

# United Nations Statistics Division

## Major work areas and accomplishments

Classifications

Dissemination of Global Statistics

Distributive Trade

Energy Statistics

Environment Statistics

Environmental-Economic Accounting

Gender Statistics

Geographic Information

Industry Statistics

Information Technology

International Merchandise Trade

International Trade in Services

Population and Housing Censuses

Social Statistics

System of National Accounts



UNITED NATIONS

*Advancing the global statistical system*





## Statistical Classifications

Classifications form the basis for data collection and data dissemination in every area of statistics. They provide standardized concepts used to describe phenomena such as economic activity, products and expenditure. They are useful in determining similarities in these phenomena within and across countries and geographical regions. International reference classifications set standards for internationally comparable classifications, which serve as models for the development of corresponding national, multinational and regional statistical classifications and form the basis for internationally comparable data. They are tools that are used by national statistical organizations, international agencies, academia and other users, including the legal community.

### Classifications in UNSD

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- Within UNSD, the development of classifications has been an integral part of its work programme from the beginning. The first session of the Statistical Commission after its inaugural meeting saw a Committee on Industrial Classifications elected to formulate proposals for an international standard classification of industry. The Statistical Commission has accorded constant attention to this area, recognizing that an “essential requisite for any real comparability is the greatest possible extent of uniformity of definitions and classifications”. The Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications, with UNSD functioning as secretariat, provides global leadership in this area of statistics.
- Attention is paid to new trends in technology and differing economic structures over time. For example, a new section on Information and communication has been introduced into the latest version of ISIC that includes: the production and distribution of information and cultural products; the provisions and means to transmit these products; as well as information technology, data processing and other information service activities. Additionally, since services are absorbing an ever larger share of economic activity, this has been reflected in ISIC and the CPC through increasing their visibility - a larger part of the structure and more detailed categories have been committed to their representation.
- These classifications are designed to be used in their original state or can be adapted to national specifics. Using them instead of developing a national classification from scratch, saves national statistical offices financial and technical resources.

### Why adopt classifications standards?

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- International reference classifications function as “international languages” for communicating in statistics. If you wish your national data to be understood, appreciated, used or quoted widely, international reference classifications are an important tool.
- They facilitate international comparability by providing standardized sets of categories which can be assigned to specific variables. These categories’ definitions are widely accepted and understood.
- International reference classifications for which UNSD is custodian, such as the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC) and the Central Product Classification (CPC) are updated or revised periodically to ensure their relevance to current economic structures.

### Where does your country stand?

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Classifications are an essential mechanism for harmonization and coordination of data compilations. As a result, they facilitate a country’s inclusion in global statistical activities. When international reference standards are not employed, national statistical offices risk their data not being comparable with those of other countries and miss out on opportunities to see how their statistical indicators compare with overall world development. They forego the opportunity to promote their data, and subsequently their country, when their data cannot be published within the internationally recognizable frameworks. Classifications remain an important aspect of collaboration and coordination efforts in the presentation of data.

In preparing national statistics, the best possible tools should be used for describing the economy. This often means that the international standards must be adapted to national economic conditions for better relevance and applicability. This will facilitate the use of the classification as an appropriate tool for policy development and policy analysis. A majority of countries make use of the international reference classifications in this manner.

Recently revised classifications such as ISIC and CPC have been developed after extensive collaboration and consultation with counterpart classifications developers. Stakeholders such as national statistical offices, international agencies and a cross section of users have been involved in all phases of their development. This was most evident in the three rounds of world-wide consultation which were undertaken, where stakeholders provided input into the discussion regarding concepts, structure and detail of the classifications. The resulting structures and organization of the classifications are therefore truly global in nature.

## Technical cooperation – what is available?

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Technical assistance for classifications is available in a variety of forms:

**Website:** A United Nations Classifications Website is maintained as part of the UNSD website at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/class/>.

**Classifications Newsletter:** A newsletter is published bi-annually, providing information on the latest developments in the area of international statistical classifications.

**Classifications Hotline:** An electronic hotline is available at [chl@un.org](mailto:chl@un.org) to provide assistance with regard to the interpretation, structure and use of ISIC, CPC and the Classifications of Expenditure According to Purpose.

**Expert meetings:** The Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications meets biennially to set guidelines, review progress and coordinate international work in the development and implementation of statistical classifications. Its Technical Subgroup on ISIC and CPC has been meeting more frequently, on a biannual basis, to advance technical work in the revisions of ISIC and CPC.

**Workshops:** UNSD organizes workshops, sometimes jointly with regional commissions and other agencies of the United Nations, to provide countries with information on the development and application of economic and social classifications.

## What is the International Family of Economic and Social classifications?

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The International Family of Economic and Social Classifications is comprised of those classifications that have been registered into the United Nations Inventory of Classifications and have been reviewed and approved as guidelines by the United Nations Statistical Commission or other competent intergovernmental boards on such matters as statistics, economics, demographics, education, social welfare, labour, health, geography, environment or tourism. It also includes those classifications on similar subjects that are registered into the Family and are derived or related to the international classifications and are primarily, but not solely, used for regional or national purposes.

Membership in the Family confers legitimacy on the registered classifications. It certifies that such classifications are technically defensible and have adhered to basic principles in their development and implementation. They are therefore regarded as models in the area of statistical classifications.

There is a strong collaborative element to the development of classifications within the Family. The current round of international classification revisions, being completed in 2007/2008, includes ISIC Rev. 4, CPC Ver. 2, the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC Rev.4), the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08), the Balance of Payments Manual (BPM 6) and other classifications within the System of National Accounts. Collaboration in their development was sustained over the entire revision process. Correspondence tables between classifications within the Family are an integral part of these classifications and are being developed in the context of the revision process. They provide enhanced means for harmonization and coordination of statistics.

## Did you know?

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**Fact:** The Statistical Commission deliberated on statistical classifications at its first meeting after the inaugural session.

**Fact:** The development of statistical classifications for economic analysis was receiving the attention of the League of Nations even before the United Nations was set up.

**Fact:** The International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC) has been adopted as a standard for data collection since 1948.

**Fact:** The Statistical Commission has recommended that all Member states adapt their national classifications to be able to report data at least at the two-digit level of ISIC, Rev. 4 without loss of information.

**Fact:** The number of categories in ISIC has increased by 373% since the initial version was published in 1948, reflecting a growing need for more detailed comparable statistics.

Contact the Economic Statistics and Classifications Section for enquiries at [chl@un.org](mailto:chl@un.org).



## Dissemination of Global Statistics

Unlike the other four branches of the Statistics Division which focus their data collection and dissemination activities on one or a few specific areas of statistics, the scope of the dissemination work of the Statistical Services Branch spans across the full range of statistical themes.

### Historical Background

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The United Nations *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* (MBS) and the United Nations *Statistical Yearbook* (SYB) have been two steadfast fixtures of the Statistics Division's publications programme and the global statistical system. Originally prepared by and released as publications of the League of Nations in Geneva – the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* in 1919 and the then-entitled *International Statistical Year-Book* in 1927 – these statistical compendiums began being produced and issued on a regular basis by the United Nations Statistical Office in New York in 1947 and 1949 respectively. By the time the United Nations Statistical Commission meets for its 39<sup>th</sup> session, close to 800 editions of the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* and the *Statistical Yearbook* will have already gone to press. These two bilingual (English and French) publications have consistently figured at or near the top of the list of the “best sellers” of United Nations sales publications.

The *World Statistics Pocketbook*, the United Nations Common Database (UNCDB) and the new UN data access system (UN-data) are other popular outputs which also form part of the Statistics Division's “general” dissemination family, although their histories are considerably shorter than those of their predecessors. Like the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* and the *Statistical Yearbook*, the *World Statistics Pocketbook*, which was produced for the first time in 1976, the United Nations Common Database, which was launched in the late 1990s, and UN-data, which was launched in early 2008, also cover a wide variety of topics and are designed to serve a broad range of user groups.

### Data Compilation and Dissemination

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The statistical products of the Branch aim at presenting in a consistent way, the most essential components of comparable statistical information so as to give a broad picture of economic and social processes. The data have been drawn not only from in-house sources such as the

databases of the various branches of the Statistics Division which are responsible for compiling demographic and social, energy, environment, industry, national accounts and trade statistics, but also from numerous other sources including UN agencies and other international, national and specialized organizations.

### Coverage, Dissemination Formats and Accessibility

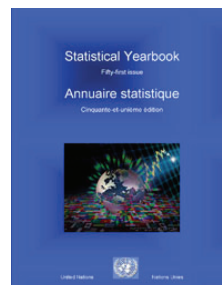
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#### *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*



Current statistics for the latest 18 months are presented in over 50 tables in the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* on the following topics: population, prices, employment and earnings, energy, manufacturing, transport, construction, international merchandise trade and finance, with annual averages of the months for the last six years shown as well. The data cover more than 200 countries and areas of the world. The *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* is available in hard copy as well as online at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mbs/>. It was, in fact, one of the first international statistical publications to become available on the Internet. Access to the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics Online* is free with a paid subscription to the print version.

#### *Statistical Yearbook*



The *Statistical Yearbook* presents, in its 70 or so tables, annual data ranging from one to ten years on over 200 countries and areas of the world. The topics covered are: agriculture, balance of payments, culture and communication, development assistance, education, energy,

environment, finance, industrial production, international merchandise trade, international tourism, labour force, manufacturing, national accounts, nutrition, population, prices, research and development, transport, and wages.

The *Statistical Yearbook* is a sales product available in hard copy. Beginning this year, one sample page of each of the tables from the most recent *Yearbook* is available on the new *Statistical Yearbook* website at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/syb>. Many of the *Statistical Yearbook* series are included as well in the United Nations Common Database.

## World Statistics Pocketbook



The *World Statistics Pocketbook* presents over 50 key indicators on more than 200 countries and areas of the world on the following topics: population, economic activity, agriculture, industry, energy, international trade, transport, communications, gender, education and the environment. The time coverage is one or two years. The *World Statistics Pocketbook* is a popular sales product available in hard copy; the data series contained therein,

however, form part of the new web-based dissemination system UN-data, which is free of charge.

## UN Common Database



The coverage of the United Nations Common Database is very comprehensive, with annual data on over 200 countries and areas of the world from 1950, whenever available, to the most recent year, on numerous topics including agriculture, balance of payments, culture and communication, development assistance, economic activity, education, energy, environment, finance, gender, industrial production, international merchandise trade, international tourism, labour force, manufacturing, national accounts, nutrition, population, prices, research and development, transport, and wages. The UN Common Database is available free of charge online at [http://unstats.un.org/unsd/cdb/cdb\\_help/cdb\\_quick\\_start.asp](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/cdb/cdb_help/cdb_quick_start.asp).

## Metadata and Quality

Comprehensive documentation on the data sources of the statistics presented is always provided. Technical notes on concepts, definitions, classifications and methodology as well as information on where to find more details from the data sources is given, in accordance with the Principles Governing International Statistical Activities, which recommends that “Concepts, definitions, classifications, sources, methods and procedures employed in the production of international statistics are ... made transparent for the users”. The team working on these products constantly strives to ensure that the selected data disseminated by the Statistical Services Branch are those of high relevance, accuracy, timeliness, accessibility, comparability and coherence.

The wide coverage and large number of different sources used in the production of the Statistical Services Branch’s outputs leads to a high level of data processing complexity and presents many challenges, due for example, to the many different source formats. As part of its standard quality control procedures, the Branch has implemented a number of automatic tools (such as macros, queries and validations). The Branch also maintains close communication with the data providing units.

## New and Noteworthy – UN-data



The new UN data access system (UN-data) is an online portal providing a single entry point to most UNSD data. Developed to meet the Division’s vision of providing an integrated information resource with current, relevant and reliable statistics free of charge to the global community, it makes it possible to search and browse several databases using one easy-to-use interface. UN-data searches over 55 million data points (as of end-January 2008), and more databases will continue to be added. Enter UN-data’s world of information at <http://data.un.org>.

Contact the Statistical Dissemination Section for enquiries at [statistics@un.org](mailto:statistics@un.org).



## Distributive Trade Statistics

The Distributive Trade Statistics programme of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) has evolved over more than fifty years, changing and responding to different data needs and the changing economic environments. This year the draft “*International recommendations for Distributive Trade Statistics 2008*” is being presented to the Statistical Commission for review and adoption.

### Historical overview

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Growing importance to statistics on distribution has been attached since the very first meetings of the Statistical Commission (SC), at which the Commission requested continued work on the subject of distribution censuses and on statistics on wholesale and retail trade, giving particular attention to the development of basic concepts and definitions suitable for use internationally. The first *Recommendations for the Statistics of the Distributive and Related Service Trades* establishing a uniform pattern for their measurement on a comparable basis were adopted at the 9<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission held in 1956.

The first international recommendations on distributive and related service trades served as a useful guide to countries which had already undertaken surveys on distributive trade. However, there were a number of problems which were not adequately dealt with in the recommendations and they needed to be reviewed and updated in light of the most recent national and international requirements and practices. In 1974, the SC adopted the updated *International Recommendations on Statistics of the Distributive Trades and Services* (IRS DTS). In the same year, UNSD issued a manual on the *Organization and Conduct of Distributive Trade Surveys* as a supplementary publication to the international recommendations. This manual is a practical guide to the planning and management of censuses and surveys of distributive trades and services, with particular attention to the problems faced by countries at an early stage of statistical development.

For a period of more than 30 years both documents have served as the international recommendations and guidelines for the collection, compilation and dissemination of distributive trade statistics.

### Recent Developments

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Since 1974, the statistics of distributive trades has not been on the agenda of the SC as a separate item. However, the Commission had considered a number of issues having direct impact on it:

- Revisions of the *United Nations System of National Accounts* which has implications on the concepts, definitions, classifications and terminology used in statistics of the distributive trades and services.
- Revisions of the *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC)* and *Central Product Classification (CPC)* particularly with respect to the boundaries of the service trades and classification of wholesale trade according to the type of goods sold.

During that period, the development of service statistics in general received an increased attention. A number of working groups deliberating on service statistics issues, including distributive trade have been established. Their work has made a significant methodological contribution to the development of the distributive trade statistics.

The appearance of new economic phenomena in distributive trade sector and the significant developments that have taken place since 1974 have necessitated a new revision and update of international recommendations on distributive trade to ensure and maintain their relevance.

Recognizing the growing economic importance of distributive trade, the UNSD has made the work on bringing the methodological and operational foundation of distributive trade statistics into line with the new economic developments, advances in statistical approaches and methodologies, and needs of users as one of its priority activities for the next years.

## Towards Revised International Recommendations for Distributive Trade Statistics

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In 2005 the UNSD launched a revision of the existing recommendations on distributive trade statistics with the objective to provide updated guidance to countries on the compilation and dissemination of data on wholesale and retail trade.

This initiative was broadly endorsed by the Statistical Commission at its 37<sup>th</sup> session in 2006. The Commission particularly recommended that the revision process should be carried out in close consultation with national statistical offices and other international organizations in order to reflect fully the specific needs and circumstances of various groups of countries.

At its 38<sup>th</sup> session in 2007 the Commission took note of the progress in preparation and the proposed outline of the revised international recommendations for distributive trade statistics.

In accordance with the Commission's request, the draft *International recommendations for Distributive Trade Statistics 2008 (IRDTS 2008)* is being presented to its 39<sup>th</sup> session in 2008 for review and adoption.

## The United Nations Expert Group on Distributive Trade Statistics

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The United Nations Statistics Division established an Expert Group on Distributive Trade Statistics (EG-DTS) in 2005 to assist and provide guidance in the revision of the existing UN recommendations for distributive trade statistics.

The Expert Group held two meetings at the UN headquarters in New York – the first meeting from 22 to 25 August 2005, and the second meeting from 16 to 19 July 2007.

During its second meeting the Expert Group reviewed, amended and endorsed the provisional draft *International Recommendations for Distributive Trade Statistics 2008* for its submission to the 39<sup>th</sup> session of the Statistical Commission for adoption. The Expert Group fully agreed on the relevance and the contents of the provisional draft *IRDTS 2008* and re-emphasized the need of flexibility in implementing the recommendations.

The *IRDTS 2008* is not intended to be prescriptive and should be implemented by national statistical offices in a way appropriate to their own circumstances, including the identified user needs, resources, priorities and respondent burden.

More information about the work of the EG can be found at: [http://unstats.un.org/unsd/Distributive\\_trade/distributive\\_trade.htm](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/Distributive_trade/distributive_trade.htm)

## The electronic discussion forum

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A password-protected website has been created to facilitate the communication between the EG-DTS members and sharing of relevant materials and draft chapters of the revised recommendations for distributive trade statistics. Through the discussion forum, the EG-DTS members reviewed the draft annotated outline and draft chapters of international recommendations and provided guidance on a number of conceptual issues.

## The global country consultations on the International Recommendations for Distributive Trade Statistics

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In accordance with the Commission's recommendation that the revision process should be carried out in close consultation with national statistical offices in order to reflect fully the specific needs and circumstances of various groups of countries, the Statistics Division conducted three global country consultations on modalities and contents of the revised draft *IRDTS 2008*:

- In October 2006 on the draft annotated outline of the IRDTS;
- In June-July 2007 on the provisional draft IRDTS;
- In November-December 2007 on the draft *IRDTS 2008*.

Countries gave their overwhelming support to the UNSD for its initiative and welcomed the coordinated manner, transparency and involvement of all interested parties in the revision process. They highly appreciated the work accomplished and found the draft *IRDTS 2008* to be comprehensive in terms of structure and content, well organized and providing an adequate treatment of all aspects of distributive trade statistics.

The document as a whole and particular recommendations related to the collection, compilation and dissemination of distributive trade statistics were strongly supported. Countries considered the revised recommendations a useful guidance for producers as well as users of statistical information. As achieving harmonization and international comparability of data on distributive trade statistics and implementing the integrated approach to data collection are one of the main objectives of the revision, a particular advantage of the *IRDTS 2008* is that the concepts, definitions and methodological approaches in it are fully harmonized with other existing statistical standards.



## Draft International Recommendations for Distributive Trade Statistics 2008

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The *Draft International Recommendations for Distributive Trade Statistics 2008* presented to the 39<sup>th</sup> session of the Statistical Commission has been prepared by UNSD following the conclusions of the first and second meetings of the United Nations Expert Group on Distributive Trade Statistics. The draft incorporates inputs from national statistical offices and international organizations received during global country consultations on its contents conducted during the period October 2006 - December 2007. The preliminary version of this draft was endorsed by the Expert Group at its second meeting.

The *Draft IRDTS 2008* has been developed within the context of integrated approach to compilation of basic economic statistics and it is fully harmonized with the recommendations of other recently updated international statistical standards such as the *International Recommendations for Industrial Statistics 2008 (IRIS 2008)* being updated in parallel with IRDTS 2008 and the *System of National Accounts, 2008 (2008 SNA)*, *International Standard Industrial Classification, Rev.4 (ISIC, Rev.4)*, and *Central Product Classification, Ver.2 (CPC, Ver.2)*. It covers all aspects of collection, compilation and dissemination of distributive trade statistics. It provides a more comprehensive methodological framework as it encompasses both annual and short-term statistics. It is also considerably expanded with the inclusion of new topics dealing with data sources and data compilation methods, approaches to data quality assessment, metadata and dissemination policies.

## Looking ahead

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During its 37<sup>th</sup> session the Statistical Commission advised that the Statistics Division should develop practical guidance on the compilation of distributive trade statistics, including a description of good practices. The Expert Group on Distributive Trade Statistics during its second meeting also identified the need to go further than the recommendations for distributive trade statistics contained in the *IRDTS 2008*. In compliance with the Commission's advice and with the aim of improving the international comparability and enhancing capacities of developing countries, the UNSD plans to prepare two follow-up manuals to complement the *IRDTS 2008: The Distributive Trade Statistics: Compilers Manual* and the *Indices of Distributive Trade Statistics: A Handbook of Good Practice*. To initiate the process of their drafting the UNSD prepared draft annotated outlines and sent them for comments to members of the Expert Group

To promote the implementation of the *IRDTS 2008* and assist countries with it, the UNSD plans to organize a number of technical assistance activities for developing countries such as training workshops.

Development of a UNSD database and dissemination of distributive trade statistics in accordance with the *IRDTS 2008* as well as collection of national practices on distributive trade statistics are also envisaged as part of the implementation programme.

Following the advice of the EG-DTS members, UNSD will keep alive the electronic discussion forum on distributive trade statistics as it is expected that it will be further developed and extended to increasingly become a knowledge-based platform for compilation and dissemination of distributive trade statistics.





## Energy Statistics

In the past 60 years the Statistical Commission has often discussed energy statistics, endorsing energy data collection efforts of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD). Today, UNSD plays a pivotal role in global energy statistics, focusing primarily on developing methodologies, collecting and disseminating global energy data and indicators, promoting collaboration with international and regional organizations, and fostering technical cooperation with the United Nations Member States.

### Historical Overview

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UNSD began regular dissemination of country and global energy statistics in 1952, with its first international time series “World Energy Supplies in Selected Years, 1929–1950.” Traditionally, UNSD has also been involved in developing concepts and methods of energy statistics, to ensure international comparability of energy data.

The current publications on methodology are:

- Studies in Methods - Series F No. 29: Concepts and Methods in Energy Statistics, with Special Reference to Energy Accounts and Balances - A Technical Report (1982) (Sales no: E.82.XVII.13)
- Studies in Methods - Series F No. 44: Energy Statistics: Definitions, Units of Measure and Conversion Factors (1987) (Sales no. E.86.XVII.21)
- Studies in Methods - Series F No. 56: Energy Statistics: A Manual for Developing Countries (1991) (Sales No. E.91.XVII.10)

The United Nations Statistical Commission at its 36th Session (1-4 March 2005) discussed a programme review on energy statistics prepared by Statistics Norway. The Commission, during its deliberations, recognized the need for revising the existing international recommendations in this area of energy statistics.

Following the Commission’s decision, the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics was established with a mandate to review and contribute to the revision of the United Nations Handbooks and Manuals. In support of this revision process, an Intersecretariat Working Group on Energy Statistics (InterEnerStat) was created with the objective to facilitate the institutional coordination among various organizations active in energy statistics.

### Methodological Developments

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UNSD is focusing now on the preparation of concrete outputs which would meet the Commission’s requirements. In particular, UNSD decided to review and consolidate the revised recommendations on energy statistics and accounts, which merit adoption by the Commission, into two documents, namely the International Recommendations for Energy Statistics (IRES) and the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting for Energy (SEEA-E).

IRES will focus on a list of data items, concepts, definitions and classifications for energy statistics covering flows and stocks (over- and under-ground) in physical and monetary terms as well as on data sources and compilation strategies, data quality, metadata and dissemination of energy statistics including the core tables. The SEEA-E will provide the international statistical standard for energy accounts consisting of agreed concepts, definitions, classifications and inter-related tables and accounts. IRES and SEEA-E are seen by UNSD as two complementary documents and their preparation will be fully coordinated. While IRES will comply to the extent possible with the SEEA-E conceptual structure and data needs, SEEA-E will develop its accounting standards on the basis of the IRES (e.g., using IRES definitions of data items and classifications of energy products and flows).

IRES is to be drafted in close cooperation with the Oslo Group on energy statistics and InterEnerStat and SEEA-E is to be drafted in consultation with the London Group and the Oslo Group under the auspices of the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental- Economic Accounts. Additional guidance on more practical/ technical matters (e.g., good practices, country case studies, etc.) to assist countries in implementation of IRES and SEEA-E is to be provided in Energy Statistics Compilers Manual (ESCM). ESCM is seen as compilation guidance and, as such, is not supposed to go through the formal adoption by the Commission. It is foreseen as a ‘live document’ being electronically maintained and periodically updated as needed.

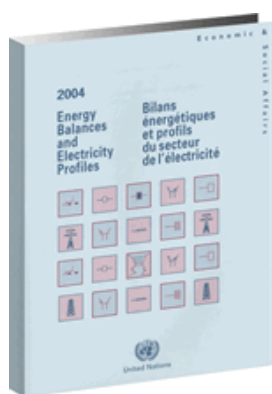
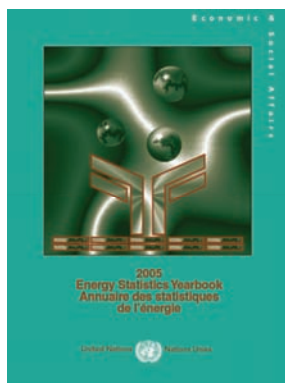
## Data collection and dissemination

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UNSD currently collects energy statistics annually from 212 countries and territories, excluding those covered by the joint OECD/IEA-UNECE-EUROSTAT energy statistics questionnaire. The UNSD questionnaire covers production, transformation, trade, intermediate and final consumption (end-use) of primary and secondary conventional, non-conventional, new and renewable sources of energy. It is sent, for update and completion, to national statistical offices, ministries of energy, or other national authorities responsible for energy statistics.

Every year in October, countries receive questionnaires for the previous year, pre-filled with data from the past years. The completed and updated questionnaires go through a rigorous process of validation before being used as the primary source for the Energy Statistics Database. Estimates are made when data is not available from the countries' national authorities. The response rate to the questionnaire has traditionally been low in Africa and certain parts of Asia. UNSD makes continuous efforts to change this.

As mentioned, the main publications are the Energy Statistics Yearbook and the Energy Balances and Electricity Profiles. Selected energy statistics are also published in the United Nations Statistical Yearbook and the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics. UNSD focuses on developing countries when compiling the energy balances. The Energy Statistics Yearbook is a comprehensive collection of international energy statistics that provides a global framework of comparable data on long-term trends in the supply and demand of mainly commercial energy. The yearbook contains data not only in the original units of the energy commodities, but also, using conversion coefficients, in common units: tons of coal equivalent, tons of oil equivalent, or terajoules, providing comparable data of the global energy production and usage in a country. The electricity profiles give detailed information on electricity generation and use.



The Energy Statistics Database provides input to the work on sustainable development, the United Nations Human Development Report and regional publications compiled by the United Nations regional commissions. It also supplies energy data for CO<sub>2</sub> emission estimates.

## International Cooperation and Technical Assistance

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UNSD is an active participant in a number of international initiatives, such as:

- The Oslo Group on Energy Statistics, a forum for countries to discuss methodological issues, contributing to the methodological development of energy statistics. The Group is now working on updating the UNSD energy statistics manuals, with the goal of harmonizing energy statistics compilation at international level. The Group works through electronic discussion forums, in addition to annual meetings.
- The monthly oil statistics initiative (JODI), a cooperative effort of seven international organizations (APEC, EUROSTAT, OECD/IEA, IEFS, OLADE, OPEC and UNSD) to report m-1 or m-2 data on crude oil and selected petroleum products on a regular basis to support the oil market transparency and the user-consumer dialogue.
- International cooperation in the area of energy statistics with OECD/IEA, EUROSTAT, OPEC, OLADE, the World Energy Council, APEC, International Sugar Organization and other inter-governmental organizations and NGOs. It also collaborates with the United Nations regional commissions and United Nations specialized agencies, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Workshops on the compilation of energy statistics have been organized in those regions where the availability of energy statistics is limited, mainly in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. These workshops assist statisticians and energy specialists in developing to improve their knowledge of energy statistics; and increase the ability of countries to provide annual and monthly energy data for their governments, policy and decision makers, as well as for international organizations, including UNSD and to facilitate regional cooperation between the participating countries.

## Information on the web

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Energy statistics can be found on the website of UNSD at <http://unstats.un.org>. The energy statistics database is accessible online through UN Data at <http://data.un.org>. The data are also available in electronic format upon request at: [energy\\_stat@un.org](mailto:energy_stat@un.org).

Contact address: UNSD Energy Statistics Section, 2 UN Plaza, DC2-1414, New York, NY 10017, USA  
Fax: 1-212-963-0623  
E-mail: [energy\\_stat@un.org](mailto:energy_stat@un.org)

## Environment statistics

Environment statistics describe the state and changes of the environment, covering the media of the natural environment (air and climate, water, land, soil and subsoil), the biota within the media, and human settlements. Environment statistics are integrative in nature, measuring human activities and natural events that affect the environment, the impacts of these activities and events, social responses to environmental impacts, and the quality and availability of natural resources.

### Background

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The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm, June 1972) was the first global conference to signal that environmental concerns had increasingly become the subject of mainstream socioeconomic policies. The Conference gave the impetus, both at the national and international levels, to the development of environment statistics as a new field of official statistics. The first initiatives pertaining to the development of environment statistics at the international level stemmed from two meetings of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) in 1973. The need for developing international recommendations or guidelines for a system of environment statistics as a long-term objective was recognized.

The second major global conference in the environmental field was the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) (Rio de Janeiro, June 1992) where a groundbreaking consensus was achieved that strategies of sustainable development should integrate environmental issues, supported by environmental and socioeconomic data, into development plans and policies. Specific recommendations by UNCED's Agenda 21 to the United Nations Statistical Division referred to the development and implementation of integrated environmental and economic accounting and indicators of sustainable development.

Ten years later the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) (Johannesburg, August 2002) put the emphasis on reaching specific targets in specific time frames and monitoring progress, thus reaffirming the need for bridging the gap in mechanisms and instruments such as data, statistics, indicators and

integrated information systems, that measure and track progress.

Given the global environmental concerns, a draft programme of international work in environment statistics was first submitted to the Statistical Commission at its eighteenth session in 1974.

### Methodological Work

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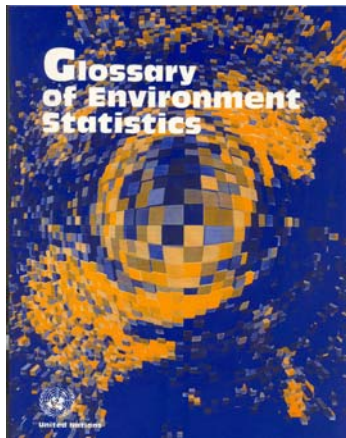
Various national and international efforts were made during the 1970s toward developing a system or framework for environment statistics. These efforts were surveyed by the United Nations Statistics Division and showed that countries differed widely in developing and organizing environment statistics. Four basic approaches emerged which were the media approach, the stress-response approach, the resource accounting approach and the ecological approach. The results were published in the *Survey of Environment Statistics: Frameworks, Approaches and Statistical Publications* in 1982.

Based on national and international work as described in the Survey, UNSD developed a *Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES)*, published in 1984, which presented a systematic approach to the organization and development of environment statistics. The FDES is a combination of the media and stress-response approaches. It was accompanied by two reports which described detailed sets of statistical variables within the FDES entitled *Concepts and Methods of Environment Statistics: Human Settlements Statistics* published in 1988 and *Concepts and Methods of Environment Statistics: Statistics of the Natural Environment* published in 1991. The *Glossary of Environment Statistics*, a quick reference tool for terms and definitions relevant to environmental data production and use, was published by UNSD in 1997.

While work at UNSD concentrated on conceptual frameworks, the ECE Statistics Division pioneered work on standard statistical classifications in different areas of environment statistics and their implementation in pilot data collections for the ECE region. Classifications were developed for land use, water use, ambient air quality, surface freshwater and marine water quality, wastes, fauna, flora and habitat statistics as well as for environmental protection activities. Environment statistics programmes also started at OECD and later at Eurostat, focusing on data collection and indicator development.

Current methodological work includes the development of the International Recommendations for Water Statistics that will provide an agreed list of variables, concepts, definitions, classifications and tabulations for water statistics.

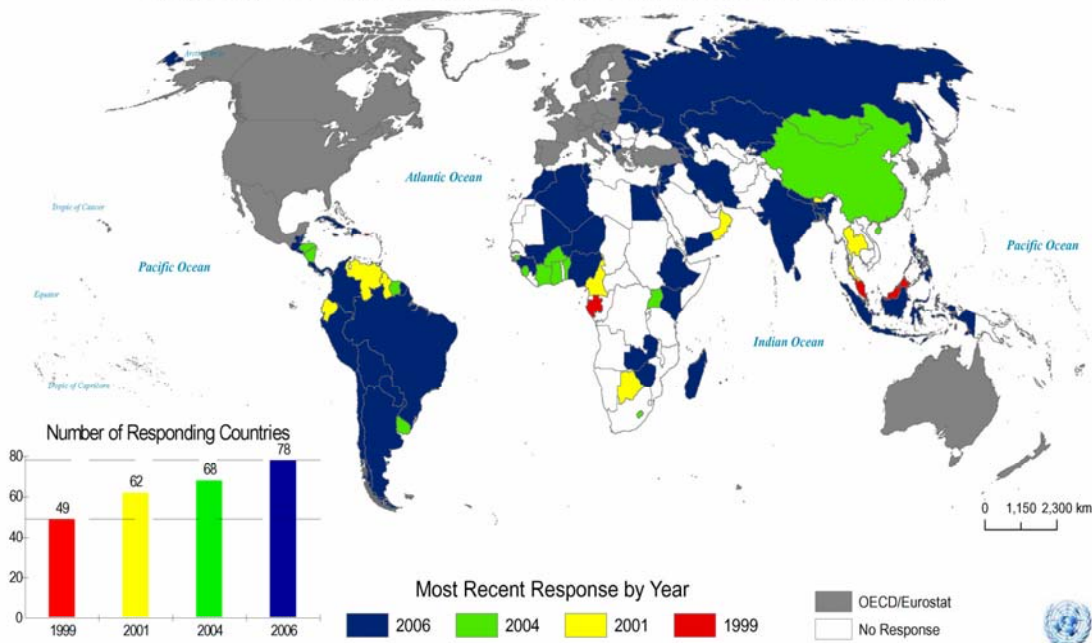
A new and important component of the methodological work is the development of a framework and agenda for climate change statistics. As a first step, a high level international conference on climate change and official statistics will be held in April 2008.



## Data Collection and Dissemination

The Statistical Commission in 1995 approved the proposal by the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Advancement of Environment Statistics that UNSD carry out a global compilation of environmental indicators from national statistical services, based on a core set of indicators. UNSD embarked on the collection of environment statistics from national statistical offices in 1999, covering all non-OECD countries. The data collection has since been established on a biennial basis as part of UNSD's data collection programme. UNEP joined the data collection in 2004. The next round of data collection will take place in March 2008.

### Coverage of UNSD Environment Statistics Data Collection



The UNSD/UNEP Questionnaire on Environment Statistics covers the areas of water, air, land and waste. Following a thorough validation process selected data sets, together with data from OECD, Eurostat and other sources, are published on the UNSD Environment Statistics website.

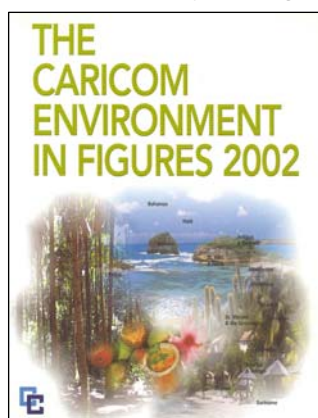
Response rates vary strongly by region. The best response rates are from Latin America and the Caribbean and Eastern Europe. Africa, Western Asia, Asia and the Pacific show low response rates.

While the number of countries responding to the Questionnaire has increased by almost 60 percent since 1999, many countries still have only scattered data and are able to reply only on a limited number of variables. Continuous efforts in training and capacity building are needed to improve the situation in countries.

## Technical Cooperation

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UNSD has organized and/or facilitated several international, regional, sub-regional and national training workshops, meetings and seminars in the field of environmental statistics and indicators. In addition, technical assistance in environment statistics through statistical capacity building projects was provided in the



CARICOM, ESCWA and ECOWAS regions. Within these projects, several activities were undertaken including workshops, inter-country study tours, and direct technical assistance to selected countries. A major output of the CARICOM project was a regional publication entitled *The CARICOM Environment in Figures 2002*. The ESCWA and

ECOWAS projects resulted in the publication of detailed assessments of the situation of environment statistics in the countries of these two regions. As part of the ECOWAS project, a strategic *Framework for Strengthening Capacity in the Development and Institutionalisation of Environment Statistics in the ECOWAS Region* was also developed and was endorsed by the ECOWAS Technical Commission on Statistics.

UNSD is currently developing a long-term training programme to assist countries in establishing environment statistics as part of their official statistics system. Another ongoing activity that covers a series of

training workshops is focusing on the development of an agreed core set of environmental indicators for Africa.

## Coordination

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The Statistical Commission at its thirty-fourth session empowered UNSD to convene an Intersecretariat Working Group on Environment Statistics to coordinate and harmonize the development of standards, methods, data collection, dissemination, training and capacity building programmes in environment statistics and thus firmly anchor environment statistics as part of official statistics both at the national and international levels. The permanent members of the Working Group are those organisations that have well-established international programmes on environment statistics (current members are UNSD, UN-ECE, UNEP, OECD, Eurostat and FAO). The Working Group also works through thematic sub-groups such as the Subgroup on Water Statistics which was established to foster closer collaboration between the parties involved in the collection and compilation of statistics on the quantitative and qualitative aspects of freshwater resources and their use. Another subgroup on land use and land cover statistics will be set up in 2008 to work on the harmonization of classifications used in these subject areas. The Working Group organized the International Work Session on Water Statistics in 2005 and pooled resources for several training and capacity building activities.

## Information on the Web

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Information on environment statistics can be found at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/environment/default.htm>

## Contact address

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Environment Statistics Section  
United Nations Statistics Division  
2 UN Plaza, DC2-1418  
New York, NY 10017  
United States  
Fax: +1 212 963 0623  
E-mail: [envstats@un.org](mailto:envstats@un.org)







## Environmental-Economic Accounting

Environmental-economic accounting brings together economic and environmental information in a common framework to measure the contribution of the environment to the economy and the impact of the economy on the environment. The System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) is a satellite system of the 1993 System of National Accounts (1993 SNA). By using common concepts, definitions and classifications, the SEEA provides a transparent information system for strategic planning and policy analysis which can be used to identify more sustainable paths of development.

### Historical overview of environmental-economic accounting

Environmentally sound and sustainable socio-economic development has received increased attention from the international community, stimulated in particular by the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987). In parallel, during the eighties and early nineties, joint workshops, organized by UNEP and the World Bank, set out to examine the feasibility of physical and monetary accounting in the areas of natural resources and the environment.

A consensus emerged in the workshops to the effect that enough progress had been achieved to develop the links between environmental-economic accounting and the System of National Accounts (SNA), and to elaborate certain aspects of environmental accounting in the 1993 SNA.

### Satellite accounts in 1993 SNA

The 1993 SNA includes a chapter on satellite accounts (chapter XXI) a large part of which is dedicated to environmental-economic accounting. The satellite approach expands the analytical capacity of national accounts without overburdening the central framework of the SNA. The Statistical Commission in its twenty-sixth session in 1991 endorsed the satellite approach and requested that the concepts and methods of integrated environmental and economic accounting be developed by means of satellite accounts.

The satellite approach was confirmed by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) (Rio de Janeiro, 1992). Agenda 21 included a programme area on “establishing systems for integrated environmental and economic accounting in all member States at the earliest date”. It recommended “expanding the existing systems of national economic accounts in order to integrate

environment and social dimensions in the accounting framework”. (UNCED para.8.42).

In his Millennium Report the Secretary-General encourages governments “to consider the SEEA carefully and identify ways to incorporate it into their own national accounts” (‘We the Peoples’, 2000).

### SEEA – 1993

In 1993 the United Nations published the Handbook of National Accounting: Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting (SEEA). The discussion of concepts and methods had not come to a final conclusion and the handbook was issued as an “interim” version.

### London Group on Environmental Accounting

After the publication of the SEEA-1993, several developing and developed countries started experimenting with the compilation of the SEEA. In particular the London Group on Environmental Accounting, one of the city groups established under the auspices of the UN Statistical Commission and composed of experts from countries and international agencies active in the field was created in 1994. The objectives of the London Group are to advance methodologies in environmental-economic accounting and provide a forum for practitioners to share their experiences in the SEEA development and implementation.

### SEEA – 2003

The Statistical Commission at its twenty-ninth session, in 1997, requested the London Group to collaborate with UNSD on the revision of the SEEA. The revised Handbook of National Accounting: Integrated Environmental and Economic

Accounting, Rev. 1 (SEEA-2003) was built upon a wide consultation process that concluded in 2002. It has been issued in 2003 by the United Nations, the European Commission, the International Monetary Fund, the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, and the World Bank.

## UNCEEA

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In 2005, in response to the request of countries to mainstream environmental-economic accounting and related statistics, the Statistical Commission in its thirty-sixth Session established the United Nations Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA).

The UN Committee's objectives are to (a) mainstream environmental-economic accounting and related statistics; (b) elevate the SEEA to an international statistical standard by 2010; and (c) advance the SEEA implementation in countries.

The UNCEEA is chaired by Mr. Walter Radermacher, President of the Federal Statistical Office Germany and UNSD serves as its permanent Secretariat.

## SEEAF

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In support to the SEEA-2003, in 2005, the Handbook of National Accounting: Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting for Fisheries (SEEAF) was issued jointly by UNSD and the FAO Fisheries Department. The handbook provides guidelines on environmental-economic accounting for capture fisheries and aquaculture and illustrates examples of compilation and uses of these accounts for selected countries.

## SEEAW

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The System of Environmental-Economic Accounting for Water Resources (SEEAW) was prepared in collaboration with the London Group. The UN Statistical Commission at its thirty-eighth session in 2007 adopted Part I of the SEEAW as an interim international statistical standard, recognizing significant demand from the users' community and encouraged its implementation in countries. The SEEAW provides a conceptual framework for organizing the hydrological and economic information in a coherent and consistent framework.

Work is underway on a compilation guide on water statistics, which will facilitate the compilation of water accounts.

## User-Producer Conferences

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A User-Producer Conference: Water Accounting for Integrated Water Resource Management (Voorburg, the Netherlands, May 2006), the first of a series, was organized under the auspices of the UNCEEA. The Conference brought together both users and producers

of water accounts. It endorsed the SEEAW as the much needed conceptual framework for integrated water resources management. More info:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/envaccounting/ceea/upcWater.asp>

## Global Assessment

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Phase 1 of the Global Assessment of Environment Statistics and Environmental-Economic Accounting was conducted in 2006 to assess the current status of national implementation of Environment Statistics and of Environmental-Economic Accounting Programmes.

Phase 2 of the Global Assessment consists of several follow-up questionnaires focusing on specific subject areas identified in Phase 1. A module on energy statistics and balances has been completed. The analysis is available on our website (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/envaccounting>). A module on energy and emission accounts as well as a module on water statistics and accounts has been sent out at the end of 2007.

## Dissemination

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To share best-practices, under the auspices of the UNCEEA, a web-based knowledge platform has been set-up (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/envaccounting/ceea>).

The platform features events and activities in the field of environmental accounting and a searchable archive of publications. The archive contains over 300 methodological publications and country practices on environmental-economic accounting with the aim of facilitating the work of statisticians, researchers and practitioners in the field.

The first edition of the *SEEA News and Notes*, a newsletter that will serve as the official vehicle to widely disseminate on-going activities in environmental-economic accounting, is also posted on the website.

## Technical assistance

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UNSD has been involved in a number of activities to provide assistance to developing countries:

- In collaboration with UNDP, UNEP, and the World Bank, several country projects in the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Morocco, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, Indonesia, Ghana, and Colombia;
- Training workshops in all regions; and
- More recently, technical assistance programmes on water accounting, including China, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Jordan and South Africa.

An Inter-regional Adviser has been appointed in UNSD to assist countries on the implementation of the SEEA and in particular on the implementation of the SEEAW.

For enquiries please contact the **Environmental-Economic Accounts Section** at: [seea@un.org](mailto:seea@un.org).

## Gender statistics

The Statistics Division's work on gender statistics was initiated in the early 1980s. The programme has been geared to users' needs, and has provided technical support to women's and gender units of the United Nations funds and programmes, statistical units of regional organizations, and national statistical offices.

### Introduction

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The Statistics Division's work on gender statistics was initiated in the early 1980s, mid-way into the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (1976-1985). The programme began in response to the call of the first International World Conference on Women, in 1975, for more statistics on the status of women, and has been shaped by demands from three subsequent international conferences on women, and other conferences, such as the World Summit for Social Development (1995) and the International Conference on Population and Development (1994). Following this initial orientation, the programme has been geared to users' needs, and has provided technical support to women's and gender units of the United Nations funds and programmes, statistical units of regional organizations, and national statistical offices (NSOs).

The gender statistics programme was designed to address three main problem areas:

- The need for data collection systems to take gender issues into account in all stages of data production;
- The limited availability and accessibility of gender statistics;
- The under-utilization of gender statistics.

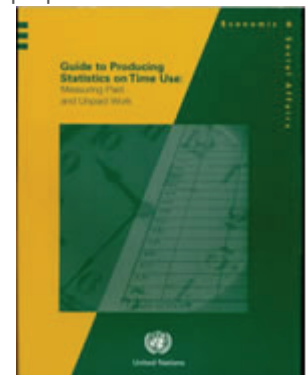
These problems have, to a large extent, been addressed with activities geared towards the review of concepts and methods; compilation and dissemination of gender statistics; technical assistance; and training. The success of the programme in responding to users needs has given the Statistics Division an unparalleled recognition in this field, resulting in strong partnerships with counterpart agencies, and coordinated support for the development of gender statistics.

### Methodological work

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The methodological work in gender statistics has involved reviewing concepts and methods currently used in the collection of official statistics, and identifying ways of integrating a gender perspective in order to avoid biases in the data collection, presentation and dissemination. Several manuals and reports have been prepared from these reviews.

The first was *Improving Concepts and Methods for Statistics and Indicators on the Situation of Women* (1984), which identified potential biases for which additional guidance was needed. Others include *Improving Statistics and Indicators on Women Using Household Surveys* (1988), and *Methods of Measuring Women's Participation in the Informal Sector* (1990).



Another aspect of the work is the development of methods to collect data on particular gender issues of concern, such as the *Guide to Producing Statistics on Time Use: Measuring Paid and Unpaid Work* (2005).

In order to ensure the mainstreaming of gender into the data collection process, the Division is also reflecting a gender perspective into the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*, technical reports, methodological handbooks and guidelines, as they are being revised. For example, in the recently adopted *Principles and Recommendations, Rev 2* (forthcoming), gender considerations have substantially been taken into account.

## Compilation and dissemination of gender statistics

The compilation and dissemination component of the programme aims at making gender statistics and indicators readily available in formats and media that are not only easily accessible to users, but also well understood. Drawing from official data collected from countries by the Statistics Division and other United Nations agencies (funds and programmes), a wide range of outputs which address different audiences and areas of policy concern have been produced. This work began with a study of basic indicators required to examine gender differentials in various areas of policy concern, and led to the publication of the report *Compiling Social Indicators on the Situation of Women* (1984). One year later, on the occasion of the Third World Conference on Women, held in Nairobi in 1985, the Division issued the first compendium of indicators, "Selected Statistics and Indicators on the Status of Women", with an accompanying Wall Chart. This was followed by the publication and dissemination, in 1987, of the first global database on gender statistics (WISTAT). Between 1987 and 2000, four versions of the WISTAT database were issued.

Following technological advances, the Division expanded its dissemination programme with the introduction, in 1996, of an on-line resource, *Statistics and Indicators on Women and Men*, which presents the latest country-level data available in selected areas of gender concern. The data is accessible at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/indwm>.

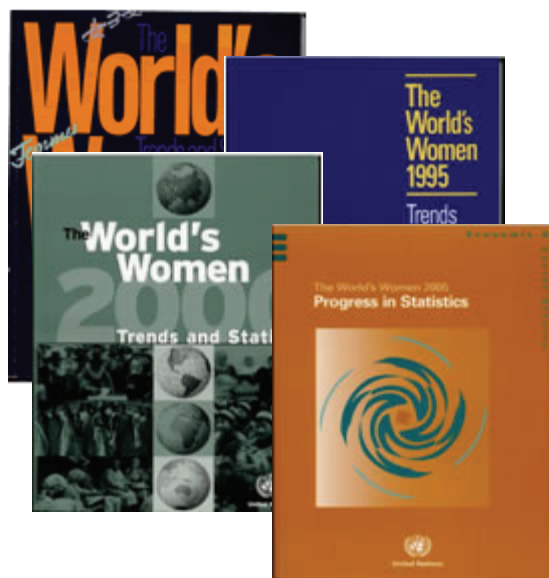


To further facilitate access to and enhance the visualization of key gender statistics and indicators, the

Division released at the end of 2007 a new product: GenderInfo 2007. This global database of country-level gender statistics and indicators uses DevInfo technology to provide users with an easy-to-use tool to visualize data through customizable tables, graphs and maps. GenderInfo is available in CD-ROM format and on-line at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/genderinfo/>



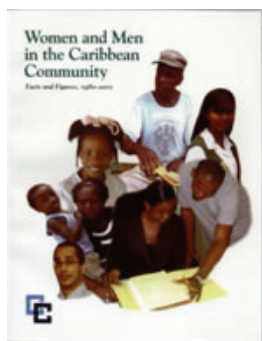
In 1991 another avenue of statistics dissemination was introduced, through the publication *The World's Women: Trends and Statistics, 1970-1990*. This maiden publication presented a statistical analysis of the situation of women (in comparison to men). Two subsequent issues in 1995 and 2000 provided updates with respect to both the coverage of gender issues and statistics, and highlighted gaps in the available data. The fourth issue, released in 2005, focused on the progress made in the production of gender statistics. This publication implicitly highlighted the wide variations in statistical capacity among countries. The next issue of *The World's Women* will be published in 2010.



## Technical cooperation and capacity-building

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The Statistics Division provides a variety of technical assistance in gender statistics to national statistical offices, regional programmes and United Nations agencies. This support, which has ranged from organizing training workshops at the interregional, regional and national levels, to providing direct technical assistance to countries, agencies and other institutions, has been critical, as few institutions have the skill to incorporate gender into their statistical activities. The initial efforts involved providing technical inputs in partnership with the United Nations International Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), to conduct a series of workshops. The first, a sub-regional seminar on “Training Users and Producers in Compiling Statistics and Indicators on Women in Development” was conducted in Harare, Zimbabwe in 1985, and materials from the seminar were published to serve as a resource for future workshops. Over a period of five years, several national and sub-regional workshops were organized to promote user-producer dialogue on user needs, the limitations in the concepts and methods, and the challenges in data collection. The focus of the workshops was subsequently directed to enhancing the capacity of national statistical offices to compile and disseminate gender statistics. A number of workshops, mainly sub-regional, have been organized in collaboration with regional and sub-regional organizations, for example, for the Pacific Islands (with INSTRAW), for Asian countries (with the Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific), for South-eastern African countries (with Statistics Sweden), for Northern Africa and Western Asian countries (with the Economic Commission of Western Asia), and for the Caribbean (with the Caribbean Community Secretariat). The latest workshop, organized in August 2007 in collaboration with the World Bank, brought together statisticians from countries in Africa, Europe and Asia and the Pacific to promote the sharing of knowledge and experiences across regions.



Another significant area of technical cooperation has been in the implementation of projects at the national and regional levels. In the early 1990s, the Division

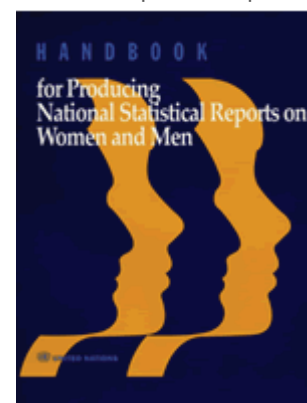
implemented a national project to create a gender statistics database in the Women’s Bureau of Kenya. The project was funded by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and involved the application of techniques developed through the WISTAT project, the conduct of workshops, and the use of materials developed by the Division to provide hands-on training for staff of the Kenya Women’s Bureau. A good example of a regional project was one that was implemented in the Caribbean region in the early 2000s. This regional project, funded under the UN Development Account, helped establish a programme on social and gender statistics in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat and provided training to all CARICOM member countries. Products generated by the project include the publication *Women and Men in the Caribbean Community: Facts and Figures, 1980-2001* (2003) and a database on social and gender statistics.

Ongoing technical assistance has also been provided upon request to institutions including United Nations departments, funds and programmes, national statistical offices and development partners, usually but not exclusively in the form of the Division providing resource persons for regional and national training workshops.

## Partnerships

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The gender statistics programme has evolved through producer-user cooperation, at the international and regional levels. Much of the Division’s accomplishments in this programme can be attributed to its successful cooperation with and the financial support of various agencies and development partners. While the Division has provided a lot of technical support to agencies, it has also received programming support from these and bilateral institutions. The Division’s initial work on concepts and methods and the resulting publications were undertaken in partnership with INSTRAW; and the WISTAT database was developed through funding from UNFPA. The database was the foundation for *The World’s Women* series, also a result of an interagency effort. Collaborating agencies provided both technical and financial contributions, with additional support from bilateral institutions, and national governments. The *Handbook for Producing National Statistical Reports on Women and Men* was produced under the project of the Gender in Development



Subgroup of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (comprised of several United Nations agencies); and the *Guide to Producing Statistics on Time Use* was prepared with financial contributions from UNDP and International Development Research Centre/Canada. In the early 1990s, leading up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, in Beijing, the technical cooperation activities were supported by the Norwegian government, which funded the post of “Technical Adviser in women in development”, and with supplementary funding from the two cited projects. The most recent activity “Interagency and Expert Group on the Development of gender Statistics”, held in New York, 12-14 December 2006, was organized in collaboration with UNFPA and the World Bank.

## A new programme orientation

The Division is in the process of reorganizing its gender statistics programme. Following the recommendations of the Interagency and Expert Group Meeting on the Development of Gender Statistics held in New York in December 2006, the Division is establishing a “Global Gender Statistics Programme” to advance gender statistics through the promotion of synergies among existing initiatives at the national, regional and global levels. The Programme was launched at the Global Forum on Gender Statistics held in Italy in December 2007. The Programme seeks to enhance the capacity of countries to collect, disseminate and use quality gender statistics and indicators in various areas of policy concern through the:

- Establishment of an Interagency and Expert Group;
- Development of a Global Gender Statistics and Indicators Database; and
- Development of training courses for adoption and adaptation at all levels

### **(a) Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS)**

The IAEG-GS has as main tasks to take stock, review progress, challenges and emerging needs, and propose actions to advance gender statistics at the international, regional, sub-regional and national levels.

### **(b) Global Gender Statistics and Indicators Database**

The Global Gender Statistics and Indicators Database has as main objective to improve access to national-level

indicators in the various areas of gender concern, including: population, households, health, education, work, and political participation. The current version of this database, named Gender Info 2007, was launched at the Global Forum on Gender Statistics, held in Italy in December 2007. The database will facilitate temporal and country comparisons in the situation of women and men in key areas of concern. It will also serve as a tool for monitoring improvements in the availability of national level data, and to identify data gaps.

### **(c) Development of training courses**

The primary goal of the courses is to strengthen the capacities of national statistical offices (NSOs) to produce gender statistics, as well as basic statistics, and of mid-management level practitioners, statisticians and users of statistics, policy makers and programme officers, etc. to use gender statistics in policy formulation, planning and monitoring and evaluation. At the request of the IAEG-GS, the Statistics Division will conduct a review of current training activities and an assessment of training needs to inform the training component of the Programme. The courses to be developed will be conducted in different contexts—in targeted workshops and seminars; in short-term training programmes, either as stand-alone or part of regular statistics training of varying duration; and for various target audiences.



## Geographic Information related activities

Since 1948, the United Nations has been promoting cartography, surveying and mapping, as well as geographical names through the organization of international and regional conferences and sessions on the standardization of geographical names, publications, training courses, and technical projects. The UN Statistics Division is the substantive office responsible for organizing and servicing these activities.

### Historical overview

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Following the recommendation of ECOSOC in 1948 that Governments of Member States stimulate surveying and mapping of their national territories and that the Secretary-General of the United Nations take appropriate action to further such efforts, a Committee of Experts on Cartography was appointed by the Secretary General to study the problem and advise upon the means of its implementation. The convening of regional cartographic conferences was recommended by the Committee, which met in March-April 1949, and the first regional conference was hosted the Government of India from 15 to 25 February 1955.

In 1959, ECOSOC Resolution 715A (XXVII) paved the way for a small group of experts to meet and provide technical recommendations on standardizing geographical names at the national and international levels. This meeting gave rise to the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names and to the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN), which meets in three sessions between Conferences to follow up the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Conferences.

UNGEGN functions through 23 geographical/linguistic divisions and through 10 working groups, addressing issues of training courses, digital data files and gazetteers, Romanization systems, country names, terminology, publicity and funding, toponymic guidelines, exonyms, pronunciation and promotion of Indigenous and Minority Group Names. Today, UNGEGN is one of the seven standing expert bodies of ECOSOC, with over 400 members from over 100 countries.

### International and regional conferences

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The United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names is held every five years, and the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN), meets between Conferences to follow up the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Conferences.

The United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific convenes every three years and the United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas meets every four years.

The latest meetings were:

- **United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names:** The ninth Conference was held in New York from 21 to 30 August 2007.
- **United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names:** The 25th session of UNGEGN was held in New York on 20 and 31 August 2007.
- **United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific: The 17<sup>th</sup> Conference was held in** Bangkok, Thailand, 18-22 September 2006.
- **United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas:** The 8<sup>th</sup> Conference took place in New York from New York, 27 June to 1 July 2005.

### Technical cooperation on geographic names, in cartography and Geographic Information System (GIS)

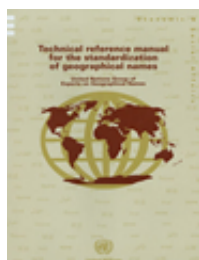
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UNSD is promoting the concept of National Spatial Data Infrastructure and stressing the use of geographic information in developing countries, organizes training courses, seminars, and expert group meetings on GIS, and collaborates with the UN Geographic Information Working Group.

## Methodological work

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- *Multilingual Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names* **available in the six UN official languages.**
- Handbook on GIS and digital mapping for population and housing censuses **available in the six UN official languages.**
- *Manual for the national standardization of geographical names* (2006) **available in the six UN official languages.**
- *Technical reference manual for the standardization of geographical names* (2007), **available in English only.**
- **The UNGEGN brochure, “Consistent use of place names”** (2001), **available in the six UN official languages.**
- **The UNGEGN 2nd brochure, “Geographical name as vital keys for accessing information in our globalized and digital worlds”,** (2007) **available in the six UN official languages.**
- **The UNGEGN Information Bulletin, published twice a year and disseminated through the website** (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo>).
- **Addendum to the UNGEGN Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names** (2007) **available in the six UN official languages.** (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo>).



## Names database

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UNSD has developed a geo-referenced database to store the names of countries and major cities in different languages. In addition, a web interface has been designed presenting the geographical information utilizing the services of a Web Map Server. The names are linked to a map offering information on the geographical location, the language, spelling and pronunciation on-line.

The geographical names are collected in cooperation with UNGEGN to ensure accuracy and reliability. Once the process of collecting and publishing of country names is complete, the focus will be drawn to major cities. Furthermore, the application development will continue to meet the requirements of a growing collection of geographical names.

## Standard Country or Area Codes and geographical regions for Statistical Use (M49)

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The M49 is a list of numerical and alphabetical codes for statistical use. As an aid to statistical data processing, a unique standard three-digit numerical code is assigned to each country or area and to each geographical region and grouping of countries or areas by the Statistics Division. Two- and three- digit alphabetical codes for the representation of names of countries or areas are assigned by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). This list of codes can be accessed at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49alpha.htm>.

### Information on the Web:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/>

### Contact address:

For further information on Geographical Names activities, please contact the UNGEGN Secretariat:

United Nations Statistics Division

Two UN Plaza DC2-1644

New York, NY 10017

Tel: (212) 963-0445

Fax: (212) 963-4569

E-mail: [zewoldi@un.org](mailto:zewoldi@un.org)



## Industry Statistics

Industry Statistics provide information on economic activity, particularly in the areas of mining, manufacturing and utilities. Although economic activity is understood to be much larger, including also the provision of services, the historical scope of “industry statistics” as a measurement of the goods-producing activities has not lost its importance. Such information may cover indicators that describe the state and growth of individual goods-producing branches of the economy and indicators that describe the outputs of the physical production.

### Industrial statistics and the UN

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The League of Nations was just about to take up industrial statistics when World War II erupted. It was only with the founding of the United Nations that industrial statistics appeared on the international level.

United Nations involvement in industrial statistics began in 1947 with the Report to the Economic and Social Council on the First Session of the Commission. The very first two recommendations of the Statistical Commission in that report mandated the Secretary-General to begin gathering national industrial classifications and metadata and to collate it into a report so that the Statistical Commission could prepare a programme of work in the field. Once these classifications were reviewed and a common UN classification was created, collection and dissemination of international industrial statistics could begin.

According to Michael Ward’s *Quantifying the World: UN Ideas and Statistics* (Indiana University Press: 2004), industrial statistics were a central concern in the post-World War II era: “Countries firmly believed that industrialization enhanced their power and status on the global political platform. Industrialization, it was widely thought, would win higher living standards for the working classes by raising the level of aggregate demand, increasing the total flow of output, and improving people’s well-being through an enhancement of their command over an expanded supply of material goods and services.” Industrialization could most easily be gauged through industrial statistics.

Work on industrial statistics within UNSD has included the production of world-wide comparable statistical information and the developing of methodology for adequately measuring the industrial sector.

An important part of this work was the undertaking of three *World Programmes of Industrial Statistics* in 1963, 1973 and 1983. These programmes served as benchmarks, provided a methodological basis and practical guidance for data collection at the national level and complemented the ongoing data collection on general industrial indicators and commodity production statistics.

Methodological guidelines that have been produced by UNSD include the *International Recommendations for Industrial Statistics* (Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 48, Rev.1), which define scope and methods used in industrial statistics. These recommendations have been revised in 2008 and provide new guidance for the compilation of industrial statistics.

Most recently, industrial statistics were taken up by the Statistical Commission in 2006 and 2007, when it was recommended that industrial statistics should be better integrated “with other statistics, such as services statistics,” and so the future should see increased attention paid to service statistics to complement the traditional industrial statistics.

### Industrial Commodity Statistics

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One of the main focuses of Industrial Statistics is the collection and dissemination of data on the production of major industrial commodities.

This data helps policymakers, businesses, academics and others to gauge both the absolute levels of production of the various commodities in each country, as well as long- and short-term trends in absolute terms. The data also offer insight into the major features of countries’ economics.

Data at UNSD are mainly collected through an annual questionnaire, sent to national statistical offices, which gather data through industrial censuses and surveys.

The 2005 *Industrial Commodity Statistics Yearbook* is the 39th annual compilation and is based on the data of the UNSD Commodity Production Statistics Database, which includes data beginning with 1950. The *Yearbook* provides production statistics in physical quantities and (for the first time) monetary value for about 500 industrial commodities (*up from 315 in the 1968 edition!*). It includes data for a ten-year period for about 200 countries and territories (*up from just 43 in the 1968 edition!*).

Through the 2004 edition of the *Industrial Commodity Statistics Yearbook*, commodities were classified according to a UN List of Industrial Products, developed within the framework of the 1973 World Programme on Industrial Statistics. This list defined commodities in terms of earlier versions of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) and was coded according to ISIC Rev.2.

A revised UN List of Industrial Products has been developed and entered into usage with the 2004 round of data collection. The revision was the result of work undertaken within UNSD and in consultation with a number of national and international agencies. This new list is based on the Central Product Classification (CPC) and enables the collection and dissemination of new series of commodity data, such as high technology commodities and pharmaceuticals, providing a better picture of today's economic production. The revised list also improves the links to existing product classifications, such as the CPC, the Harmonized System (HS) and the European Prodcom list, thus providing data producers with a better tool to identify products in their national setting and providing users with a better tool for linking production and trade-related data.

The complete List of Industrial Products is available on the UNSD industry statistics website.

## Indices of Industrial Production

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The Indices of Industrial Production (IIP) are the other main focus of Industry Statistics within UNSD. The IIP are a widely used tool to measure changes in the volume of industrial production over time, and they are also an important short-term economic indicator for the estimation of national accounts at constant prices. The IIP are also used by businesses and others interested in measuring the growth of national economies. UNSD started collecting data on IIP in 1953 and is the only international organization that produces aggregated IIP data at world level as well as by economic and geographical grouping.

Guiding the IIP is the *Manual on Index numbers of Industrial Production* (Statistical Papers, Series F, No.1), which is currently being revised and updated. The manual provides guidance on matters of basic concepts

and of statistical practice to individual countries compiling, or planning to compile, index numbers of production and assists in securing international comparability between national index numbers.

IIP data are collected through questionnaires sent to national statistics offices, and are published monthly, quarterly and yearly in the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* and the *UN Statistical Yearbook*. Data are currently compiled according to ISIC Rev.3, at the 2-digit level for the mining, manufacturing and utilities sectors.

The weights used in the calculation of the indices are updated in five year intervals and the base year in which the indices are published is changed at that time as well. The annual and quarterly indices are using 2000 as the base year (i.e. 2000=100%) as of the June 2007 edition of the MBS.

## General Industrial Statistics

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From 1953 to 1993, Industrial Statistics also handled general industrial statistics, including such indicators as number of establishments, number of employees, wages and value added per industry group per country. As of 1994, these indicators for the manufacturing sector were transferred to the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), which now collects and disseminates this data. Indicators for the mining and utilities sectors remained with UNSD and continue to be collected but not separately published.

## Publications

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The three primary publications of Industrial Statistics are:

- the ***Industrial Commodity Statistics Yearbook*** (covering a ten-year period);
- the **dataset of Industrial Commodity Statistics** CD-ROM (covering data starting with 1950); and
- the **General Industrial Statistics Dataset** CD-ROM (covering 1953-1993).

Customized subsets of the Industrial Commodity Statistics database are available. Please contact us directly or check the website for ordering information.

Monthly data for selected commodities are published in the ***Monthly Bulletin of Statistics***, which also features the Indices of Industrial Production. Annual data for selected commodities as well as the IIP are also published in the ***United Nations Statistical Yearbook***.

Prices and ordering information for Industry Statistics publications can be found at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/industry/publications.asp>.

**Contact the Economic Statistics and Classifications Section** for enquiries at: [industry@un.org](mailto:industry@un.org).



## Information Technology

The history of computerization of UN statistics started in 1965 when the United Nations New York Computing Section (NYCS) received the first IBM 7044/1401 mainframe computer system. Prior to this date mechanical punched card tabulators were used for tabulating and computing summary statistics. The UN Statistical Office soon realized the opportunity and by establishing the Computer Systems Development and Programming Section started to process data from reporting countries, most of which was received in magnetic tape or punched card format.

### The Mainframe era

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In 1971 the International Computing Centre (ICC) was created by a Memorandum of Agreement among the United Nations (UN), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Health Organization (WHO), pursuant to resolution 2741 (XXV) of the United Nations General Assembly.

ICC was created as an inter-organization facility to provide electronic data processing services for UN agencies and other users. UNSD became an active user on the ICC mainframe using SPSS Statistical Package for Social Sciences, SAS Statistical Analysis System, MAGACALC On-line spreadsheet, TAB68 Cross Tabulation System of National Bureau of Statistics, Sweden and the TPL Table Producing Language of US Bureau of Labor Statistics to process statistical data and produce yearbooks.



same time a mail function was added to UNSIS and enabled users to communicate with each other.

### The era of UNSIS

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By the 1980s UNSD created a complex mainframe system called the United Nations Statistical Information System (UNSIG) where all separated data records with different structures were converted to one standard fix length character time series databases. As well as the system produced publishing ready tables for practically all publications of the Statistical Office using the Table Producing Language (TPL) UNSIS was developed using PL1, but one of the modules – conversion different type of measurement was written with FORTRAN and part of the photocomposition module with ASSEMBLER.

In 1986 the UNSIS data retrieval part was redesigned and further developed to allow users, outside of the Statistical Office to access the stored information. At the

### The PC era

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Starting with the advent of IBM PCs in 1984 UNSD purchased the first PCs for processing statistical data and publishing statistical publications and a slow transition started from the mainframe to new paradigm of computing. In the early 1990's UNSD got its connection to the UNHQ computer network and from that moment all users got easy access to the mainframe from their own computers as well as at the same time email was introduced which created new opportunities for communication and data collection.

In 1996 UNSD established its presence on the Internet and started to disseminate statistical data from the very moment.

In May 1997 at an expert group meeting on applying new methods and technologies for statistical databases UNSD used Internet dissemination of meeting documents in PDF.

This was a highly successful experience and it was applied for the 1998 Statistical Commission meeting and later sessions.

By the mid 1990s it was clear that there will be no need for mainframe computer processing and processing can be moved to servers and PCs on Local Area Networks (LAN). The first client-server applications were created in 1997-1998 in the areas of national accounts and demography.

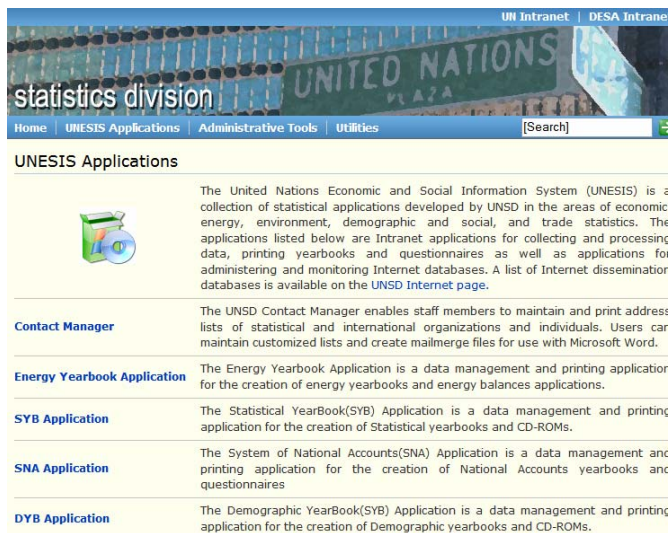
## The Internet era

In 1999 a new approach was tested for Internet data dissemination by creating the United Nations Common Database (UNCDB) an interactive database for statistical data on broad topics. At this time it became apparent that a new Intranet/Internet type of architecture would be the best solution for UNSD. In 2001 UNSD started a migration of all systems both client-server and mainframe based to Intranet/Internet platform and completed the migration of mainframe applications by December 31, 2005 when the last day of mainframe operations took place.

As of late 2007 all major statistical production systems are Internet/Intranet based providing enhanced capabilities for data collection, processing and dissemination. The computing infrastructure comprises of 10 servers for production and development with overall storage capacity of 5 Terabyte.

## Next steps

The history does not stop here UNSD is in the process of creating new products and services UNSD will be introducing the UNData Portal to the general public in 2008, providing easy access to a wide variety of statistics to everyone, treating statistics as public in the interest of social development.



For more information please contact: [statistics@un.org](mailto:statistics@un.org)

## International Merchandise Trade Statistics

The United Nations Statistics Division initiated this year a review of the recommendations for international merchandise trade statistics in view of globalization of the production and distribution processes, expansion of intra-firm trade, changes in legal environment and related statistical frameworks, and due to growing user needs for more detailed and timely data.

### Historical overview

Especially in the early sessions of the United Nations Statistical Commission, international merchandise trade statistics received much attention and exposure. At its first official session (1947) the Commission recognized the need to resume collection and analysis of international trade statistics and established soon a Committee on Statistical Classification which created the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) (adopted in 1950). At the same time the Commission requested that Governments report their international trade statistics to the United Nations in terms of SITC starting with the year 1949. Furthermore, the Commission recommended improving the methods used in the recording of transactions in international trade. The next year (1951) the Commission agreed on the principle that the customs area, as defined by the countries themselves, should constitute the basis for trade-by-countries statistics.

As further indication of the importance the Commission attached to international trade statistics, it discussed and adopted a number of key methodological recommendations in 1953, which are still valid today, namely:

- Coverage of international trade statistics was defined as “all goods, which add to, or subtract from, the resources of a country as a result of their movements into or out of the country”;
- For imports valuation was defined as the transaction value, that is to say, the value at which the goods were purchased by the importer plus the
- cost of transportation and insurance to the frontier of the importing country;

It recommended as well estimating FOB imports at aggregate level for BOP purposes.

### UN Comtrade database

The historical developments can further be distinguished in three areas, which are (1) data compilation, (2) classifications and (3) updating of methodology. Data compilation comprises collection, processing, dissemination, quality and timeliness of data, as well as data harmonization. During the sixties the United Nations Statistics Division created a centre for the collection and publication of international data on external trade. This centre received detailed trade-by-commodity-by-country statistics from many governments on the basis of SITC, Revised, and utilized a mainframe computer to convert the data into US dollars, metric units of quantity, and standard commodity and country codes. This mainframe was operational until the end of 2005. Improved technology, cheaper storage space and the global use of the Internet made it possible that this database, commonly known as the UN Comtrade database, is now easily available for all interested users around the world. UN Comtrade contains 45 years of detailed trade data for over 170 countries or areas. For its design and accessibility UNSD received the 2005 UN21 Award.



## Classifications: from SITC, Revised, to HS-2007, SITC, Revision 4, and CPC 2.0

The common language in trade statistics has been determined throughout its history by the commodity classifications. The best illustration of this importance was given by the fact that most of the report of the sixth session of the Commission in 1951 consisted of the complete description of the original version of the SITC. From 1973 until 1985, the Customs Co-operation Council (now known as World Customs Organization) developed the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS) which became so widely used by the Customs administrations around the globe that the Commission recommends its use as the principal tool for collection of trade data in 1993.



The HS has become the universal language of trade data, which is the reason why SITC, Revision 4, was created in 2006 completely in line with HS-2007. In January of 2006, SITC, Rev.4, was available in hard copy. Also the Central Product Classification (CPC), which is used for trade but also for production statistics, stays as close as possible to definitions used in the latest version of HS. The latest version of CPC (CPC 2.0) was adopted by the Commission in 2007.

## Methodological developments

The foundation of standards in IMTS was laid well over fifty years ago by the League of Nations when it was already recommended that coverage was determined by cross-border trade and valuation was FOB for exports and CIF for imports. The original concepts and definitions of IMTS were published and approved by the Commission in 1954. Almost 30 years later, in 1981, it approved the first revision in the document "International trade statistics: concepts and definitions" (ST/ESA/STAT/SER. M/52/Rev.1), which incorporated the concepts laid down in the Kyoto Convention to distinguish special and general trade systems, as well as to define country of origin. With the adoption of the 1993 System of National Accounts (SNA93) and the 1995 Balance of Payments Manual (BPM5) trade statisticians were requested to bring concepts closer to those frameworks. Confirming its cross-border trade principle, and taking into consideration customs regulations, requirements by WTO and, where appropriate, the change-of-ownership principle of the SNA, a second revision of the Concepts and Definitions of IMTS was approved by the Commission in 1997 and released in 1998. Practical guidance for data compilers was provided in the 2004 Compilers Manual to IMTS, Revision 2.

The Trade Statistics Branch of UNSD will publish the Supplement to the Compilers Manual in early 2008. This Supplement consists of 6 chapters in which a number of issues are discussed that are at this moment of great importance for the recommendations of international merchandise trade statistics. These issues include (1) the outcome of the 2006 National Compilation and Dissemination Practices questionnaire which was sent to all data compiling offices around the world in July 2006, and which shows compliance to the UN recommendations; (2) Revised Kyoto convention and its implications for data compilation; (3) the new HS edition 2007, and SITC, Revision 4; (4) differences between IMTS and General Merchandise BOP, including compilation of data on goods for processing; (5) INTRASTAT – use of non-Customs data sources; and (6) linking trade with business statistics.



## Towards the Third Revision of International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions

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As mentioned, the current recommendations for use in international merchandise trade statistics were adopted in 1997 and published in 1998 in *International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions* (IMTS, Rev.2). In 2004 *International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Compilers Manual* was issued to assist countries in implementation of IMTS, Rev.2. Both publications were promoted by UNSD and other agencies-members of the Task Force on International Merchandise Trade Statistics (TFIMTS) in a series of training workshop for developing and transitional countries. These efforts helped in harmonizing IMTS methodologies across countries and, therefore, helped to increase cross country data comparability and availability for international users in UN Comtrade. However, with time it became apparent that the next cycle of review and updating of the recommendations was needed.

The IMTS, Rev.2 needs to be revised because of:

- (i) changes in the way international merchandise trade is conducted, like increasing globalization of the production and distribution processes, expansion of intra-firm trade, transactions with bundled goods and services components;
- (ii) changes in legal environment such as adoption by the WCO Council of the Revised Kyoto Convention and new legal/administrative measures for increased security or further simplification of customs formalities;
- (iii) changes in related statistical frameworks, like the 1993 System of National Accounts and the Balance of Payments Manual;
- (iv) changes in user needs, including increased demand for more detailed and timely data for market access negotiations and trade policy purposes, market research by business community and economic analysis (e.g., linking industry and trade data);
- (v) need for further clarification of some existing concepts and improve the overall readability.

The need for a new revision was discussed by TFIMTS which supported the UNSD initiative to begin the process in 2007 aiming at submission of the revised recommendations to the UN Statistical Commission for adoption in 2010.

## Organization of the revision process

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To ensure active country involvement into the revision process and to obtain their endorsement of the future draft UNSD decided to establish the United Nations Expert Group on International Merchandise Trade Statistics (EG-IMTS) which held its first meeting from 3-6 December 2007 in New York. The first meeting of EG-IMTS reviewed areas where the revised or new recommendations are needed, established a list of issues for worldwide consultation, and commented on an initial outline of the IMTS, Rev.3.

In December 2007, UNSD submitted a separate report to the 39th session of the UN Statistical Commission which describes the need for the new revision, organization of the revision process including terms of reference of the EG-IMTS, scope and timing for a worldwide consultation.

Based on conclusions of the EG-IMTS and taking into account comments and suggestions of the TFIMTS, UNSD will prepare a list of issues for the first round of worldwide consultations and will conduct it in May -June 2008.

## Technical Cooperation in International Merchandise Trade Statistics

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The Trade Branch of UNSD is very active in technical cooperation with many data compilers from national statistical offices and customs administrations around the world. Regional workshops focus on Compilation guidance and explanation of international recommendations.

Workshops on Compilation of IMTS were conducted recently in the following regions:

- For Western Africa: Abuja, Nigeria, 30 August – 2 September 2005
- For Central Africa: Douala, Cameroon, 12 – 15 June 2006
- For South and South-East Asia: Bangkok, Thailand, 12 – 15 December 2006
- For Latin America: Lima, Peru, 7-11 May 2007
- For Western Asia and Northern Africa: Amman, Jordan, 26 October – 2 November 2007
- For Eastern and Southern Africa: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12-16 November 2007

The schedule for 2008 includes two more workshops on IMTS for the Middle East countries under the ESCWA/UNSD Development Account project. This project runs from 2006 – 2009. Within the general context of the revision process of the recommendations of IMTS, UNSD organizes in 2008 also a workshop specifically for developing countries to voice their concerns on possible changes.







## International Trade in Services

Trade in Services has grown, year after year, in importance in the world economy. Consequently, the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) became more concerned about the adequate measurement of statistics of international trade in services (SITS). Only recently was SITS added as a separate field to the Trade Statistics Branch of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD). The principle objectives for UNSD in this area are (i) the establishment of a world-wide database on SITS, (ii) the creation of database of country practices in the compilation and dissemination of SITS and (iii) the further development of the methodology of SITS together with the other members of the Task Force of SITS.

### Trade in Services Statistics history in a nutshell

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Already in 1949, during its 4th session, UNSC discussed issues of Banking statistics, Insurance statistics and Distribution statistics. However, it was not until 1989, forty years later (during its 25th session), that UNSC explicitly recognized that international trade in services was a subject of increased importance to users and producers of statistics. Since then, things have accelerated. In 1994, at the request of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), UNSC approved the creation of an **Inter-agency Task Force on Statistics of International Trade in Services** (TFSITS). The objective was to elaborate on the statistical requirements of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). Convened by the OECD, TFSITS consists of members of Eurostat, IMF, UNCTAD, UNSD, World Tourism Organization, and World Trade Organization. In 2001, UNSC approved the **Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services** (prepared by TFSITS) as the international standard for SITS. In 2004, a **Technical Subgroup (TSG) on the Movement of Natural Persons - Mode 4** was established by UNSC, in response to the need for a statistical framework to measure the economic impact (on home and host countries) of the movement of natural persons. The TSG consists of experts from international organizations and national statistical offices. UNSD was Chair and Secretariat of the group.

### Manual on Statistics of Trade in Services

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Until 2001, the work of TFSITS focused on the development of the manual, which sets out a statistical framework for the collection and dissemination of Trade in Services data, extending the statistical definition of international trade in services into new areas to reflect the four modes of trade in services as defined by GATS, namely cross border, consumption abroad, commercial presence and presence of natural persons. Also, MSITS provides a more detailed classification of services delivered through conventional trade between residents and non-residents than is contained in BPM5, includes a treatment of local delivery of services through a foreign commercial presence and takes a first step towards linking these two systems.



## Revision process of the Manual on Statistics of Trade in Services

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Although the Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services (MSITS) was first published as recently as 2002, an updating became necessary with the revision of the System of National Accounts, the Balance of Payments Manual, ISIC and CPC classifications and publication of or revisions to a number of other related statistical frameworks. The extent of the changes necessitated by and related to trade in services in these other frameworks, led TFSITS to speak of a revision rather than an updating. The revision nonetheless was planned to be limited in scope but could incorporate some improvements to the Manual, where these were in line with the basic 2002 framework.

The process of the revision of the Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services (MSITS) began with a worldwide consultation on issues for the revision in the summer of 2006.

The TFSITS summarized and reviewed the responses, which were used to inform discussion of detailed proposals for changes to MSITS and then draft chapters were prepared. Proposals were presented and discussed at the OECD-Eurostat Expert Meeting on Trade-in-services Statistics on 19 September 2007, which was attended by more than 40 countries from all continents. At its 20-21 September 2007 meeting the TF discussed the proposals and a set of draft chapters and annexes. This was followed by a period for further written comments.

The Task Force proposed the following general structure with some broad changes to the MSITS, while proposals for a number of detailed changes are yet to be agreed:

## The structure of the revised Manual on Statistics of Trade in Services

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### **Chapter 1 Foundations of the Manual: general introduction and overview**

### **Chapter 2 Conceptual framework for the development of statistics on international trade in services**

The detailed discussion on modes of supply will be removed, expanded and incorporated in a new chapter 5 on modes of supply. Chapter 2 will include a description of the links to other related statistical frameworks.

### **Chapter 3 Services transactions between residents and non-residents**

This chapter discusses service transactions in the balance of payments and will incorporate changes from the revised balance of payments manual (BPM6). The goods and services account of BPM6 will provide the high-level structure for the revised Extended Balance of Payments Services (EBOPS) Classification. Notable new items are manufacturing services, and repairs and maintenance on movable goods. Telecommunications is split from postal services and grouped with computer and information services. Financial services will include FISIM, and the definition of insurance services is amended in line with the revised SNA. The content of the Royalties and license fees category is clarified and will be renamed perhaps as Fees for the use of intellectual property. The name is still to be decided. Merchanting of goods is removed from services and will be included with trade in goods.

### **Chapter 4 Foreign Affiliates Statistics and the international supply of services**

On the title of the chapter, the Task Force supported the proposed new title “Foreign affiliates statistics and the international supply of services”. TFSITS considered that this would help to reduce confusion by making clear that foreign affiliates statistics were not a part of international trade in services but were relevant to describing the commercial presence mode of supply and related market access issues. The acronym FATS was to be kept, with an explanation of the link to statistics on the activity of multinational enterprises (AMNEs).

Since MSITS was published in 2002, there have been a number of important developments related to foreign affiliates statistics (FATS) and an increasing policy interest in them. Firstly the OECD Handbook on Economic Globalisation Indicators was published in 2005, early drafts of which were the basis for the original MSITS Chapter 4. Secondly the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Community statistics on the structure and activity of foreign affiliates was approved in June 2007. Eurostat has also published a Recommendations Manual on the Production of Foreign Affiliates Statistics in 2007. Thirdly the draft OECD Benchmark Definition of Foreign Direct Investment 4<sup>th</sup> edition (BD4), due to be finalized in spring 2008, has a chapter on FDI and Globalization with recommendations on statistics on the activity of multinational enterprises, which includes FATS.

### **Chapter 5 Measuring modes of supply**

WTO has developed a draft of the proposed new Chapter 5 on modes of supply of services, including material on mode 4, and the measurement of supply of services by mode. TFSITS reviewed the draft and provided detailed comments.

## The Inter-agency Task Force on Statistics on Trade in Services

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As mentioned, UNSD is an active member of the TFSITS. Besides participating in regular meetings, UNSD maintains the TFSITS website (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/tradeserv/TFSITS/taskforce.htm>), and is the editor of the TFSITS newsletter (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/tradeserv/TFSITS/newsletter.htm>). The latest newsletter of the Task Force has most been posted for December 2007.

## A Global Database on Trade in Services: UN ServiceTrade

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In 2003, the TFSITS agreed that, as part of the implementation plan of the MSITS, UNSD, using its experience with the trade statistics database (UN COMTRADE) would create a database system which will be able to process, store and disseminate statistics of international trade in services in accordance with MSITS, including trade by service category (EBOPS classification) and partner country. In 2007, The UN International Trade in Services database (UN ServiceTrade) became publicly available on the Internet. UN ServiceTrade contains currently EBOPS by partner data for about 100 countries covering the years 2000 to 2006 (see <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/servicetrade>).

## Data collection

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In an effort to increase the availability of data in UN ServiceTrade, UNSD sent out a general request for SITS data at the end of 2006. The goal is to have as many countries as possible reporting their SITS data to UNSD, so that a fairly accurate picture of global trade in services can be given. On the basis of the available data we will then try to estimate missing data and estimate world imports and exports of services.

## Working for and with the countries

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UNSD undertakes **Technical cooperation** activities and assistance to countries through workshops and country projects in collaboration with other agencies. Examples of recently organized workshops on the compilation of trade in services statistics, in which UNSD was represented with one or more resource persons, are:

- Regional workshop for Western Asia countries in Beirut, Lebanon (2004) – Financed by ESCWA;
- Regional workshop for Central America and the Caribbean on Anguilla (July, 2005) – Financed by OAS and Canada;
- Regional workshop for Latin America and the Caribbean in Panama City, Panama (September, 2005) – Financed by UNSD;
- Regional workshop for Andean Community member states in Lima, Peru (July, 2006) – Financed by the European Commission.
- Regional workshop for Western Asia countries in Cairo, Egypt (6-9 February, 2007) – Financed by ESCWA;
- Regional workshop for Africa in Tunis, Tunisia (16-20 April 2007) – Financed by the Joint African Institute and organized by IMF;

More regional workshops are planned for 2008, namely:

- Regional workshop for Commonwealth of Independent States in Kiev, Ukraine (September 2008) – Organized by UNSD.

## What's next?

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UNSD will actively participate in the work of the Task Force on SITS which focuses at present on:

- (1) Promotion of the implementation of the Manual through various means, including organization of workshops;
- (2) Development of compilation guidance documents;
- (3) Revision of the MSITS (to be completed by 2009); and
- (4) Creation of a knowledge base available on-line. Further development of UN ServiceTrade database and its metadata is necessary with a focus on quality and detail of data. As mentioned, workshops are currently under preparation and more technical cooperation will follow in the coming years.

For enquiries regarding International Trade in Services, contact [tradeserv@un.org](mailto:tradeserv@un.org).





## Population and Housing Censuses

Under the different mandates of the World Programme, the United Nations Statistics Division as the Secretariat of the Statistical Commission, has played a pivotal role in the coordination of the World Programme by: setting of standards and methods including the preparation of the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*; providing technical assistance in census operations; and the compilation and dissemination of census results from countries or areas.

### Background

Under the different mandates of the World Programme, the United Nations Statistics Division as the Secretariat of the Statistical Commission, has played a pivotal role in the coordination of the World Programme by: setting of standards and methods including the preparation of the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*; providing technical assistance in census operations; and the compilation and dissemination of census results from countries and areas. This is done in collaboration with the Regional Commissions and other international, regional and sub-regional organisations.

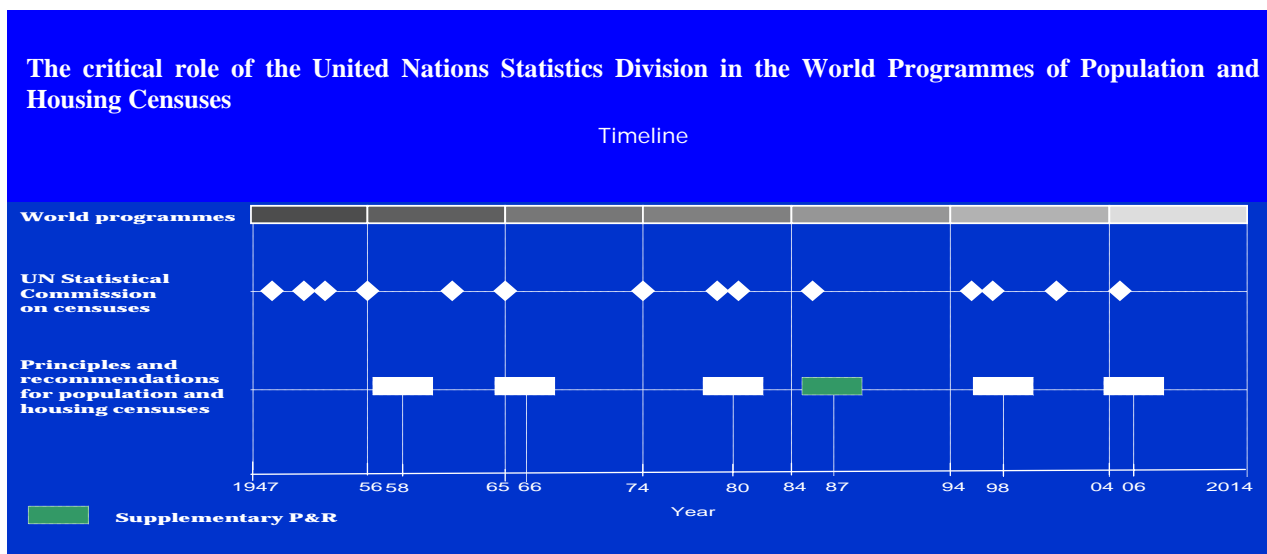
For over six decades, the Statistical Commission has supported national census-taking worldwide through the establishment of the World Programmes on Population and Housing Censuses. Related recent actions taken by the Commission are reflected in a resolution by the

Economic and Social Council in support of the 2010 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses (resolution 2005/13) urging Member States to carry out a population and housing census at least once in the period 2005-2014.

Some aspects of the world situation at the time that the Statistical Commission was formed were very different to those existing today. For example, many areas that are now sovereign states and Member States of the United Nations were then described as "Territories and Dependencies". In addition, in a number of areas, only the non-indigenous population was counted during censuses. These different aspects have implications for population counts.

### Development of Census Methodology

The Division has continued to play an indispensable role in the development of standards and methods related to census taking. This includes the production of technical handbooks



and manuals on various topics pertinent to census planning and census-taking:

(i) *Principles and Recommendations*

As part of the World programme, for each census decade, the United Nations Statistics Division regularly prepares and updates standards and methods of census-taking. For the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme, the Statistical Commission at its thirty-sixth session, requested that the United Nations Statistics Division, in collaboration with Regional Commissions and experts from Member States, revise and update the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*, taking into account lessons learnt from the previous round of censuses and emerging issues. For instance, revision 2 of the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses* provides revised international standards on concepts, definitions and classifications pertinent to some topics; a set of recommended tabulations; an elaboration of alternative approaches to census-taking compared to the traditional approach; and has a comprehensive section on promotion and effective dissemination of census results.

(ii) *Handbooks and manuals*

In addition to the Principles and Recommendations, the United Nations Statistics Division produces a series of more detailed census guidelines including handbooks and manuals which are based upon national experiences and technological and methodological developments in census-taking. Such guidelines include handbooks on: *Population and Housing Census Editing*; *Census Management for Population and Housing Censuses*; *Geographical Information Systems and Digital Mapping*; the *Collection of Fertility and Mortality data*; and a technical report on the *Collection of Economic Characteristics in Population Censuses*.



## Technical assistance

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An integral part of the World Programme is the provision of technically sound advice that builds upon the existing strengths of national statistical/census offices while considering ways to strengthen overall national statistical capacity in the process of conducting censuses and intercensal national sample surveys. The programme also encourages the sharing and exchange of national experiences through international, regional and sub-regional exchange programmes, workshops and advisory services.

A major goal of the advisory services is to identify common solutions to technical and organizational problems that many countries confront in the planning and conducting of censuses or large-scale national sample surveys. In this context, a fully fledged team of inter regional and technical advisors in the Statistics Division provided technical assistance, for decades, in areas such as census mapping, planning, management, data processing and in designing and carrying out large-scale national sample surveys.

An Interregional Advisor on Population and Housing Censuses has been appointed to carry out short-term advisory missions to assist countries planning to conduct censuses during the 2010 round.

A critical aspect of the 2010 World programme is for the United Nations Statistics Division to support effective and creative use of information and communication technology (ICT) while working within a wide range of ICT capabilities of national statistical and census offices. This will be achieved through developing guidelines and sharing experiences such as in the use of the internet in census data collection and dissemination, and also through the preparation of technical documents as described above. In addition, regional and sub-regional workshops on various technical areas of census-taking, and dissemination have been and will be conducted as part of technical assistance to countries.

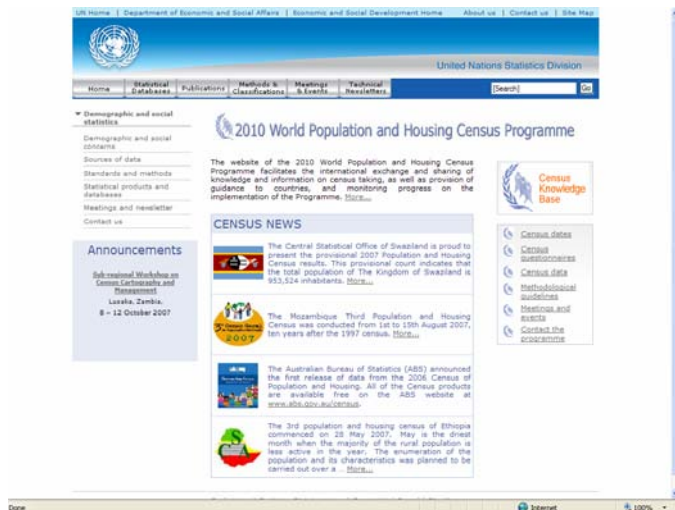
## 2010 World Programme website

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The United Nations Statistics Division has developed a website as part of its activities of the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme: [http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/2010\\_PHC/default.htm](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/2010_PHC/default.htm). The primary objective of the website is to promote international exchange and sharing of census-related knowledge and information, and also to monitor progress being made in the implementation of the 2010 World Programme at the national, regional and international levels. The website provides updated information on country activities related to census taking in the 2010 census round, including national census dates as well as questionnaires that have been used in various censuses. In addition, the website presents information on census meetings and

workshops organized by the United Nations Statistics Division and other organizations.

One of the important aspects of the website is provision of a Census Knowledge Base, which serves as a repository of census methodology and documents pertaining to country best practices in various aspects of census taking. The main objective of the knowledge base is, therefore, to act as a resource centre for use by countries as they conduct their population and housing censuses. To date, the Knowledge Base contains over 220 articles on census-related matters.



## Dissemination of Census data

Dissemination of census data both at the national and international levels is paramount. It is against this background that the Statistical Commission at its 36<sup>th</sup> Session urged Member States to disseminate census results in a timely manner.



At the international level, the United Nations Statistics Division has been collecting from countries and disseminating socio-demographic data since 1948. Data from the more recent census round is available on line at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/default.htm>. For the early rounds of the World Programme, dissemination of national statistics was mainly through paper publications. Since the 1980 round of censuses a far wider range of media have progressively become available.

## Types of media for dissemination of census results

While paper publications are still common and necessary for the dissemination of census results, electronic media are increasingly becoming more widespread. In addition, two media have, in recent decades, become of very limited use, namely the magnetic tape and the floppy disc. Responding to, and maximizing the benefits of varied dissemination media, has provided a challenge to countries, the United Nations Statistics Division and other players in finding appropriate mixes of media to maximize the dissemination of census data in acceptable, user friendly formats and in a timely manner.

A software package, **CensusInfo**, will be developed by the United Nations Statistics Division in collaboration with UNICEF's DevInfo to help countries disseminate census data on CD-ROM and on the website. Based on the DevInfo platform, specific functionalities will be added to meet the census dissemination requirements such as cross tabulation (pre-determined or by request); template reports for dissemination at any appropriate geographical domains; and mapping capabilities.







## Social statistics

Since its inception, the United Nations has been concerned with issues of social development and living standards, pursuant to the promotion of “higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development” as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations (Article 55)

### Introduction

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Since its inception, the United Nations has been concerned with issues of social development and living standards, pursuant to the promotion of “higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development” as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations (Article 55). The Statistics Division, under the overall guidance of the United Nations Statistical Commission, has supported deliberations and policies on this area of interest through its work in social statistics.

Initial efforts towards improving social statistics at the national and international levels can be traced back to the publication of the first issue of the Statistical Yearbook in 1948, which made apparent the need for research in this field. One year later, and upon request of the Statistical Commission<sup>1</sup>, the then Statistical Office of the United Nations initiated the first of a series of activities and programmes which have led to some advances in social statistics at the international and national levels.

Those advances include substantive work towards the establishment of a framework for social statistics and indicators; the formulation of standards and guidelines for the collection, compilation and dissemination of data on social issues; and the regular compilation and analysis of selected statistics and indicators in various areas of social concern including: housing, international migration, education, poverty, gender, time-use, crime and disability.

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<sup>1</sup>United Nations (1949) *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*, Ninth Session, Supplement No. 6. para. 128, E/CN.3/82.

### Towards a framework for social statistics and indicators

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One of the initial tasks undertaken by the Statistics Division in the field of social statistics was the development of a framework for the systematic organization and compilation of social statistics and indicators. A review of national practices resulted in the publication, in 1954, of two seminal documents: the *Survey of Social Statistics* and the report entitled “International definition and measurement of standards and levels of living.” These documents were the first to articulate the need for policy-relevant social statistics and indicators. They identified a list of basic statistics and indicators and outlined a number of steps for improving the quality of the data and strengthening national capacity in the field of social statistics.

Subsequent activities led to the formulation of a System of Social and Demographic Statistics (SSDS) in 1972 and also a Framework for Social and Demographic Statistics (FSDS) in 1975. Preliminary “Guidelines on social indicators” were published in 1978. A decade later, the Statistics Division issued the *Handbook on Social Indicators* (1989) as a practical tool for the selection and compilation of social indicators by countries and international organizations. In line with the FSDS, the “Guidelines” and *Handbook* supported the development and use of basic data sources and the harmonization of underlying statistical concepts, classifications and definitions.

During the 1990s, the demand for social statistics and indicators grew significantly as a result of the need to monitor progress in the attainment of the goals and objectives agreed upon at international conferences and summits, particularly the 1990 World Summit for Children, the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, the 1995 World Summit for Social Development, the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, and the 1996 United Nations Second

Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II). In response to these demands, the Statistical Commission endorsed in 1997 the Minimum National Social Data Set (MNSDS) to guide countries on the production of basic social statistics. Methodological guidance was provided in a chapter of the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*, issued in 1998, on the extent to which the minimum set could be derived from census data.

The Division has continued to convene Expert Group Meetings and to organize other activities towards setting the scope and future direction of social statistics. In 2003, the expert group on setting the Scope of Social Statistics defined specific goals and activities that would further advance the production of social statistics. In addition, the Division will organize a seminar on New Directions in social statistics prior to the 29<sup>th</sup> Statistical Commission Session on 22 February 2008.

## Areas of social concern

As early as 1954, the Division recognized that the development of social statistics involves the arraying of data in such a way as to make possible an analysis of differences among social groups and countries in topical issues, such as housing, health, education, conditions of work and employment; and that special attention should be devoted to the study of conditions of special population groups, including children, the elderly, the unemployed, people with disabilities, etc. Since then, the Division has worked in collaboration with specialized agencies, the regional commissions and other relevant organizations towards the development of statistics in the key areas already mentioned, as well as in areas such as crime, international migration, gender, ethnicity, time use and poverty.

## Methodological developments

Preliminary guidelines for the compilation of **housing** statistics were issued in 1958 in the *General Principles for a Housing Census*. Revisions of those guidelines have been published in the *Principles and Recommendations for Housing Censuses* in 1970 and in the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses* in 1980 and 1998. The latest recommendations in the area of housing statistics are being published as part of the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Rev 2 (forthcoming)*.

Methodological work in **international migration** centered from the start on the search for a definition of international migrant that could be adopted globally. United Nations efforts to identify international migrants in a uniform way culminated in the adoption in 1953 of the first set of United Nations recommendations on statistics of international migration.

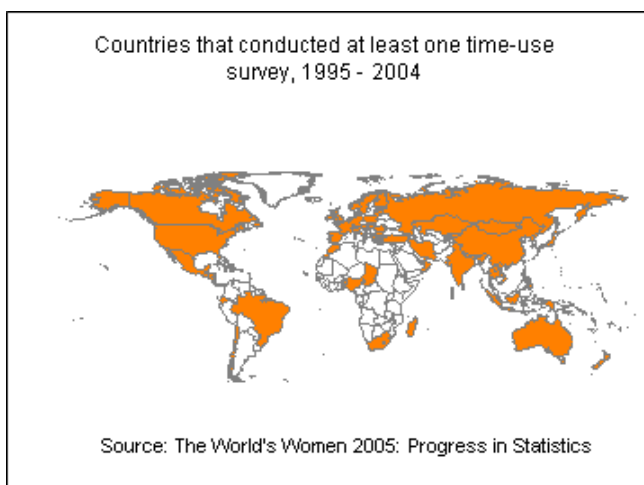


Further efforts to improve the definitions and recommendations led to two revisions, issued in 1976 and 1998. Efforts are underway to elaborate the 1998 United Nations recommendations and produce a guide to measuring international migration through population censuses and sample surveys, to be followed by a handbook that will include discussion on administrative sources.

Work in the area of **gender** statistics was initiated in 1982, following the proclamation of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (1976-1985). To improve the production of gender statistics, the Division has issued a series of methodological reports aimed at providing practical guidance to countries on a variety of topics including: concepts and methods, training of users and producers, database development and statistical reporting. Technical reports have also been issued in key areas such as measuring women's economic activity (1993) and participation in the informal sector (1990), and the development of **time-use** statistics for measuring paid and unpaid work (2004). Methodological work in the area of time

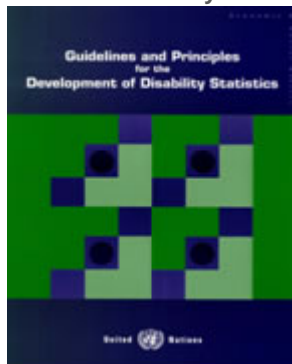


use statistics for measuring paid and unpaid work (2004). Methodological work in the area of time

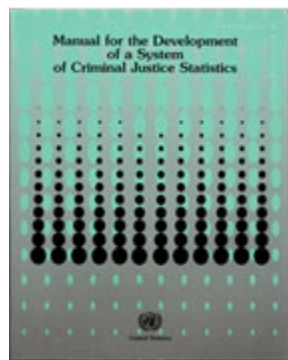


use has resulted in the development and implementation of the trial International Classification of Activities for Time-Use Statistics (ICATUS) in 2005 and compilation of metadata on national time-use surveys. (See <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sconcerns/tuse/>)

Activities on the development of **disability** statistics were initiated in response to the proclamation of the International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981, the adoption of the United Nations World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons in 1982, the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons from 1983 to 1992, and the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in 1993. Results from an initial evaluation of the extent and reliability of national disability statistics were published in the *Development of Statistics of Disabled Persons: Case Studies* (1986) and the *Disability Statistics Compendium* (1990). These were followed by the *Manual for the Development of Statistical Information for Disability Programmes and Policies* (1996), and the *Guidelines and Principles for the Development of Disability Statistics* (2001). In recent years, the Division has collaborated with the Washington Group on Disability Statistics to develop disability measures suitable for use in population censuses, and efforts are now geared towards developing disability measures for use in national sample surveys.



In the mid-1980s the Division, acting on the guidance of the General Assembly and the United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, initiated a set of activities towards the development of **crime** and criminal justice statistics. These activities led to the publication of a series of manuals for the development of national criminal justice statistics in 1983, 1992, and 2003. The latest in the series is the *Manual for the Development of a System of Criminal Justice Statistics*, issued in 2003.

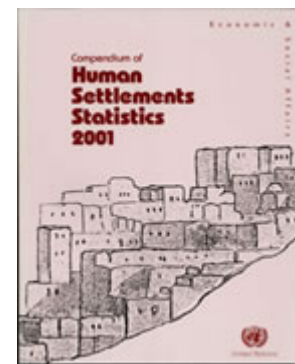


A new area of focus is **poverty** statistics, which the Division introduced in its programme in 2003. Under this programme, the Division has organized a series of panel discussions, regional workshops and Expert Group Meetings to promote dialogue and facilitate the development of a system of poverty measurement. One of the outputs of these consultations is a *Handbook on Poverty Statistics* (forthcoming). A report on poverty profiles in the Economic Community for Western African States (ECOWAS) has recently been published in collaboration with the Division and ECOWAS.

The Division has, in collaboration with the International Labour Office, developed technical guidelines on the collection of data on the economically active population from population censuses. This collaboration has led to the production of the *Handbook on Measuring the Economically Active and Related Characteristics in Population Censuses*, to be published in 2008.

## Data compilation, analysis and dissemination

The Division regularly compiles, analyses, and publishes the latest social statistics in a variety of formats as part of its dissemination activities. Among these publications are: the *Survey of Social Statistics* in 1954; the *Compendium of Social Statistics* in 1963, 1967, 1977 and 1988; the *Compendium of Housing Statistics* in 1971, 1972-74 and 1975-77; and the *Compendium of Human Settlements Statistics* in 1983, 1995 and 2001; "Selected Statistics and Indicators on the Status of Women" in 1985; and Women's Statistics and Indicators (Wistat) Database, in 1987, 1991, 1995 and 2000.



In 1991, the Division began publishing the series *The World's Women*—a statistical source-book that provides a comprehensive analysis of changes in the conditions of women and men in such areas as health, family, education, work, public life and leadership. Published at five-year intervals, the reports of *The World's Women* series have also been important avenues for the dissemination of conceptual and methodological developments in the field of gender statistics. The last issue in the series, published in 2005, reviewed the availability of basic statistics useful for gender analysis

as a way of assessing progress made in gender statistics.

As part of the social statistics programme, the Division regularly disseminates on-line social statistics as well as gender statistics, which are available at:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/socind>  
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/indwm>

## Technical Assistance

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The Division has over the years provided technical assistance to national statistical offices through training workshops on specific topics in social statistics such as: disability, poverty, international migration, gender statistics, etc. These workshops are generally organized to assist countries in the implementation of international recommendations. The United Nations Statistics Division has conducted regional training workshops on disability statistics, with the overall objective of strengthening national capabilities to produce, disseminate and use data on disability for policy development and implementation. Interregional and regional workshops have also been organized on a range of topics, such as on gender statistics in 2007, on fertility and mortality statistics in 2004, on international migration in 2003, and on dissemination of social statistics from population censuses in 2002.

Additionally, special advisory missions are undertaken in countries upon request, such as missions to Turkmenistan to review survey instruments, including one on economic characteristics; to Mongolia to review

existing social statistics produced by the country and assess their adequacy in answering both national and international needs; to Mongolia to advise and set up a national disability data collection system; to Kenya to support the development of a Women's Statistics and Indicators Database; and to Cuba on the design of a national time-use survey. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, several missions were undertaken in countries to assist them in the adoption and implementation of the National Household Survey Capability Programme.

Technical inputs have also been provided to regional commissions, regional organizations and countries through UNSD's participation as resource persons in their meetings, such as for workshops on disability statistics in ESCAP and ESCWA; on economic characteristics in ESCWA; on gender statistics in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM); and on poverty statistics in the ECOWAS. Support for training in countries includes that to Nigeria on the review of the National Integrated Survey of Households (NISH) and to Mongolia on gender statistics.

The Division also arranges and supports study tours between NSOs, and has on occasion hosted study visits of NSO staff to the United Nations, during which advances in methods and international standards are presented.



## System of National Accounts

At its first session in 1947, the Statistical Commission emphasized the need to establish **international statistical standards** ... guidelines for national accounts statistics (national income and expenditure), taking into consideration methodology and international comparability...

### History of work in National Accounts

At its first session in 1947, the Statistical Commission emphasized the need to establish **international statistical standards** as soon as possible. Specifically, the Commission recommended that the United Nations Statistical Office, in consultation with the interested specialized agencies, should work on guidelines for national accounts statistics (national income and expenditure), taking into consideration methodology and international comparability. In view of the emphasis on international statistical standards throughout the history of the Commission, the following national accounts standards, called System of National Accounts (SNA), were produced:

- The **1953 SNA** was published under the auspices of the Statistical Commission. It consisted of a set of six standard accounts and a set of 12 standard tables presenting detail and alternative classifications of the flows in the economy. The concepts and definitions of the accounts were widely applicable for most countries, including developing countries.
- The **1968 SNA** extended the scope of the national accounts substantially by; adding input-output accounts and balance sheets; giving more attention to estimates at constant prices; and making a comprehensive effort to bring the SNA and the Material Product System (MPS) closer together.
- The **1993 SNA** was entrusted to the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA) comprising representatives of the European Commission, OECD, IMF, World Bank and the United Nations. The 1993 SNA represents a major advance in national accounting and embodies the result of harmonizing the SNA and other international statistical standards more completely than in previous versions.
- The **1993 SNA Revision 1** was in 2003 again entrusted to the ISWGNA to address issues brought about by changes in the economic environment. The update adopted for review a list of 44 issues and the **1993 SNA Rev. 1** will be submitted to the Statistical Commission for approval in 2007. Issue papers, recommendations and comments by countries and experts can be found on the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) national accounts website at:  
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/sna1993/snarev1.asp>

### UNSD national accounts Database

To serve the analytical purposes of the UN and the public the UNSD, mandated by the Statistical Commission, annually collects national accounts data from member countries. The UNSD uses a questionnaire based on the SNA framework. Currently, two data sets are compiled and published in the two publications, namely:

National Accounts Statistics: Main Aggregates and Detailed Tables; and

National Accounts Statistics: Analysis of Main Aggregates.

More information can be obtained on the UNSD website at:  
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/default.asp>

### National Accounts Statistics: Main Aggregates and Detailed Tables

The first yearbook appeared in 1958 and contained data for 70 countries and territories. The most recent yearbook contains data for more than 191 countries and territories. Data are reproduced as they are reported by the countries in their respective national currencies. The national accounts data for the period 1970 to 2006 will soon also be available for download from the UNSD website.

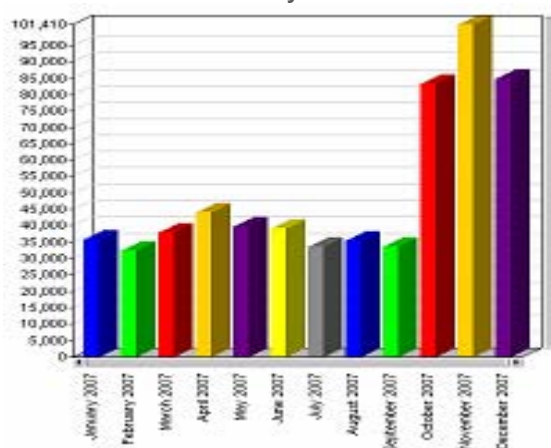
## National Accounts Statistics: Analysis of Main Aggregates

To improve the usefulness of the national accounts data, the UNSD database is updated from secondary sources and estimates where official data are not available. This publication contains data from 1970 to the most recent year on gross domestic product (GDP) by type of expenditure and by kind of activity; at current and constant prices; in both national currency and United States dollars. The data are aggregated into various groupings, such as, geographical areas and level of development.

The data are also available for download from the UNSD website, which attracted on average more than 50000 visits per month during 2007 compared with about 30000 visits during 2005:

(<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/snaama/dnllist.asp>).

Monthly visits to the UNSD national accounts data website from January to December 2007



## Implementation of the 1993 SNA

Assistance to countries to implement the SNA has always been of one of the main objectives of the UNSD. Besides working on the international standards for national accounts, the UNSD has been involved in a number of activities to which include:

- Regional and national training workshops and technical cooperation and national accounts projects in countries;
- The publication of handbooks and guides for the compilation of national accounts and associated statistics.

A series of national accounting handbooks has been published by the UNSD

(<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/sna1993/handbooks.asp>)

which include:

- *National Accounts: A Practical Introduction*, (United Nations publication, ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/85).
- *Handbook on Non-profit Institutions in the System of National Accounts* (United Nations publication, ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/91).
- *Use of the System of National Accounts in Economies in Transition* (United Nations publication, ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/66).
- *Handbook of Input-Output Table Compilation and Analysis* (United Nations publication, ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/74).
- *Links between Business Accounting and National Accounting* (United Nations publication, ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/76).
- *A Systems Approach to National Accounts Compilation* (United Nations publication, ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/77).
- *Use of Macro Accounts in Policy Analysis (Compilation)* (United Nations publication, ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/81).
- *Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework* (United Nations publication, ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/61).
- *Handbook of National Accounting: Household Accounting Experience in Concepts and Compilation, Vol. 1, Household Sector Accounts, Vol. 2, Household Satellite Extensions* (United Nations publication, ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/75).

## SNA News and Notes

SNA News and Notes is a bi-annual information pamphlet of the ISWGNA prepared by the UNSD. It contains information on the latest national accounts developments and discusses topical issues. The SNA News and Notes is published in four languages (English, French, Russian and Spanish) and is available on the UNSD website at:

(<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/snaneews.asp>)

**Contact the National Accounts Section** for enquiries on national accounts data and methodology at: [sna@un.org](mailto:sna@un.org).



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