

Measurement of SDG indicator 5.5.1b

This document was prepared by UN Women and UNECE as support for data compilation on SDG indicator 5.5.1b in Europe and Central Asia. It is based on the global metadata of the indicator available at: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/files/Metadata-05-05-01b.pdf>.

The SDG indicator 5.5.1b is a new indicator, currently classified as tier II (conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, but data are not regularly produced by countries) and is measured as the percentage of elected positions held by women in deliberative bodies of local government.

The following definitions and sources of data are used for the global monitoring of the indicator.

1. Terms and definitions

Local government is one of the sub-national spheres of government and a result of decentralization, a process of transferring *political, fiscal, and administrative powers* from the central government to sub-national units of government distributed across the territory of a country to regulate and/or run certain government functions or public services on their own.

The definition of local government follows the 2008 System of National Accounts (SNA) distinction between central, state, and local government (para 4.129). Local government consists of local government units, defined in the SNA as “institutional units whose fiscal, legislative and executive authority extends over the smallest geographical areas distinguished for administrative and political purposes” (para 4.145). What constitutes local government of a given country, including its organization by tiers (levels), is defined by that country’s national legal framework, including national constitutions and local government acts or equivalent legislation.

Each local government unit typically includes a deliberative body and an executive body.

Deliberative bodies, such as councils or assemblies, are formal entities with a prescribed number of members as per national or state legislation. They are usually elected by universal suffrage and have decision-making power, including the ability to issue by-laws, on a range of local aspects of public affairs.

Executive bodies, consisting of an executive committee or a mayor, may be elected, appointed or nominated and they prepare and execute decisions made by the deliberative body.

Elected positions are the most common manner of selection of local government members. They are selected in local elections, based on a system of choosing political office holders in which the voters cast ballots for the person, persons or political party that they desire to see elected. The category of elected positions includes both elected persons who competed on openly contested seats and persons selected during the electoral processes on reserved seats or through a candidate quota.

By comparison, members selected on appointed positions (the least common manner of selection of local government members) are nominated, typically by government officials from higher-ranking tiers of government. Appointed positions of local government are more frequent among the leadership positions, such as the heads of the executive body, representatives of specific groups

(e.g., disadvantaged groups, youth); and, temporary committees/delegations/caretakers appointed by government officials when a council has been dissolved.

2. What is included in/excluded from the calculation of SDG indicator 5.5.1b?

SDG indicator 5.5.1b covers elected positions in the deliberative bodies of local government for all tiers of local government identified based on national legal frameworks.

Indicator 5.5.1b does not cover other local government positions such as (a) elected positions of executive bodies who are not, at the same time, part of the deliberative bodies, and (b) nominated or appointed positions in either deliberative or the executive bodies of local government.

Other categories of persons – such as public administration staff, members of auxiliary or participatory bodies, representative of interest groups, representatives of traditional leaders, and local citizens – do not have legislative/deliberative or executive powers on matters of local self-government, and are not members of the local government. They are therefore excluded from the measurement of indicator 5.5.1b.

3. Data sources

Administrative data on election results are the main source of data on elected members of local government, and the recommended data source for Indicator 5.5.1b. These data are produced by Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) or equivalent bodies tasked with organizing elections at local level. The data on elected women and men required to calculate Indicator 5.5.1b are derived from administrative information on election winners, disaggregated by sex. No adjustments or estimates are necessary to transform this administrative information into statistics for monitoring the indicator.

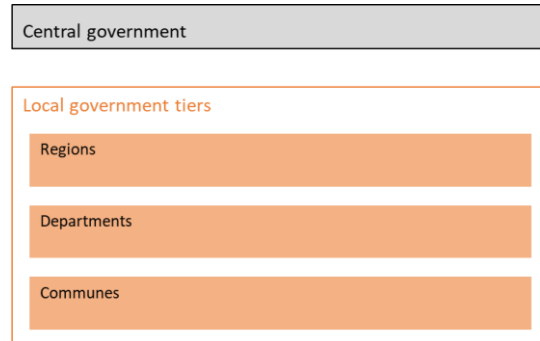
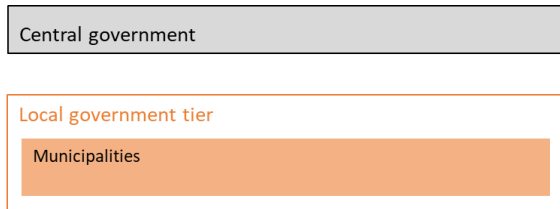
When sex-disaggregated data based on electoral results are not available, two other types of sources of data may be used. **Public administration data**, available to line ministries overseeing local government, may include information on local government members. Additional processing of information may be necessary, however, when the information on women and men in elected positions of local government is mixed with information that is not covered by indicator 5.5.1b, including on appointed positions, other categories of local government members, and public administration employees. In some cases, elected positions may not be covered in the records maintained, for example, if the administrative records are restricted to only those positions that are on the government payroll.

Another type of data source that may provide information on women and men in local government refers to existing **surveys or censuses using local government units as units of observation**. These surveys or censuses may be undertaken by National Statistical Offices and/or line ministries and may take the form of (a) local government censuses or surveys; (b) establishment surveys; and (c) municipality surveys. They would also need to distinguish between elected positions of local government and other categories of local government members or public administration employees, which are not covered by indicator 5.5.1b.

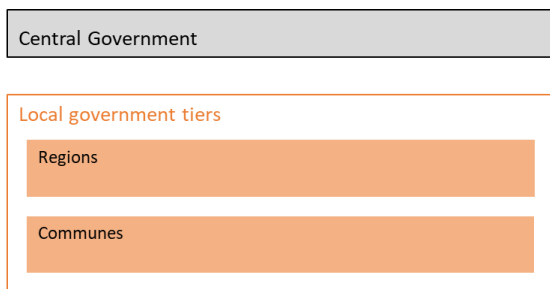
Other data such as those provided by the Associations of local government are not considered official statistics and should not be used for the global reporting on SDG indicator 5.5.1b.

Annex. Examples of local government organization

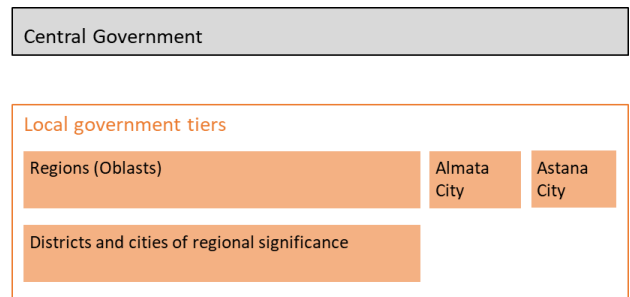
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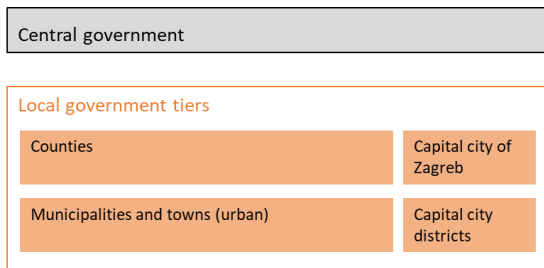
Albania



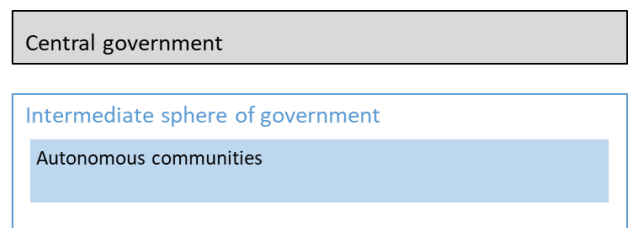
Kazakhstan



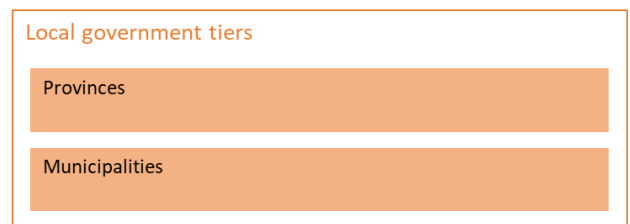
Croatia



Spain



France



United States of America

Federal government

Intermediate sphere of government

States

Local government sphere

Counties

Municipalities and townships