ways to Collect Time-Use Statistics (EG-TUS), which initiated its work in June 2018 with the overall objective of taking stock and reviewing country practices in time-use surveys and providing technical guidance and recommendations to improve the collection and use of time use data, in line with international standards and in support of SDGs implementation. In particular, the Group was established to develop methodological guidelines on how to operationalize ICATUS 2016 and produce time-use statistics using the latest technologies, as requested by the United Nations Statistical Commission at its forty-eighth session in 2017 in its decision 48/109. The 51st Session of the Statistical Commission in 2020 (decision 51/115) endorsed the work of UNSD and the EG-TUS, approved the terms of reference of the Expert Group, and congratulated the group on the progress made in developing a conceptual framework to modernize time-use surveys. The 53rd Statistical Commission in 2022(decision 53/111b) endorsed the work of UNSD and the EG-TUS. This included the minimum harmonized instrument for time-use data collection, quality considerations for time-use surveys, and options to modernize time-use data production. These three documents are the core components of the United Nations guidelines for producing time-use statistics.

For more information and resources on UNSD's Time-Use Statistics programme, please visit UNSD - Time-use statistics

4. Other methodological considerations (OTHER_METHOD)

4.a. Rationale (RATIONALE)

The purpose of the indicator is to measure the amount of time women and men spend doing unpaid work, to ensure that all work, whether paid or unpaid, is valued. In addition, it also provides an assessment of gender equality, by highlighting discrepancies between how much time women and men spend on unpaid work, like cooking, cleaning, or taking care of children.

[3] https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/gender/minset

This indicator measures the average amount of time as a proportion in a day, so that if for a given country it is reported that women aged 15+ spend 10% of their day on unpaid domestic chores while men in the same age group spend 1%, it indicates that women spend 2.4 hours (2 hours and 24 minutes), while men spend 14.4 minutes on it a day, on average. As explained further in 4.c, this daily average is obtained from an average taken over the reference period for the data collection, and thus does not mean that women and men spend these given amounts of time every single day.

4.b. Comment and limitations (REC_USE_LIM)

Time use statistics have been used: (1) to provide a measure of the quality of life or general well-being of individuals and households; (2) to offer a more comprehensive measurement of all forms of work, including unpaid household service work; (3) to produce data relevant for monitoring gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and are essential inputs for the policy and political dialogue on gender equality.

International comparability of time-use statistics is limited by several factors, including:

a) Diary versus stylized time-use survey. Data on time-use can be collected through a 24-hour diary (light diary) or a stylized questionnaire. With diaries, respondents are asked to report on what activity they were performing when they started the day, what activity followed, the time that activity began and ended, and so forth through the 24 hours of the day. Stylized time-use questions ask respondents to recall the amount of time they allocated to a certain activity over a specified period, such as a day or week. Data obtained from these two different data collection methods are usually not comparable, and even data collected with different stylized questions might not be comparable given that the level of detail asked about activities performed might differ from one instrument to another, thus impacting the total time spent on a given activity.

b) Time-use activity classification. Regional and national classifications of time-use activities may differ from the The International Classification of Activities for Time Use Statistics 2016 (ICATUS 2016), resulting in data that are not comparable across countries.

c) Time-use data presented refer to the “main activity” only. Any “secondary activity” performed simultaneously with the main activity is not reflected in the average times shown. For instance, a woman may be cooking and looking after a child simultaneously. For countries reporting cooking as the main activity, time spent caring for children is not accounted for and reflected in the statistics. This may affect the international comparability of data on time spent caring for children; it may also underestimate the time women spend on this activity.

d) Different target age populations used by countries and age groups also make time use data difficult to compare across countries.

4.c. Method of computation (DATA_COMP)

Data presented for this indicator are expressed as a proportion of time in a day. In the case when the reference period is one week, weekly data is averaged over seven days of the week to obtain the daily average time.

The proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work is calculated by dividing the daily average number of hours spent on unpaid domestic and care work by 24 hours.

Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work ($Indicator\ 5.4.1$) is calculated as:

$$Indicator\ 5.4.1 = \frac{Daily\ number\ of\ hours\ spent\ on\ domestic\ work + Daily\ number\ of\ hours\ spent\ on\ care\ work}{24} \times 100$$

where,

$$Daily\ number\ of\ hours\ spent\ on\ relevant\ activities = \frac{\begin{matrix}Total\ number\ of\ hours\ spent\ by\\ the\ population\ on\ relevant\ activities\end{matrix}}{\begin{matrix}Total\ population\ (regardless\ of\ whether\\ they\ participated\ in\ the\ activity)\end{matrix}}$$

The average number of hours spent on unpaid domestic and care work derives from time-use statistics that are collected through stand-alone time-use surveys or a time-use module in multi-purpose household surveys. Data on time-use may be summarized and presented as either (1) average time spent by participants (in each activity) only or (2) average time spent by all populations of a certain age (total relevant population). In the former type of average, the total time spent by the individuals who performed the activity is divided by the number of persons who performed it (participants). In the latter type of averages, the total time is divided by the total relevant population (or a subgroup thereof), regardless of whether people performed the activity or not.

SDG indicator 5.4.1 is calculated based on the average number of hours spent on unpaid domestic and unpaid care work for the total relevant population. This type of measure can be used to compare groups and assess changes over time. Differences among groups or over time may be due to a difference (or change) in the proportion of those participating in the specific activity or a difference (or change) in the amount of time spent by participants, or both.

4.d. Validation (DATA_VALIDATION)

Most of the data are provided and validated by national statistical offices. In some cases, data have been obtained from publicly available national databases and publications. The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) communicates with countries if there are inconsistencies or possible errors in the data.

4.e. Adjustments (ADJUSTMENT)

No adjustments concerning international standards are made.

4.f. Treatment of missing values (i) at country level and (ii) at regional level (IMPUTATION)

- **At country level**
  UNSD does not produce estimates for missing values

- **At regional and global levels**
  No imputation is done. Aggregates are computed based on available data only.

4.g. Regional aggregations (REG_AGG)

UNSD compiles regional estimates to support global monitoring and reporting. These estimates are derived as simple averages of the indicator values, using the most recent data available for each

country within a region. Unless otherwise specified, regional estimates refer to the population aged 15 and over and are based on nationally representative data.

4.h. Methods and guidance available to countries for the compilation of the data at the national level (DOC_METHOD)

International Classification of Activities for Time Use Statistics 2016:
https://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/timeuse/23012019%20ICATUS.pdf

Guide to Producing Statistics on Time-Use:
For more information and resources on UNSD's Time-Use Statistics programme, please visit UNSD - Time-use statistics

System of National Accounts 2025 (SNA 2025): https://
unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/docs/2025_SNA_Pre-edit.pdf

The Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization:
http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/standards-and-guidelines/resolutions-adopted-by-international-conferences-of-labour-statisticians/WCMS_230304/lang--en/index.htm

4.i. Quality management (QUALITY_MGMNT)

Details on quality management are available in the data quality for time use statistics paper, presented to the Statistical Commission in 2020:
https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/51st-session/documents/BG-Item3m-Defining_Quality-E.pdf
This technical report was updated and further developed by the Expert Group on Innovative and Effective Ways to Collect Time-Use Statistics (EG-TUS)and was presented at the 53rd session of the Statistical Commission in March 2022. The updated report is available at: BG-3h-Quality_UN_EG_TUS2021_FINAL_SENT_rev-E.pdf

4.j Quality assurance (QUALITY_ASSURE)

The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) has been reviewing in detail the survey methodology followed to collect time use data and the classification of activities used by countries, to assess the level of comparability across countries and over time in each country.

4.k Quality assessment (QUALITY_ASSMNT)

UNSD reviews and assesses the quality of the data received from countries and reverts to the data providers for clarifications if needed. The data received are compared to previous years to ensure consistency over time. In addition, the indicator calculations are verified, and data are checked for anomalies.

5. Data availability and disaggregation (COVERAGE)

Data availability:
96 countries with data between 2000 and 2024

By Year:
From 2000 – 2004: 41 countries
From 2005 – 2009: 38 countries
From 2010 - 2014: 50 countries
From 2015 - 2019: 37 countries
From 2020 - 2024: 31 countries

Time series:
From 2000 to 2024

Disaggregation:
This indicator should be disaggregated by the following dimensions: sex, age, and location.
The categories for disaggregation, by dimension, are as follows:
Sex: female/male.
Age: the recommended age groups are 15+, 15-24, 25-44, 45-54, 55-64 and 65+
Location: urban/rural (following national definitions given the lack of international definition).

These categories have been recommended by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS) during its 11th meeting in Rome, Italy on 30-31 October 2017.

6. Comparability / deviation from international standards (COMPARABILITY)

Sources of discrepancies:

Not applicable

7. References and Documentation (OTHER_DOC)

URL:

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/default.html

References:

- Guide to Producing Statistics on Time-Use (https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/SeriesF/Seriesf_127e.pdf)
- International Classification of Activities for Time Use Statistics 2016 (https://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/timeuse/23012019%20ICATUS.pdf
- Time-use statistics - Resources hub (https://unstats.un.org/UNSDWebsite/demographic-social/time-use/resources-hub)
- Repository of information about time use surveys (https://unstats.un.org/UNSDWebsite/demographic-social/time-use/data-and-metadata)

Minimum Set of Gender Indicators (https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/gender/minset)