Overview of KOSTAT

A. History

Statistics Korea (hereafter to be referred as KOSTAT) is Korea's official national statistical organization. It was established as the Bureau of Statistics under the Government Information Agency with 4 Divisions, consisting of 1,000 staff members in 1948. It was relocated to the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1955 and to the Economic Planning Board to support the 5-year Economic Development Plan in 1961. The organization became Statistics Korea (KOSTAT) with 1,122 persons among 3 Bureaus, 14 Divisions, and 11 Local Offices in 1990. KOSTAT was raised to the Vice Ministerial level in 2005.

According to the revision of "Government Organization Act" in February 2008, the production work of agriculture and fishery statistics was transferred to KOSTAT from the Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry and the Ministry of Maritime Affairs & Fisheries .

B. Responsibility

As the central government organization for statistics, KOSTAT aims at supporting services of overall planning and coordination of national statistics, establishing statistical standards, producing and distributing various economic & social statistics, processing and managing statistical information and providing various statistical data.

C. Mission

KOSTAT reinforces effective statistical adjustment and cooperation activities and executes quality improvement in national statistics in order to achieve development of statistical system to actively respond to diverse statistical demands and aggravation in survey environment in accordance with rapid changes in economic and social environment. Statistics Korea produces reliable statistics with the objectives of accuracy, usefulness and timeliness through innovation of national statistical system. In relations to production and distribution of statistics, KOSTAT ensures privacy of individuals and confidentiality of businesses in order to secure confidence of the people.
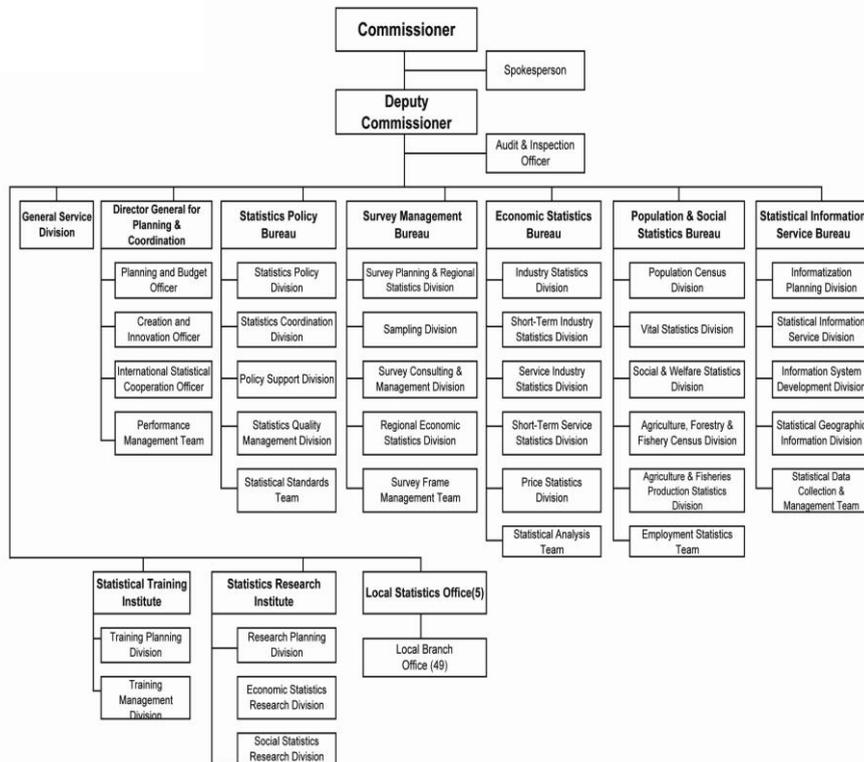
D. Organization & Personnel

KOSTAT is the central organization for statistics under the Ministry of Strategy and Finance. KOSTAT has 5 bureaus, 4 officers, 23 divisions and 7 teams among headquarters, the Statistical Training Institute (STI), Statistical Research Institute (SRI) in Daejeon and 5 local offices (Gyeongin, Dongbuk, Honam, Dongnam and Chungcheong), and 49 local branch offices as of August 2009. Each office is responsible for the collection of data for current surveys and for statistical information distribution at the regional level.

KOSTAT employs a total of 2,257 staff members.(2009.8.) There are 554 employees at headquarters, 24 in the STI, 40 in the SRI and 1,639 in local offices, respectively.

*Local offices were restructured in February 2009
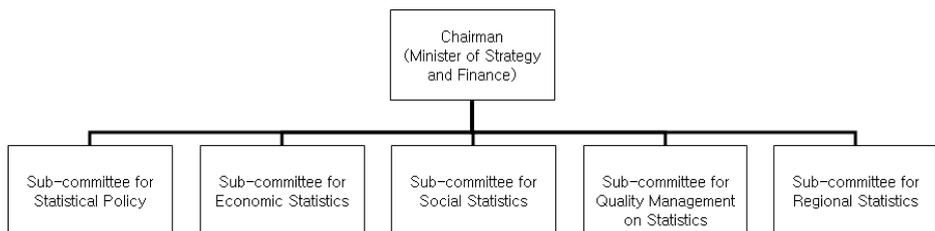
Organization of Statistics Korea

E. National Statistics Committee (NSC)

The NSC was established by the Statistics Act to be a deliberative body on statistical matters.

It plays an important role in assisting statistical activities of KOSTAT. The committee deliberates on the following matters:

a) Development and improvement of statistical system

b) Mid and long term statistical development plan including new statistics

c) Statistics-based policy management system including policy evaluation based on statistics

d) Coordination, merger and abolition of similar and overlapping statistics

e) Statistics quality management system and improvement of statistics

f) Establishment and amendment of statistical standard classifications.

National Statistics Committee

Chairman
(Minister of Strategy
and Finance)

| Sub-committee for Statistical Policy | Sub-committee for Economic Statistics | Sub-committee for Social Statistics | Sub-committee for Quality Management on Statistics | Sub-committee for Regional Statistics |

F. Function

1) Coordination of Statistical Activities

Redundancy, omission of statistics, and inconsistency between statistics compiled by various agencies may occur under a decentralized system. To preclude these problems of the decentralized statistical system, KOSTAT, as the central statistical agency, plays a leading role in integrating and coordinating the statistical activities of approximately 284 governmental and 78 non-governmental agencies authorized by the Statistics Act.

2) Establishment of Statistical Standards and Classifications

In order to improve the comparability and consistency of statistics, KOSTAT standardizes statistical terms and classifications. These classifications include Korean Standard Industrial Classification(KSIC), Korean Standard Classification of Occupations(KSCO), Korean Standard Classification of Diseases(KCD), Standard Korean Trade Classification (SKTC), etc.

3) Compilation and Analysis of the Basic National Statistics

KOSTAT also plays a role as a major producer of statistics by conducting 42 kinds of censuses and surveys which mainly focus on socio-economic and demographic fields, such as the Census of Establishment and Population Census. In addition, KOSTAT compiles 10 kinds of analytic statistics and 1 kind of administrative statistics.

4) Dissemination of Statistical Information

One of the major functions performed by KOSTAT is to provide statistical data for a variety of users such as policy-makers, governmental planners, administrators, researchers at research institutes, universities, political parties, enterprises, and individuals. The provision of statistical data is made through various means of publicity such as publications, CDs, an on-line database system(KOSIS), Statistical Data-Warehouse System, MDSS(Micro Data Service System), tabulation for special requests, etc.

5) Statistics Quality Management

A statistics quality management system, which is now in place in Korea can be summed up as a combination of the statistical inspector system and quality assessment checklist scheme. Since the revision of the Statistics Act in 2007, the rotational assessment is carried out every 5 years while self-assessment is conducted every year.
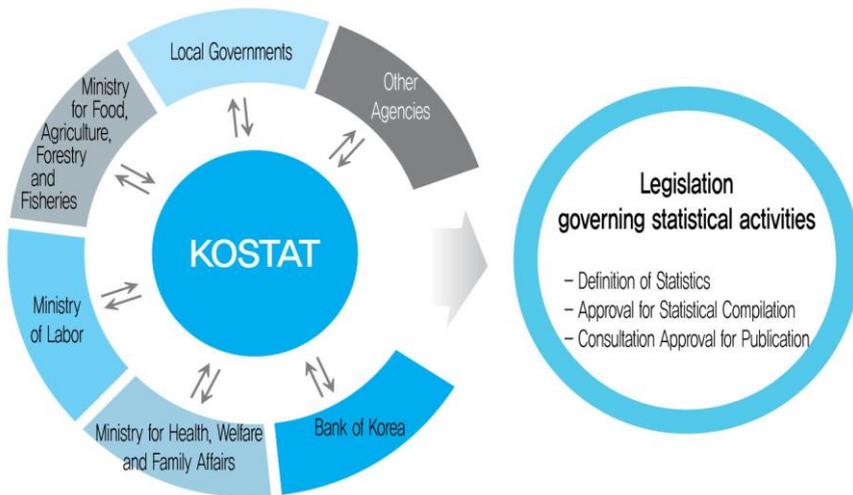
6) Statistical Training and Research

Every year, the Statistical Training Institute(STI) trains around 3,600 persons from both governmental and non-governmental agencies. Its training curriculum includes several courses on basic and advanced statistics, sampling technique, computer technology, survey methodology, etc.

The Statistical Research Institute(SRI) has contributed to the advancement of national statistics through statistical research and development. The SRI conducts research projects required to develop

new statistics and statistical techniques to improve the quality of national statistics. It also performs in-depth analysis of statistical data.

7) International Statistical Cooperation

KOSTAT actively participates in diverse international statistical activities in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. KOSTAT hosts various international conferences on statistics and related fields.   In addition, KOSTAT regularly receives statistical obligations and sends its work-results to international organizations and other countries.   It also offers statistical data and replies to statistical inquires from international organizations and other countries.

< Coordination of Statistical Activities >