

Distr.  
GENERAL

CES/SEM.41/7 (Summary)  
3 February 2000

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

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STATISTICAL COMMISSION and  
COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE ECONOMIC  
EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (EUROSTAT)

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

Joint ECE-Eurostat-ILO Seminar  
on Measurement of the Quality of Employment  
(Geneva, 3-5 May 2000)

Topic 2

**Statistics on work schedules and working time arrangements:  
An overview of issues and some experiences**

Invited paper submitted by the International Labour Office

**Summary**

This paper presents some of the conceptual issues, variables and typologies which are relevant when producing statistics on work schedules and working time arrangements (WTA). It is partly based on the results from two studies commissioned by the ILO in 1999. One of these studies was asked to review the statistics on WTA available in four OECD countries (Germany, Italy, United Kingdom and United States) and to make recommendations on whether and how such statistics could be improved and produced on a regular basis, to describe differences in WTA between different groups of workers and to monitor the changes taking place. The other study was asked to investigate to what extent existing *Time Use Surveys (TUS)* can be used to describe WTA arrangements and the issues involved in doing so. Among the conclusions from these studies is that TUS do provide considerable insights into WTA, even when the activities within the work episodes are not described, and that more work is needed to establish criteria for defining core working hours and the patterns of WTA implied by this definition. One of the findings from two countries with more than one TUS is that persons' work episodes over time have become more concentrated to the defined core hours. This contradicts the popular perception based on anecdotal evidence that there has been a relative reduction in the number of persons who work only during core hours. All the TUS surveys reviewed show, however, that there was clear WTA differences between countries and between different groups within the countries.