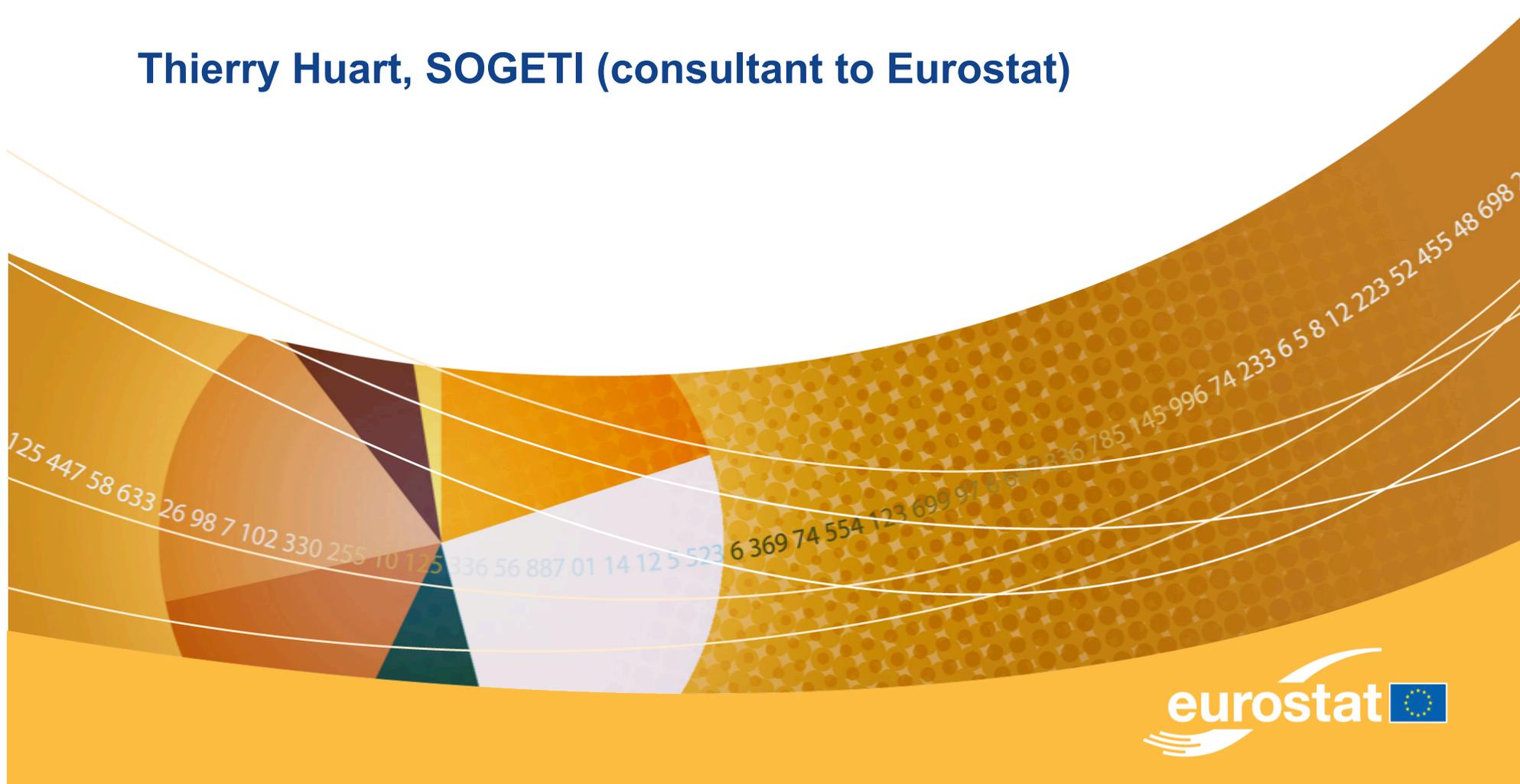


Challenges and opportunities for collecting data on inclusive education / special needs education

Lene Mejer, Eurostat unit F4

Thierry Huart, SOGETI (consultant to Eurostat)



Challenges and opportunities in regard to statistics on special needs education

This presentation is a follow up of the one provided for the first MIPIE meeting December 2010. It focuses on:

- 1. Update on Eurostat project regarding SNE data**
- 2. Challenges for collection of data.**
- 3. Opportunities for linking quantitative data to indicators providing relevant analysis**

1st MIPIE meeting, December 2010

- UOE (UNESCO, OECD, Eurostat data collection on education systems): SEN pupils within scope but 'hidden' eg. not separately identified.
- UOE manual, volume 1:
 - ' no common definition of 'special education' has been adopted by countries so far, and it is difficult to conceive a methodology that would generate consistent and comparable statistics from countries (op. cit.).'
- This was the situation of 10 years ago and is now under evaluation in the Eurostat work.

Update on Eurostat project regarding SNE data

Three tasks to be carried out in 2011:

Specific tasks of the project

Task 1

1. Assessment of existing statistical methodologies and data related to students with special educational needs SEN
2. Assess priorities of EU Commission and states for SEN st



Task 2

1. Proposal for data collection on SEN to be integrated in the UOE collection (e.g. make a sub-population visible in existing data collection)



Task 3

1. Suggestion and testing of relevant quantitative measurable indicators on the basis of the UOE data collection suggestions and the policy priorities indicated at E



Process including: discussions, modifications

Eurostat Work programme 2011

Task 1:

- > An enquiry to 'actors' at international and country level is foreseen regarding data and indicator needs in relation to SEN pupils. This enquiry will also include questions on data availability at country level as well as possibilities for making data 'comparable'.
- > Enquiry drafting is underway (for spring 2011). Main sections concern policy needs, possibilities for indicators at international level, reviewing available information (Eurydice, SEN agency, OECD SENDDD and UOE data collection), national sources, data dimensions and comparability issues.

Eurostat Work programme 2011

Task 2:

- > creation of an 'ideal' UOE test table combining policy needs and data availability in an 'optimal mix'. Test table should be accompanied by relevant methodological instructions including on concepts and definitions to be followed. Testing of the 'ideal' UOE table in a number of Member States using available data.
- > test table to be discussed with countries at the Education and Training Statistics Working Group meeting in May 2011.
- > relevant dimensions are: institutional setting, SNEs characteristics, gender, age, public/private, educational level
- > challenge: standardised unit for comparability purposes (for inclusive settings)

Eurostat Work programme 2011

Task 3:

- > Identification of relevant and possible indicators given policy requirements and available data.
- > Relevant indicators should have the following characteristics:
 1. Comparable between countries
 2. Policy relevant (inclusive education, equity dimension)
 3. Should be measurable
 4. Should not impose 'extra burdens' (in the broad sense)
 5. Should have powerful analytical value, particularly also for supporting more 'soft' measures.

Challenges for data collection

There are several challenges that need to be addressed regarding data collection on SEN:

■ To comply with the UOE framework:

1. Presentation of the UOE framework,
2. Methodological issues,
3. Implementation issues.

■ To meet EU2020 strategy needs:

1. EU Commission needs as well as national needs (enquiry),
2. System of indicators

Challenges for data collection – UOE framework (2)

■ How to make the right balance between data needs and the burden on respondents (NSI or Ministry of education) → Limitation of the scope of the data collection → Should some dimensions be left aside? Which ones?

■ Which timeframe should be set up?

– Defining priorities (as mentioned above)

– What is available now,

– What should be available in the short term (2-3 years), in the medium term (4-5 years) and in the long term (more than 5 years)

■ Which metadata should be collected to help assessing and guaranteeing:

– Clarity of data;

– Relevance,

– Accuracy;

– Coherence

– Geographical comparability of the data

■ How to use existing information from the Agency, Eurydice and OECD in order to avoid overlapping of data collection?

Challenges for data collection – UOE framework (3)

□ **Defining the target population: definition of the SEN population**

• **UNESCO definition 1997**

According to the ISCED 1997 Manual (p. 47), “the concept of ‘children with special educational needs’ extends beyond those who may be included in handicapped categories to cover those who are failing in school for a wide variety of other reasons that are known to be likely to impede a child’s optimal progress”. (ISCED 1997 Manual, p. 47).

• **UNESCO definition 2011 (draft version – February 2011)**

Education designed to facilitate the learning of students who, for a wide variety of reasons, require additional support and adaptive pedagogical methods in order to meet learning objectives. The reasons may include disadvantages in the area of physical or intellectual ability, behavioural or emotional needs or as a result of specific medical conditions.

a definition based on the notion of additional resources

Those with special educational needs are defined by the additional resources provided to support their education in a systematic and sustainable way. That means that any punctual additional support (e.g. additional lesson on the Pythagorean theorem) would not fall into the SNE concept.

-> comparability ensured ?

Challenges for data collection – UOE framework (4)

□ *Defining the dimensions to be considered:*

• **Age and gender breakdown:** age needed at EU level?

• **Level of education:** compulsory education (ISCED 1-2) only? ISCED 0? ISCED 3 and even beyond (vocational training)?

• **Sector of education:** The regular UOE data collection collects data on educational institutions which are classified as either public or private. Private institutions are further classified between government dependent private and independent private institutions.

• **SEN population sub-categories:** the DDD taxonomy? (Disabilities/Difficulties/Disadvantages) -> Value in regard to inclusion/segregation

• **Level of inclusion:** which level of detail?

1) *full segregation:* SEN students are enrolled in specific schools dedicated to SEN;

2) *semi-inclusive* education: SEN students attend specific classes within mainstream schools (no attendance of mainstream classes);

3) *inclusive* education (keep the 80% criterion?):

3a) *partial temporary* inclusive education: attendance of some mainstream classes a part of the year.

3b) *partial permanent* inclusive education: attendance of some mainstream classes all year long;

3c) *full temporary* inclusive education: attendance of the whole programme a part of the year;

3d) *full permanent* inclusive education: attendance of the whole programme all year long.

Challenges for data collection – UOE framework (5)

Defining the dimensions to be considered:

Which units to be used:

- **Segregated settings:**

- Headcounts,
- Full time equivalent units (FTE pupils).

- **Inclusive settings:**

- Headcounts in the different categories, i.e. 2, 3a, 3b, 3c & 3d?
- Number of hours spent in mainstream classes?

Challenges for data collection – EU2020 strategy (1)

Educational disadvantage should be addressed by providing high quality early childhood education and targeted support, and by promoting inclusive education. Education and training systems should aim to ensure that all learners - including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, those with special needs and migrants - complete their education, including, where appropriate, through second-chance education and the provision of more personalised learning (Council conclusions on ET2020, May 2009, p. 7)

-> Questions:

- are « those from disadvantaged backgrounds » and « migrants » to be regarded apart from « those with special needs »
- how « inclusive education » can be operationalised? (see above)

(Contacts with DG-EAC and UNESCO in progress..)

Challenges for data collection – EU2020 strategy (2)

System of indicators and indicators should be:

- ***policy-relevant***, by being capable of providing clear and unambiguous responses to key policy issues and concerns;
- ***user friendly***, i.e., comprehensible, timely and few in number;
- ***derived from a framework***, which allows the interpretation of one figure (say enrolment) in the context of other basic variables (say demography and investment in education) of a particular country;
- ***technically sound***, i.e. valid, reliable and comparable;
- ***feasible to measure at reasonable cost***, in that the basic statistics required for deriving them can be either readily available or comparatively easy to collect within a well-defined timeframe.

Opportunities: towards SEN indicators

- Core indicators:
 - Number of segregated/ included SEN pupils , in absolute terms or as a percentage of all SEN students;
 - Distribution of SEN by inclusive setting (partial/temporary/full) ?

- Enlarging the SEN issue to all equity aspects:
 - access (early identification of SEN pupils, additional provision set up);
 - treatment (additional resources and staff)
 - outcomes (graduation and employability)

- Kind of additional resources allocated to SEN (material, pedagogical methods, staff specific training, social workers, ...);

- Quantification of financial and personnel resources;

- Statistics on SEN graduation and employability.

Overall objective

Individuals should take full advantage of education and training in terms of opportunities, access treatment and outcomes

Strategic objectives

Increasing participation rate of SEN population

Increasing the number of graduates in the SEN population

Potential core indicators

Pupils with special education needs in segregated settings (percentage of total pupils in compulsory education)

Distribution of SEN pupils by category of settings

Context indicators

Number of pupils with special education needs by gender and age

Number of pupils with special education needs by level of education



Contextual qualitative information: SEN Agency, Eurydice, etc.