

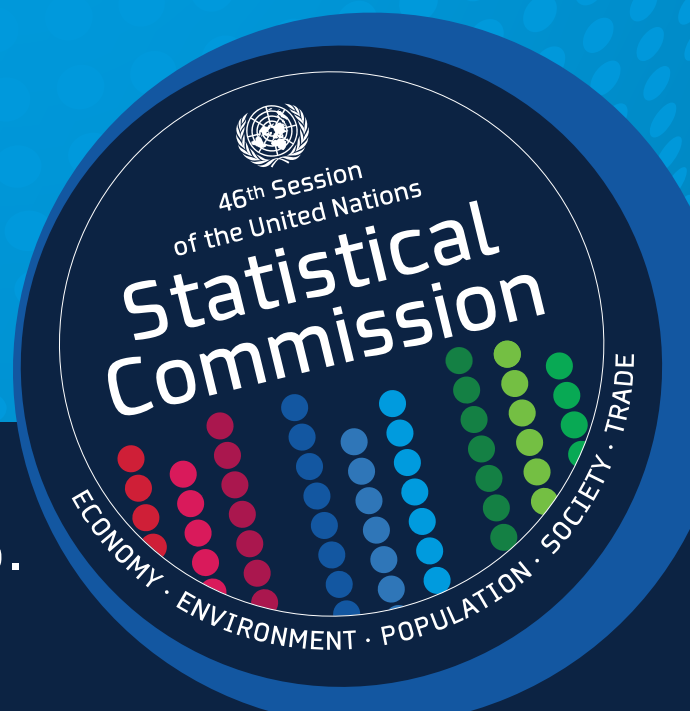


United Nations Statistics Division
Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Statistics Division at a Glance

2015

BETTER DATA. BETTER LIVES.



United Nations Statistics Division

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

2015

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A Message from the Director

I am pleased to present the newly-designed overview of the United Nations Statistics Division's work: *Statistics Division at a Glance*. The objective of this document is to inform our stakeholders – delegates, Chief Statisticians, colleagues from national, regional and international statistical agencies - about the work programme and achievements of the Statistics Division in the 2014.



The recent year saw continued work in our regular work program as well as initiatives in some new and exciting topics. In the area of technical assistance, in the year 2014 the Division organized 43 workshops, expert group meetings and seminars at which a total of 2,878 professionals exchanged experience and received training. 96 individual fellowships were awarded to statisticians from developing countries to attend 19 regional and international meetings. The Division's three Inter-regional Advisors conducted 11 advisory missions. One quarter of these events was organized under the regular programme for technical cooperation, the rest under the various multi-year capacity building trust funds and ongoing development account projects. In terms of substantive areas, the organized events covered demographic and social statistics (9); economic statistics, such as international trade, economic globalization, tourism, energy and industrial statistics and national accounts (22); environment statistics and environmental-economic accounting (6); and geospatial information management (6). In 2014 also UNSD released 19 publications (English and Bilingual) and 12 in languages (other than English) and one white cover draft publication.

The prevalence of the use of electronic devices and the generation of digital information has caused a fundamental change to the nature of data. The statistical community is recognizing the potential offered by Big Data sources for Official Statistics and for the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals. However, the statistical

community is conscious of the fact that in order to take advantage of the various Big Data sources, it needs to adequately address issues pertaining to methodology, quality, technology, legislation, privacy, management and finance.

The United Nations Statistics Division is also supporting the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) and its Friends of the Chair Group on broader measures of progress in the activities related to the development and implementation of a monitoring framework for the post-2015 development agenda. One important task is to provide statistical support to the intergovernmental process towards the post-2015 development agenda in order to ensure the measurability of goals and targets and that a robust measurement approach is incorporated from the onset.

As always, we look forward to working with all of you this year to further strengthen the global statistical system in general and National Statistical Offices in particular. To reflect this goal as well as the upcoming challenge of the Sustainable Development Goals, we have adopted a new motto for the *Statistics Division: Better Data, Better Lives*.

Stefan Schweinfest
Director
United Nations Statistics Division

Part One

Cross Cutting and Emerging Issues



Big Data for Official Statistics

The prevalence of the use of electronic devices and the generation of digital information has caused a fundamental change to the nature of data. The statistical community is recognizing the potential offered by Big Data sources for Official Statistics and for the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals. However, the statistical community is conscious of the fact that in order to take advantage of the various Big Data sources, it needs to adequately address issues pertaining to methodology, quality, technology, legislation, privacy, management and finance.

Historical overview

Following the Friday Seminar organized by UNSD on “Big Data for Policy, Development and Official Statistics” in 2013, the 44th session of the Statistical Commission requested to get an assessment of the use of Big Data for official statistics. In response, a report on “Big data and Modernization of Statistical Systems” was submitted to the 45th session of the Statistical Commission in 2014. The report provided an overview of issues related to Big Data and presented the results of the global assessment on its use.

The Commission recognized that Big Data constitute a source of information that cannot be ignored and needs to be evaluated on its merits, and created a global working group (GWG) on Big Data for Official Statistics.

International Conference on Big Data for Official Statistics

The United Nations Statistics Division in collaboration with the National Bureau of Statistics of China organized an international conference on Big Data for official statistics in Beijing, China from 28 to 30 October 2014. The Conference brought together 120 statisticians and data scientists from national and international institutes around the world to discuss the potential of Big Data in delivering more timely and more relevant statistics for policy purposes.

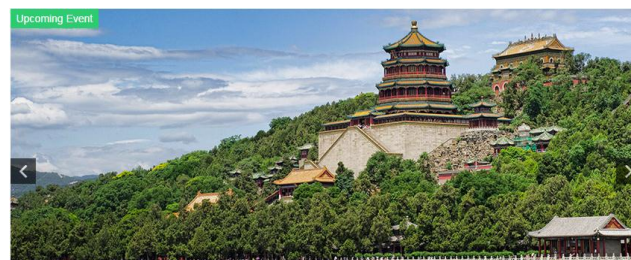
The conference focused on three clusters of Big Data sources namely (i) mobile phone, GPS and other tracking devices, (ii) satellite imagery and other geospatial information, and (iii) twitter and other social media. In relation to each of these sources, the conference discussed their typology, their specific challenges and the partnerships necessary to exploit them. The final sessions of the conference discussed common benefits and challenges of Big Data sources, ways of introducing innovation and how to make the business case for Big Data for Official Statistics.

For more information and material from the conference, see the UNSD website.

UN Global Working Group on Big Data for Official Statistics

The UN Global Working Group (GWG) on Big Data for official statistics was established at the 45th session of the Statistical Commission and met in person for the first time in Beijing on 31 October 2014. The GWG is chaired by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, and the group consists of around 30 members from national and international organizations.

At the first meeting, the GWG formulated its terms of reference and mandate as follows: (1) to provide strategic



vision, direction and coordination of a global programme on Big Data for official statistics, including for indicators of the post-2015 development agenda; (2) to promote practical use of Big Data sources, including cross-border data, while building on the existing precedents and finding solutions for the many challenges; (3) to promote capacity building, training and sharing of experience; (4) to foster communication and advocacy of use of Big Data for policy applications, especially for monitoring of the post-2015 development agenda; and (5) to build public trust in the use of private sector Big Data for official statistics.

The proposed programme of work of the global working group in 2015 covers the following areas: training, skills and capacity building; linking Big Data and the sustainable development goals; advocacy and communication; access and partnership; cross-cutting issues, such as classifications and frameworks; and the exploration of specific Big Data sources for official statistics, namely mobile phone data, social media data and satellite imagery.

The GWG reports on its work to the 46th session of the Statistical Commission in March 2015.

MDG Monitoring

UNSD initiated its work on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) monitoring in 2002, in its role as coordinator of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on MDG indicators. The work has included the preparation of data and analysis to assess progress towards the MDGs, the technical development of the indicators, the development and maintenance of the MDG Indicator Database and a series of activities to improve the statistical capacity of countries for national MDG monitoring. Since 2005, the Division has also coordinated the work for the yearly production of the MDG Report, the progress charts and MDGInfo.

Background

After the adoption of the Millennium Declaration in 2000 by all United Nations Member States, the United Nations Secretariat convened the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Millennium Development Goal indicators (IAEG-MDGs), a group comprising international agencies, regional organizations and national statistical offices, to be responsible for the global and regional monitoring of progress towards the MDGs. The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) acts as the coordinator of the IAEG-MDGs.

The IAEG-MDGs meets regularly to review the work done for the improvement of data and reporting systems for MDGs, discuss strategies to improve MDGs monitoring and enhance methods for the assessment of progress, and set priorities for statistical capacity building on MDG monitoring.

Since 2006, the work of this Group has been guided by Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/6 on strengthening statistical capacity, including:

- (a) improving data availability and quality for the monitoring of the MDGs;
- (b) promoting and facilitating the use of Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) for MDG indicators as an important tool for improving coordination and reporting on the Goals;
- (c) resolving discrepancies between national and international sources and promoting countries' full ownership of monitoring data.

Methodology for improving MDG data

The IAEG-MDGs has continued its efforts to ensure that countries have access to the necessary tools to monitor the MDGs at the national level. In particular, the Group produced the *Handbook on Millennium Development Goals Indicators* to assist countries in the compilation of the MDG indicators. The handbook focuses on methods

that countries can use to produce the MDG indicators at the national level, based on existing national sources. The new version of the handbook has been published electronically through a Wikipedia online platform (<http://mdgs.un.org/>). The new handbook is tailored to the specific country needs and covers all the new indicators being introduced since its first edition was issued in 2003.

A key concern of the Statistical Commission has been the degree to which MDG indicators are produced based on United Nations agency estimates rather than from actual national statistics. The IAEG-MDGs continues to address these concerns through improving the dialogue between representatives of national statistical systems and international agencies and focusing on improving coordination within national statistical systems and their reporting mechanisms to the international agencies.

In order to improve transparency, UNSD introduced in 2006 a colour-coding system for the MDG database to indicate the source and compilation method of the data. Also, detailed metadata which provide a comprehensive description of data sources, definitions and methodologies used by agencies to compile the international data, have been included and regularly updated in the database. The colour coding and metadata are also meant to help users, especially national statisticians, reconcile national data with the data available in the international database.

The Division also executes a multi-year project to improve the collection, availability and dissemination of data for the monitoring of the MDG indicators, especially at the national level. Building on progress made during its pilot phase (2008/09), the project has started its main phase in 2010 with kick-off events in Asia and Africa. The project produces MDG data portals at national level, bringing together the necessary data from the various responsible national institutes. The project has launched a data dissemination prototype, MDGLabs (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mdglabs>), which displays key MDGs indicators based on both national and international sources, and highlights and explains differences between the two sources of data.

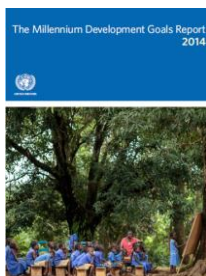
Technical cooperation

A series of regional workshops have been launched by UNSD since 2008 to bring together representatives of national statistical systems and experts from international agencies with the purpose of filling existing data gaps and reconciling differences between national and international data sets by identifying the underlying causes and recommending appropriate actions.

Special sessions also have been organized in these workshops to address the particular needs of each region covered, including training on sub-national monitoring, use of administrative sources and MDG databases and SDMX among others. Seven workshops were held from 2008 to 2012 for countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and Eastern Europe.

In addition, UNSD and the Philippine National Statistical Coordination Board jointly organized two International Conferences on MDGs Statistics in 2007 and 2011. The Conference brought together representatives from National Statistical Offices, national government agencies, international agencies and civil society to review the MDG monitoring strategies in place and propose recommendations for improved monitoring approaches.

Publication



Every year since 2002, UNSD, based on regional and sub-regional figures on the official MDG indicators provided by the partner agencies, has produced the assessment of MDG trends to inform the annual report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on progress towards the MDGs. The official figures on

MDG indicators have also regularly been included as a statistical annex to the report. Moreover, every year since 2005, based on the same data and analysis, UNSD has prepared the MDG Report, published by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The report presents an accounting of how the world is doing in meeting the goals and targets, based on the most updated international data series. The latest version of the MDG Report was launched by the Secretary-General in New York on 7 July 2014.

UNSD has also issued yearly the MDG Progress Chart, a colour-coded chart presenting an

assessment of regions and sub-regions that are on- or off-track to achieve the goals.



In March 2014, the fourth Millennium Development Goals Gender Chart was launched by UNSD and UN-Women. This Chart focuses on the progress of women towards achieving the MDGs and highlights inequalities between women and men looking at wealth, location, ethnicity and other relevant factors.

UNSD also continues to maintain the website and database of the IAEG-MDGs. The database is also available on MDGInfo, an adaptation of the DevInfo platform. The Website, database and MDGInfo are available online at <http://mdgs.un.org>.

UNSD regularly assesses the availability of data in the MDG indicator database as an indirect measure of countries' capacity to produce the necessary data and to determine to what extent the regional aggregates used for the global monitoring reflect the actual situation of countries around the world. Continued progress in data production in countries, and improvements in the reporting from countries to the international statistical system have resulted in increased availability of data in the MDG database.



Post-2015 development agenda

The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) is supporting the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) and its Friends of the Chair Group on broader measures of progress in the activities related to the development and implementation of a monitoring framework for the post-2015 development agenda. One important task is to provide statistical support to the intergovernmental process towards the post-2015 development agenda in order to ensure the measurability of goals and targets and that a robust measurement approach is incorporated from the onset.

Process towards the 2015 development agenda

As one of the main outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), held in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012, Member States agreed to launch an intergovernmental process to develop a set of sustainable development goals (SDGs) to succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) after 2015.

The post-2015 development agenda will be adopted at a High-level Summit in September 2015. Leading up to the summit, between January and July 2015, intergovernmental negotiations are taking place at the UN General Assembly, under the leadership of two Co-facilitators appointed by the President of the General Assembly.

The process of arriving at the post-2015 development agenda is Member State-led, with broad participation from Major Groups and other civil society stakeholders. There have been numerous inputs to the agenda, notably a proposal for a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the Open Working Group (OWG) of the General Assembly on 19 July 2014, and the report of an Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing.

On 4 December 2014, the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly a report entitled "The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet", which synthesizes the full range of inputs available on the post-2015 development agenda as a contribution to the intergovernmental negotiations in the lead up to the Summit. In particular, the synthesis report proposes a framework to monitor and review implementation, based on enhanced statistical capacities and tapping into the potential of new and non-traditional data sources.

Role of the Statistical Commission

The UNSC is the apex entity of the global statistical system and the intergovernmental focal point for the elaboration and the review of the indicators used in the United Nations system as indicated by Resolution A/RES/57/270 B of the General Assembly in 2003. The UNSC has been providing guidance and leadership in monitoring progress towards the achievement of the MDGs. The United Nations Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators (IAEG-MDG), consisting of international agencies, regional organizations and national statistical offices and coordinated by UNSD, has been responsible for the global and regional monitoring of progress towards the MDGs.

The UNSC and its working mechanisms will guide and lead the response to the statistical needs arising from the post-2015 development agenda. Specifically, the UNSC is the technical forum for the development and implementation of the indicator and monitoring framework and reporting mechanisms for the goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda.

The FOC group on broader measures of progress

At its forty-fourth session in 2013 the Statistical Commission established the Friends of the Chair group on broader measures of progress (FOC). The FOC has been mandated to build a work programme to develop broader measures of progress based on a stocktaking exercise of current national, regional and international practices in this field, following the specific mandate given in the Rio+20 outcome document (see para. 38). Furthermore, the FOC has been requested to closely monitor the ongoing debate on development frameworks and to keep the Bureau of the Statistical Commission informed in order to ensure that a robust

statistical measurement approach is incorporated from the outset in preparations for the post-2015 development agenda.

During 2013 and 2014, the FOC has provided multiple inputs in support of the inter-governmental process towards the definition of a post-2015 development agenda. The FOC contributed to the organization and conduct of an informal session of the OWG on measuring progress in December 2013, which brought together national chief statisticians and monitoring experts with members of the OWG. In March 2014, the Chair of the UNSC officially transmitted to the Co-Chairs of the OWG a compendium of 29 statistical notes drafted under the auspices of the FOC by experts from many national statistical offices and international organizations, steered and coordinated by UNSD, to feed into the deliberations on sustainable development goals (SDGs). In March and April 2014, the FOC gave comments on the indicator proposals of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), and an initial assessment of proposed indicators in terms of their measurability. In June, the FOC provided the OWG Co-Chairs a matching between available indicators and the targets contained in the OWGs "Zero draft", and an assessment of the broad data availability for these indicators in countries. In October 2014, the FOC initiated a survey to National Statistical Offices on the availability of data for indicators to measure the SDGs and the associated 107 substantive targets proposed by the OWG.

The way forward

The FOC in its report to the forty-sixth session of the Statistical Commission suggests a roadmap for the development and implementation of the indicator and monitoring framework for the goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda. Besides describing the development of an indicator and monitoring framework and reporting mechanism the report gives an initial assessment of the data requirements and gaps and examines how to close them and build statistical capacity.

The suggested roadmap envisions providing possible indicators and an indicator framework for the monitoring of the goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda by end of 2015, or earlier, depending also on the requirements of the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda.

The report proposes the establishment of an Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG indicators (IEAG-SDG), as the mechanism to bring together the contributions by experts from national statistical systems

and international agencies for the development and implementation of this indicator framework. On 25 and 26 February 2015, preceding the forty-sixth session of the Statistical Commission, an expert group meeting on the indicator framework for the post-2015 development agenda will take place. The meeting will discuss the organization of work and the key elements and principles for the development and design of the indicator framework with broad participation of countries and organizations. It will provide its conclusions as an input to the discussions at the Commission.

Parallel to the development of the indicator framework, there are separate work-streams regarding the financing of statistical development and capacity building and regarding methodological work and the strengthening of statistical systems. The third International Conference on Financing for Development in July 2015 will be an important opportunity to mobilise funding for the development of statistical capacity.

In order to carry the work forward, the FOC proposes that in addition to the creation of an IEAG-SDG, to form a High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity Building for post-2015 monitoring to discuss strategies and activities for statistical capacity building and to address the issue of funding for statistics. Furthermore, the FOC suggests the establishment of a biennial "World Forum on Sustainable Development Data" with possible regional and country level events, to bring together public and private data producers and users. These proposals are also reflecting the recommendations made by the Secretary-General's Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development which released its report "A World That Counts" on 6 November 2014.

In December 2014, the Co-Facilitators of the process of intergovernmental negotiations on the post 2015 development agenda invited the UNSC to contribute to the task of developing an effective framework of targets and indicators which are measurable. In particular, the Co-Facilitators have asked the UNSC for an early proposal in relation to indicators to serve as an input to the detailed discussion of Sustainable Development Goals and targets. Based on its work in the last two years, in particular the work of the FOC, but also many other activities, the statistical community, supported by the Statistics Division, has prepared itself to contribute to the intergovernmental process and to develop and implement the required indicator framework for the monitoring of the SDGs.

Part Two

Regular Work Programme



Demographic Statistics

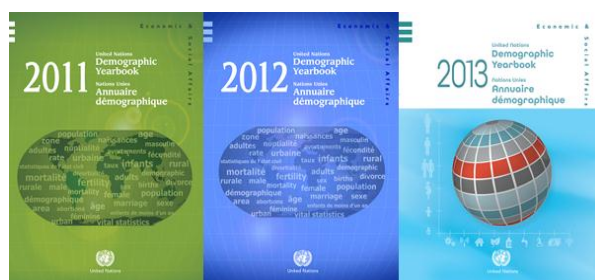
United Nations Statistics Division's activities in the field of demographic statistics encompass a number of components, including the collection and dissemination of official demographic statistics through the *Demographic Yearbook* data collection system, the work related to the population and housing censuses, and the activities under the civil registration and vital statistics programme.

Demographic Yearbook

History

The publication of the *United Nations Demographic Yearbook* was mandated by ECOSOC Resolution number 41 (IV) adopted at its fourth session from 28 February to 29 March 1947, in Lake Success, New York. The resolution called for a publication of a demographic yearbook, containing regular series of basic demographic statistics, comparable within and among themselves, and relevant calculations of comparable rates.

In complying with the resolution, the first issue of the *Demographic Yearbook* 1948 was published in 1949. The *Demographic Yearbook* has been published every year since then. The latest issue is the 64th issue, the *Demographic Yearbook* 2013, available online at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2013.htm>. All sixty-four issues of the *Demographic Yearbook* are available online at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2013.htm>.



Collection and dissemination of official demographic statistics

The collection of demographic statistics relies on annual and census *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires. The annual *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires are: Population Estimates Questionnaire, Vital Statistics Questionnaire and the International Travel and Migration Statistics Questionnaire. The National Statistical Offices supply data to the United Nations Statistics Division, by way of replying to these questionnaires. Key statistics being collected are population size and distribution by age,

sex and marital status, population of cities, data on fertility, mortality, nuptiality, divorce and annual in- and out-migration.

The census *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires consist of: Population Census Questionnaire on General Characteristics, Population Census Questionnaire on Economic Characteristics, Population Census Questionnaire on Household Characteristics, Housing Census Questionnaire for National Data and the Housing Census Questionnaire for Data on Selected Cities. The census questionnaires are sent out to countries or areas for every population and housing census conducted. The tabulations of the census questionnaires are designed in compliance with the core topics and tabulations presented in the latest version of the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*¹.

All demographic statistics, collected from national statistical offices either annually, or after the population and housing census, are subjected to quality control, processing, addition of meta-data and are stored in the Statistics Division Demographic Statistics Database. The bulk of the data collected annually is printed in the *United Nations Demographic Yearbook*. Compendia of tabulations on Households and Economic Characteristics are published online at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2.htm>

Summary demographic data are also presented in the *Population and Vital Statistics Report*, available at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/vitstats/default.htm>.

Statistics collected for the 2000 and 2010 rounds of population and housing censuses are made available through the medium of UNdata portal <http://data.un.org/>. The major topics of these datasets are: Basic population characteristics, Educational and Ethno-cultural characteristics, Native and Foreign-born population, and Household and Economic characteristics. The datasets are available at: <http://data.un.org/Explorer.aspx?d=POP> and <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dybcensusdata.htm>.

¹ *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*, Revision 2, Sales No. E.07.XVII.8. Revision 3 will be submitted for approval to the Statistical Commission at its 46th session in March 2015.

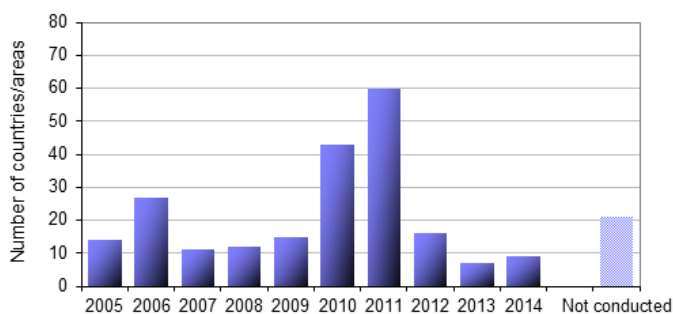
Population and Housing Census Programme

History

For over six decades, the Statistical Commission has supported national census-taking worldwide through the establishment of the decennial World Population and Housing Census Programme. Related recent actions taken by the Commission are reflected in a resolution by the Economic and Social Council in support of the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme (resolution 2005/13) urging Member States to carry out a population and housing census at least once in the period 2005-2014.

As of the end of the 2010 round (December 2014), 214 countries or areas have carried out a population and housing census. This figure also includes countries which base their detailed population statistics on population registers, administrative records, sample surveys or other sources or a combination of those sources. These countries or areas altogether account for an estimated 93 per cent of the world population.

Figure 1: Number of countries/areas that conducted a population and housing census in the 2010 round, by year



2011 was the peak calendar year in terms of the number of censuses conducted with 60 countries/areas carrying out a census, over half of them in Europe. 2010 marked the calendar year with the highest proportion of the world's population enumerated (37 per cent). Twenty-one countries/areas have not conducted a census in the 2010 round.

Census methodology

The Division has continued to play a crucial role in the development of international standards and methods related to census taking. This includes the production of international recommendations, as well as 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, in collaboration with the Regional Commissions and other international, regional and sub-regional organizations, prepares and updates standards and methods of census-taking. For the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme, the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses Revision 2* provided new as well as 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 guidelines on promotion and effective dissemination of census results. The work on the next version of the principles and recommendations (for the 2020 round) started with an expert group meeting held in New York in November 2013. This work is now in its final stages and the publication is expected to be finalized in 2015, after the endorsement by the Statistical Commission at its 46th session in March 2015.

(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 on good practices of national experiences and on technological and methodological developments in census-taking. Such guidelines include handbooks on: *Population and Housing Census Editing*; *Census Management for Population and Housing Censuses*; *Geospatial Infrastructure in Support of Census Activities*; *Measuring the Economically Active in Population Censuses*; as well as technical reports on the operational guidelines on *Post Enumeration Surveys*; and on *Census Data Capture Methodology*.

Dissemination of census data: CensusInfo

While hard-copy publications are still common and necessary for the dissemination of census results, electronic media are increasingly becoming more widespread.

A software package, **CensusInfo**, has been developed by the United Nations Statistics Division in collaboration with UNICEF and UNFPA to help countries disseminate census data on CD-ROM and on the Internet. Specific functionalities have been added to meet census dissemination requirements such as generation of tables, graphs, maps, and template reports for dissemination at any appropriate geographical domain. CensusInfo was officially launched at

the United Nations Statistical Commission on 23 February 2009. The most recent updated version of CensusInfo is available for free on-line at <http://www.censusinfo.net>.

To date, 27 workshops— 7 regional and 20 national —have been conducted to assist countries in adapting the software for dissemination of aggregated census data at all geographical levels.

Technical cooperation

An integral part of the World Programme is the provision to countries 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 population and housing censuses. This part of the programme emphasizes the 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 planning and conducting of censuses or large-scale national sample surveys. In this context, the United Nations Statistics Division continues to organize regional workshops focusing on a different aspect of census taking each year, such as census mapping, planning and management, quality assurance, data processing, census evaluation and post-enumeration surveys, data dissemination, etc. In the period 2006-2014 the United Nations Statistics Division conducted 59 workshops and seminars involving over 1,400 participants from around 140 countries. As the 2010 census round was winding down, the focus had shifted to the study of experiences and lessons acquired in that

round, as first steps for preparing for the next (2020) round of censuses.

2010 World Census Programme website

The United Nations Statistics Division hosts a website for the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/census2010.htm>. The primary objective of the website is to promote international exchange and sharing of census-related knowledge and information, and 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, including national census dates as well as questionnaires that have been used. In addition, the website presents information on census-related meetings and workshops organized by the United Nations Statistics Division and other organizations. The website includes a periodic Newsletter on census activities and related events at national, regional and international levels.

An important aspect of the website is the Census Knowledge Base, which serves as a repository of census methodology and documents pertaining to national 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 400 documents on census-related matters.

Civil Registration and Vital Statistics

History

Vital statistics are a key component of a national statistical system. Defined as a collection of statistics on vital events in a lifetime of a person and their characteristics, these statistics provide crucial and critical information on the most valuable capital of every nation – its people. Reliable vital statistics are essential for producing timely and accurate population estimates and demographic and health statistics.

Taking into consideration the significance of accurate and reliable vital statistics and that many countries do not have adequate legal or statistical recording systems for vital events, the United Nations Statistical Commission has focused closely on the development of vital statistics systems since its inception, in 1948.

In 1991, the Statistical Commission adopted the International Programme for Accelerating the Improvement of Vital Statistics and Civil Registration Systems (See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1991, Supplement No. 5, (E/1991/25), para. 118).

Nowadays, the Programme continues to provide technical guidance and support for countries to undertake activities to strengthen their civil registration and vital statistics systems, with an emphasis on sustainable national efforts. There is growing recognition of the value of civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) to governance, development and human rights. Furthermore, CRVS are emerging as an essential underpinning to the post-2015 development agenda, due to

their potential for providing robust, reliable and timely figures in the context of indicator monitoring.

Methodology, availability and sources of vital statistics

Annual vital statistics are not always available for all countries. In a number of countries basic birth and death statistics can only be obtained from population censuses and sample surveys. The availability of reliable, up-to-date and continuous vital statistics depends on the level of development of civil registration systems. According to the information provided to the United Nations *Demographic Yearbook*, regular, annual vital statistics are not yet available in approximately half of the countries in the world.

The United Nations Statistics Division is responsible for developing guidelines and methodologies for the collection, compilation and dissemination of vital statistics. This includes the production of international recommendations for vital statistics systems, as well as technical handbooks and manuals on specific aspects pertinent to building or maintaining a well-functioning civil registration system, and obtaining vital statistics from civil registration, population census and sample surveys.

(i) Principles and recommendations

The original version of the *Principles for a Vital Statistics System: Recommendations for the Improvement and Standardization of Vital Statistics* was adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission in 1953. The publication was subsequently revised in 1973 and 2001. The 2001 revision recognized that civil registration alone will not provide the requisite indicators needed to monitor social and economic development; it also describes other sources of data for both the estimation of vital rates and the estimation of denominators to calculate statistical rates and indicators.

The latest, third revision of the *Principles and Recommendations* was guided by the recommendations adopted by an Expert Group Meeting conducted in June 2011. The revised recommendations were submitted to the 45th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission in March 2014, and were published in print and electronically in its English version in November 2014². This revision presents updated methodological solutions for civil registration and vital statistics. It makes a clear distinction between vital statistics and their sources, and includes an elaboration on the role of different components of the system, such as the role of public health institutions and the role of population

registers that are being instituted and developed in more and more countries.

(ii) Handbook and manuals

In addition, the Division produces a series of more detailed guidelines including handbooks and manuals which elaborate on specific aspects of civil registration and vital statistics systems. These guidelines include handbooks on five operational aspects of civil registration and vital statistics systems - preparation of a legal framework; developing information, education and communication; management, operation and maintenance; computerization and records release and archiving. A training handbook was also published, as well as the handbook on fertility and mortality focusing on the use of censuses and surveys for vital statistics.

The release of the third revision of the *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* carries the need to update the accompanying manuals and handbooks relevant to CRVS, such as the *Handbook on Training in Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems* and the *Handbook on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems: Management, Operation and Maintenance*. Thus, the Statistics Division plans on gradually revising the contents of the pertinent manuals in order to offer countries a complete up-to-date set of publications on CRVS.

Technical cooperation

One of the mandates of the Statistics Division is providing technical assistance to countries. Throughout the years, UNSD has conducted training workshops, which are usually attended by representatives from national statistical offices and civil registrars.

Currently, the Division is holding a series of regional and sub-regional workshops to facilitate the implementation of the third revision of the *Principles and Recommendations* and the improvement of national capacities in collecting and compiling vital statistics. The first workshops of this series took place in Daejeon, Republic of Korea for Asian countries and in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for English-speaking African countries. The Statistics Division will continue to forge alliances with regional bodies, taking advantage of the momentum favoring the improvement of CRVS, and will hold further workshops in other regions, such as Central Asia, the Pacific and Latin America.

The Division produces technical reports on the status of civil registration and vital statistics systems that describe country practices in registering vital events and producing vital statistics from various data sources. Currently, 25 countries and areas are covered by the technical reports. The technical reports feature areas such as organisation of the civil registration system, organisation structure of the vital

² United Nations publication, ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/19/Rev.3, Sales No. E.13.XVII.10. Available from <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/standmeth/principles/default.htm>.

statistics system, status of civil registration and vital statistics systems in the country, use of population censuses and sample surveys as sources of vital statistics and availability of vital statistics.

Website

The Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Knowledge Base, available at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/vitalstatkb>, documents and disseminates demographic research articles, United Nations methodological guidelines, and country practices and activities in the area of civil registration and vital statistics. It facilitates the international exchange and sharing of knowledge and information, provides guidance to countries, and monitors progress made on civil registration and vital statistics at national level. There are currently almost 500 articles in the Knowledge Base.

Global Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Group

The formation of a global CRVS group was discussed at a side-event of the 45th session of the Statistical Commission. The initial meeting brought together key regional and international stakeholders, who agreed on the need to establish a global mechanism where members can make positive contributions to the improvement of CRVS, in light of respective expertise and areas of concern.

The main objectives of the group are to (a) converge strategic priorities and mandates, creating an enabling environment for greater collaboration; (b) exchange information and coordinate global activities; (c) explore and leverage additional opportunities to accelerate the improvement of CRVS systems; and (d) advocate for the importance of CRVS as a development imperative.

The United Nations Statistics Division serves as the Secretariat of the group. Members are international and regional inter-governmental organizations, committed to the advancement of CRVS programs, represented by senior staff.

During 2014, the United Nations Statistics Division designed and constructed the website for the group (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/CRVS/GlobalCRVS.html>). It contains the terms of reference, information on members' expertise, and activities and events on CRVS, to be shared among members and disseminated to the wide public.

Energy Statistics

Energy statistics encompass basic energy statistics and energy balances aiming to describe how energy products are produced by human activities within a national territory, how they enter into and/or exit from that territory and how they are used in it. Energy statistics are fundamental to monitoring the energy situation both at the national and international level and are the basis for sound energy policy making.

International Recommendations for Energy Statistics

Following the recommendations of the United Nations Statistical Commission at its thirty-seventh session (7-10 March 2006), UNSD worked together with the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics and the Intersecretariat Working Group on Energy Statistics (InterEnerStat) on the preparation of the *International Recommendations for Energy Statistics* (IRES). IRES was adopted by the Statistical Commission at its forty-first session (22-25 February 2011).

IRES provides a firm foundation for the long-term development of official energy statistics based on the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and contains guidance on the underlying concepts, definitions and classifications, as well as on data compilation and data dissemination.

IRES represents a major achievement in energy statistics at the international level: it provides for the first time a set of internationally agreed and harmonized definitions of energy products, reflecting the work on harmonized definitions carried out by the Intersecretariat Working Group on Energy Statistics (InterEnerStat) and presents the *Standard International Energy Product Classification* (SIEC) with its correspondence to the Central Product Classification (CPC ver. 2) and the Harmonized System (HS 2007). SIEC is expected to play an important role in providing guidance for the collection, compilation and dissemination of energy statistics and in facilitating the integration of energy statistics with other statistical domains.

IRES provides recommendations on the statistical units for use in data collection from both energy and non-energy industries. The reference list of data items for collection (together with their definitions) is provided to reflect the specificity of each energy product and to ensure international comparability of the compiled statistics. IRES provides an overview of data sources (e.g., administrative data, surveys, etc.) and data collection and compilation methods relevant to energy statistics.

Given the importance of the legal and institutional framework for the collection and compilation of energy statistics, recommendations are formulated to promote coordinated and efficient frameworks.

IRES provides recommendations on the general principles underpinning the compilation of energy balances. A template for the energy balance is presented in IRES in detailed and aggregated form as a reference.

IRES describes the main dimensions of energy data quality and provides recommendations on how to set up a national energy data quality framework, including the development and use of indicators of quality and the reporting on data quality and metadata.

Recommendations on the dissemination of energy statistics, in particular on how to address data confidentiality, release schedules, and dissemination of metadata are now formulated in IRES, consistent with other frameworks.

In addition to concepts and definitions for energy statistics, IRES also lists examples of the use of energy statistics and its data items. IRES presents an explanation of the conceptual relationships between balances, on the one hand, and energy accounts of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA), on the other, in order to assist both compilers and users of energy statistics. Examples of indicators relevant for energy statistics are also provided, as well as a reference to the importance of energy statistics for the calculation of greenhouse-gas emissions.

The preparation of IRES has been the result of an extensive consultation with countries, regional and international organizations as well as expert groups such as the Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications, the London Group on Environmental Accounting etc.

Practical guidance for the implementation of IRES will be provided in the *Energy Statistics Compilers Manual* (ESCM). The ESCM will contain further and more detailed explanations of the recommendations and provide practical guidance for compilers by describing best practices applicable under different circumstances. It is expected that the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics will play a key role in the preparation of the ESCM.

Data collection and dissemination

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.” UNSD continues to compile and disseminate energy statistics annually from more than 225 countries and territories.

The UNSD Energy Statistics Questionnaire, which covers production, trade, transformation and final consumption (end-use) of energy products, is sent to national statistical offices, ministries of energy or other national authorities responsible for energy statistics. The Questionnaire is the primary source of information for the UNSD Energy Statistics Database. Additional sources of information for the database include national, regional and international statistical publications. UNSD prepares estimates where official data are incomplete or inconsistent.

Energy statistics are disseminated through two annual publications:

- The *Energy Statistics Yearbook*, which provides comparable data on the supply and demand of energy products. It contains data both in original physical units and in common energy units such as terajoules, to allow inter-product comparisons.
- The *Energy Balances and Electricity Profiles*, which provides a snapshot of the energy supply and use for a selected number of countries in a common energy unit, as well as detailed information on electricity capacity, generation, trade, losses and final consumption of electricity.

The *UNSD Energy Statistics Database* contains data from 1950 to present. Data from 1990 onwards are freely accessible through the [UNdata](http://data.un.org) portal at <http://data.un.org>.

As a result of the work on IRES, the *UNSD Energy Statistics Questionnaire* has been revised to reflect the concepts, methods and classifications contained in IRES and to harmonize it more closely with the questionnaire of other international organizations (such as the IEA/Eurostat/ECE questionnaire) in order to reduce response burden on countries and facilitate data exchange. The 2011 round of data collection was the first to be carried out with the revised Questionnaire.

Knowledge-sharing

As part of the preparation of the *Energy Statistics Compilers Manual* (ESCM), UNSD in close cooperation with the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics has been collecting country practices in the collection and compilation of energy statistics. The information is available on the UNSD website at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/energy/template.htm>

More than 45 countries have already submitted their practices in various aspects of the collection and compilation of energy statistics (on the collection of electricity production, on energy consumption in households, on energy balances etc.).



energy statistics.

The website will be expanded to cover also relevant methodological guidelines in order to provide a forum to share information on concepts, definitions, and compilation practices related to

International Cooperation and Technical Assistance

UNSD is an active participant in a number of international initiatives related to energy statistics, such as:

- The Oslo Group on Energy Statistics, a forum for countries to discuss methodological issues and contribute to the methodological development of energy statistics.
- The Intersecretariat Working Group on Energy Statistics (InterEnerStat), a forum for organizations engaged in the collection of energy statistics from countries (at the global, regional and sectoral level), as well as for major users of international energy statistics, to enhance the coordination of international energy statistics and the collaboration of international (global, regional and sectoral) organizations.
- The Joint Organizations Data Initiative (JODI), a cooperative effort of eight international organizations (APEC, EUROSTAT, GECF, IEA, IEFS, OLADE, OPEC and UNSD) to report monthly statistics such as production, trade, stocks and stock changes for oil and natural gas on a regular basis, to support transparency in the oil and gas markets and user-consumer dialogue.
- International cooperation with other international organizations (e.g. IEA and EUROSTAT), countries, non-governmental organizations as well as with the United Nations regional commissions (e.g. ESCWA) and United Nations specialized agencies, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), on matters concerning energy statistics.

Workshops on the compilation of energy statistics are being organized to assist statisticians and energy specialists in improving their knowledge of energy statistics and increasing their ability to provide energy data for their governments, policy and decision makers, as well as for international organizations.

Contact the Industrial and Energy Statistics Section for inquiries at energy_stat@un.org.

Website: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/energy>

Environment Statistics

Environment statistics describe the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the state of the environment and its interaction with human activities and natural events by integrating data from a multitude of different subject areas and sources. Environment statistics is an emerging statistical field in official statistics in most countries and it is indispensable for evidence based policies and decision making to support sustainable development.

Environmental statistics and indicators for policy-making

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

In 2000 most countries signed the Millennium Declaration and committed themselves to reach the declaration's goals and targets by 2015, including Goal 7 on environmental sustainability, using 10 globally agreed environmental indicators to monitor progress.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, August 2002) put the emphasis on reaching specific targets in specific time frames and monitoring progress, thus reaffirming the need for statistics, indicators and integrated information systems that measure and track progress.

More recently, during the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20, Brazil, June 2012), Member States of the United Nations have addressed the necessary advancement in environmental information. Its outcome document, "The Future We Want", contains various references to the importance of environmental data, information and indicators, that are highly relevant to the work of UNSD.

Environmental and sustainable development assessment, climate change information and policy, discussions about ecosystems and biodiversity, the green economy and measuring progress beyond GDP, are all developments that influence and will most likely continue to contribute to increased demand for environmental statistics and indicators. Beyond the MDGs, the post-2015 development

agenda worldwide will include the new Sustainable Development Goals, targets and indicators shaping the next international development monitoring framework, which will undoubtedly require countries to produce a wide range of environment statistics to compile relevant indicators.

Milestones in the history of environment 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. 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.

In the 1970's and 1980's, while work at UNSD concentrated on conceptual frameworks for environmental statistics and indicators and on environmental-economic accounting, the UN-ECE Statistics Division pioneered work on standard environment statistics classifications. Environment statistics programmes also started at OECD and later at Eurostat, focusing on data collection and indicator development.

In the late 1990's UNSD embarked on data collection. The first global collection of environment statistics was launched in 1999 and since then it has been conducted on a biennial basis.

In 2010, following the request of the Statistical Commission, UNSD started the revision of the 1984 Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES 2013) including the establishment of the Basic and Core Sets of Environment Statistics.

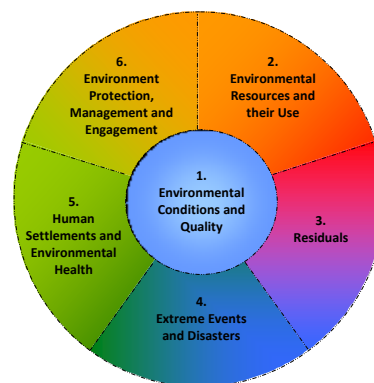
The Statistical Commission at its 44th session in February 2013 endorsed the revised FDES (including the Basic and Core Sets of Environment Statistics) as the framework for strengthening environment statistics programmes in countries, and recognized it as a useful tool in the context of sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda. The Commission also endorsed the Action Plan and the establishment of an Expert Group on Environment Statistics.

Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics and a Core Set of Environment Statistics – FDES 2013

UNSD developed a Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics that was published in 1984 (FDES 1984). It presented a systematic approach to the organization and development of environment statistics. It was accompanied by two technical 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 FDES 1984 was considered a successful framework that has been used by many countries.

The Statistical Commission at its forty-first session in 2010 endorsed a work programme to revise: a) the FDES 1984, based on improved scientific knowledge about the environment and new statistical requirements created by emerging environmental policies and concerns; and b) to develop a Core Set of Environment Statistics as part of the FDES revision process. The process was led by UNSD with the substantive contribution of the Expert Group on the Revision of the FDES, which met four times and worked remotely on a continued basis during the process.

The revision and development process (2010–2013) started with a review of different conceptual, analytical and indicator frameworks. It also included the analysis of relevant international and country practices and data requirements created by international conventions, Multilateral Environmental Agreements and development goals. It required the consideration of current and foreseeable environmental and sustainable development information needs at all levels. The process also involved the consideration of different possible structures for organizing the statistics about the environment into a multi-layered approach. The revision and development process engaged a great variety of stakeholders represented by producers and users of environment statistics from countries in all regions and at different stages of development, as well as international organizations, specialized agencies and NGOs. As part of the process to develop the Core Set of Environment Statistics, more than 2,500 environmental indicators and statistics were analyzed, in terms of relevance, statistical feasibility and methodological soundness. The resulting draft Core Set was tested in 25 countries through a pilot exercise that substantively improved it. Both the revised FDES and the Core Set were subjected to a Global Consultation process in which 71 countries, areas and organizations sent their valuable contributions and suggestions.



The resulting FDES 2013 is a multi-purpose conceptual and statistical framework that is comprehensive and integrative in nature and marks out the scope of environment statistics. It provides an organizing structure to guide the collection and compilation of environment statistics at the national level. It brings together data from the various relevant subject areas and sources. It is broad and holistic in nature, covering the issues and aspects of the environment that are relevant for policy analysis and decision making by applying it to cross-cutting issues such as climate change as well as the relation of agriculture to the environment.

The FDES 2013 organizes environment statistics into a structure of six components, each of them broken down into sub-components and statistical topics, which in turn contain the individual environment statistics. It is structured in a way that allows links to economic and social domains therefore facilitating further integration of information for analytical purposes.

The objective of the Core Set of Environment Statistics contained in the FDES 2013 is to serve as an agreed, limited set of environment statistics that are of high priority and relevance to most countries. The Core Set is organized and presented in accordance to the FDES 2013 structure. The Core Set of Environment Statistics is actually Tier 1 of a greater (though not exhaustive) Basic Set of Environment Statistics composed of three tiers according to the level of relevance, availability and methodological development of the statistics.

The FDES 2013 targets a wide user community. Though it is relevant to, and recommended for use by countries at any stage of development, its primary objective is to guide countries at early stages in the development of their environment statistics programmes. The audience at the national level includes environmental statisticians in national statistical offices (NSOs), environmental administration and management as well as other producers of environment statistics in line ministries and sectoral authorities. The FDES 2013 helps to mark out the roles of the different data producers, thus facilitating inter-agency coordination.

Implementation of the FDES 2013 and the Expert Group on Environment Statistics

The Statistical Commission at its 44th session endorsed the action plan for the implementation of the Framework in countries. The action plan included the establishment of an Expert Group on Environment Statistics to assist the Statistics Division in methodological work such as the development of (i) a methodological manual for the Core Set of Environment Statistics that will provide detailed guidance built upon existing resources where available; (ii) an environment statistics self-assessment tool; and (iii) guidelines to establish and strengthen environment statistics programmes in countries.

The Expert Group on Environment Statistics (EGES) was established in December 2013. Complementary statistical tools of the FDES currently under development by the EGES include: the Environment Statistics Self-Assessment Tool (ESSAT), the Manual on the Basic Set of Environment Statistics containing detailed methodological guidance and metadata for the different component, sub-components and its individual environment statistics, and the Handbook to Set Up/Strengthen Environment Statistics Programmes at the National Level.

The FDES 2013 has been used by countries to assess the state of their environment statistics as well as to plan their future strategies; it has been applied as a basis for capacity building and technical assistance by UNSD and partner agencies, and has also been used by consultants assisting countries, regions, and sub-regions to develop and strengthen environment statistics.

Countries more recently developing their environment statistics programmes are using its structure and guidance to organize their own statistical databases and compendia of environment statistics (following the FDES 2013 structure of components, sub-components and statistical topics). The FDES 2013 has been very helpful in providing guidance for countries on how to organize and develop environment statistics that are multi-purpose, providing descriptive statistics and indicators, substantiating reports, and feeding into integrated environmental-economic accounts.

There have now been many cases where the FDES 2013 has been successfully implemented in countries by National Statistical Offices, Ministries of Environment or very often by the two institutions in cooperation with one another as well as with other institutions. Several national, sub-regional and regional workshops with or without the presence of UNSD have aided the implementation process.

Collection and dissemination of global environment statistics and indicators

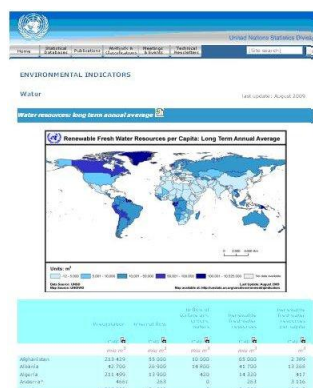
The Statistical Commission in 1995 approved the proposal by the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Advancement of Environment Statistics that UNSD carry out a global

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/Eurostat countries. The data collection has since been conducted on a biennial basis as part of UNSD's data collection programme. UNEP joined the data collection in 2004.

The 2013 round of data collection is currently being finalized and the complete results from this round will be disseminated on the UNSD website.

The UNSD/UNEP Questionnaire on Environment Statistics covers the areas of water, air, land and waste. The last five data collections have focused on water and waste. Response rates vary strongly by region. The best response rates have been from Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia. Africa and the Pacific show low response rates.

While the number of countries responding with data to the Questionnaire has increased since 1999, many countries still have only scattered data and are able to respond only for a limited number of variables.



Following a thorough validation process, selected data sets, together with data from OECD, Eurostat and other sources, are published by UNSD through two main web-based products: the [UNSD Environmental Indicators](#) and [Country Snapshots](#), as well as through contributing selected tables to [UNdata](#).

Ten themes have been selected to organize the current set of UNSD Environmental Indicators: Air and Climate; Biodiversity; Energy and Minerals; Forests; Governance; Inland Water Resources; Land and Agriculture; Marine and Coastal Areas; Natural Disasters; and Waste.

The Country Snapshots include many of the indicators from the UNSD Environmental Indicators list, as well as other economic and demographic background information.

Technical cooperation and capacity building

During the last two decades, UNSD has been committed to technically assist countries in the field of environmental statistics and indicators, and has conducted various specialized regional, sub-regional and national workshops, seminars and training courses around the world. UNSD has constructed partnerships to build capacities in the different regions and sub-regions working closely with the

UN Regional Commissions and other regional and sub-regional institutions. A wide range of practitioners from NSOs, environmental ministries and sectoral authorities involved in the production of environment statistics have participated in these capacity building activities over the years.

Currently, environment statistics capacity building activities are being supported by the regular budget as well as by two Development Account projects: "Supporting developing countries measure progress towards achieving a Green Economy" (2014-2015), and "Supporting Member States in developing and strengthening environment statistics and integrated environmental-economic accounting for improved monitoring of sustainable development" (2014-2017).

Previously, technical assistance in environment statistics through statistical capacity building Development Account 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 CARICOM Secretariat has launched a regular data collection programme in environment statistics and the third regional compendium is planned for 2013. UNSD has continued to provide technical assistance in this subject to the CARICOM Secretariat and its Member States.

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.

A strategic Framework for Strengthening Capacity in the Development and Institutionalization of Environment Statistics in the ECOWAS Region was developed and is being implemented by the ECOWAS Secretariat. The ECOWAS Secretariat has started data collection in environment statistics from its Member States and UNSD continues to assist the Secretariat in this regard.

Coordination of international activities in environment statistics

The Statistical Commission at its thirty-fourth session in 2003 empowered UNSD to convene an Intersecretariat

Working Group on Environment Statistics (IWG-ENV) to coordinate and harmonize methodological work, data collection, dissemination, training and capacity building programmes in environment statistics. The permanent members of the IWG-ENV are those organizations that have well-established international programmes on environment statistics (current members are UNSD, UN-ECE, UN-ECLAC, UN-ESCWA, UNEP, OECD, Eurostat and FAO). The IWG-ENV also works through thematic sub-groups as needed.

Information on the Web

The FDES 2013 is currently undergoing official English editing. The unedited version is available here: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/environment/fdes.htm>

A brochure describing the developments and the use of the FDES 2013 is available in all the six UN languages at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/environment/fdes.htm>

ENVSTATS, Environment Statistics News and Notes provides information about national, regional and international events and developments in environment statistics. It is published twice a year and is available at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/environment/newsletters.htm>

For more information on ongoing methodological work in environment statistics, questionnaires, indicators, country data, access to data sources and publications, visit <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/environment/default.htm>

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Environmental-Economic Accounting

The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) contributes to the development of standards, compilers manuals and implementation guides on environmental economic accounts. Through its work as secretariat to the United Nations Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA), the Division has facilitated the revision of the Handbook of National Accounting: Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting 2003 (SEEA 2003) and the elevation of the SEEA Central Framework to an international statistical standard. The Division plays a leading role in advancing the methodology and implementation of environmental-economic accounting including ecosystem accounting.

With the adoption of the SEEA Central Framework as the international statistical standard for environmental-economic accounting and the welcoming of the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting by the UNSC, the Division has initiated implementing the capacity building programme for the implementation of the SEEA Central Framework and the testing of SEEA Experimental Ecosystem accounts as recommended by the Statistical Commission. The Division provides capacity building and technical assistance directly to a limited number of countries and conducts regional and global workshops on the SEEA.

The Division maintains a website which serves as the global hub for environmental-economic accounts providing information on, among others, the process of revising the SEEA and of developing its subsystems, meetings and other events. It also maintains a digital library containing methodological and compilation publications about environmental-economic accounting from national statistical offices, international agencies, academia and NGO's. The Division plans to update its website to an interactive knowledge base platform.

The System of Environmental Economic Accounts (SEEA)

The SEEA is a multipurpose statistical framework to measure the environment and its interaction with the economy. It provides the internationally agreed framework for providing indicators that directly respond to the demand of integrated policy-making, reversing the historical 'information silo' approach to statistics. Policy-makers and managers benefit from consistent, comparable and comprehensive statistics and indicators when the integrated accounting approach of the SEEA is used. Importantly, the trade-offs of their decisions that affect natural resources and associated services are made explicit.

The SEEA has been recognized as an important framework for monitoring progress in the context of the post- 2015 development agenda, and more specifically, as an important statistical framework for the SDG indicators by several fora including the Statistical Commission at its 45th Session. On a broader level, it is expected that the SEEA can also contribute to the strengthening of national statistical systems and their adaptation to changing data landscapes.

The post-2015 development agenda focusses on a multi-dimensional set of goals and calls for integrated evidence based decision making. As has been recognised by the Commission at its forty-fifth session, the SEEA would contribute significantly in advancing a multi-dimensional information system for the post 2015

development agenda to better evaluate tradeoffs and interconnections between different facets of sustainability in particular related to the economy and the environment. The SEEA can provide an internationally recognised and standardized approach to bringing measures of the environment into a system of information fully consistent and integrated with the System of National Accounts (SNA) used to measure the economy, for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals. The integration of economic and environmental information allows for the derivation of coherent indicators and the use of environmental-economic modelling to develop footprint type indicators and evaluate trade-offs and impacts of policies on the economy and the environment.

The SEEA can be implemented in countries which are at various stages of development. The implementation of the framework can be incremental starting from aggregated tables and accounts that can be disaggregated based on policy needs and data development.

A suite of publications has been developed on specific resources or SEEA modules, including SEEA-Water, SEEA-Energy, international recommendations for water and energy statistics and Guidelines for the Compilation of Water Accounts and Statistics in order to elaborate in detail on these themes and support the wider SEEA revision.

SEEA Central Framework: The international statistical standard for environmental-economic accounting

The System of Environmental-Economic Accounting Central Framework was adopted as international statistical standard by the UN Statistical Commission at its 43rd session in February 2012. It was published in early 2014 by the United Nations, European Commission, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, International Monetary Fund and World Bank. The official Arabic and Chinese translations have been completed. Draft translations of the publication into the other official languages of the United Nations have been posted on the Division's website. The SEEA Central Framework provides the internationally agreed standard concepts, definitions, classifications, accounting rules and tables for producing internationally comparable statistics on the environment and its relationship with the economy. Building upon the System of National Accounts, it organizes environmental and economic information in a systems approach that covers the stocks and flows that are relevant to the analysis of environmental and economic issues. Using the accounts compiled following the principles of SEEA Central Framework, a number of policy relevant questions can be answered including questions related to the use of natural resources as well as depletion of such resources.



SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting



SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting summarizes the state of knowledge on ecosystem accounting from the perspective of environmental-economic accounting. Ecosystem accounting is an approach to the assessment of the environment through the measurement of ecosystems

and of the flows of services from ecosystems into economic and other human activity. It provides a complementary perspective to the accounting

approaches described in the SEEA Central Framework. While SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting is not an international standard, it marks the beginning of a more integrated, multi-disciplinary research programme in this area that benefits from the strong role that official statisticians can play.

The Statistical Commission at its 44th session welcomed the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting as an important first step in the development of a statistical framework for ecosystem accounting, and encouraged its use by international and regional agencies and countries wishing to test and experiment in this new area of statistics. The official English version of the publication is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2015. Work is also underway for the translation of the book into the official languages of the United Nations.

SEEA Applications and Extensions

SEEA Applications and Extensions is a companion document to the SEEA Central Framework that highlights the potential of data from the accounts of the SEEA Central Framework to be applied to a range of policy and research questions and to be extended to integrate with data in other domains. SEEA Applications and Extensions will not be a statistical standard, but will provide a bridge between compilers and analysts and is an important document in promoting and supporting the implementation of the SEEA Central Framework.

The Statistical Commission at its 44th session welcomed the SEEA Applications and Extensions as a useful contribution to illustrating possible applications of the SEEA Central Framework. The white cover version of the publication has been posted on the division website; the official publication is expected in late 2015.

SEEA-Water and International Recommendations for Water Statistics

The System of Environmental-Economic Accounting for Water (SEEA-Water) is a subsystem of SEEA applied to water-related information. It provides a conceptual framework for organizing the hydrological and economic information related to water in a coherent and consistent framework.

The UN Statistical Commission at its thirty-eighth session in 2007 adopted the SEEA-Water as an interim international statistical standard and, recognizing significant demand from the users' community, and encouraged its implementation in countries.





The International Recommendations for Water Statistics (IRWS) provides a coherent set of principles, concepts and definition of data items and related statistics to assist countries in the establishment and strengthening of policy relevant information systems for water. In

particular IRWS supports the collection, compilation and dissemination of internationally comparable water statistics in countries; the implementation of SEEA-Water; and the development of coherent and consistent indicators.

An initial version of the Guidelines for the Compilation of Water Accounts and Statistics has been completed. The Guidelines provide compilers of water statistics and accounts with a set of materials to support the implementation of water accounts and statistics in support to decision-making. The guidelines are intended for both statisticians working in national statistical offices as well as water experts who plan to embark on the collection of water statistics and compilation of the accounts.

SEEA-Energy

The System of Environmental-Economic Accounting for Energy (SEEA-Energy) is a subsystem of the SEEA for energy related information and as such is fully consistent with the SEEA Central Framework. It consists of agreed concepts, definitions, classifications and tables and accounts related to energy. It also elaborates on the links between energy balances and energy accounts.

SEEA-Energy is coherent with the International Recommendations for Energy Statistics (IRES). Both IRES and SEEA-Energy will provide countries with guidance on how to organize and strengthen energy statistics to meet energy policy demands. The final draft of the document is expected to be completed by the first quarter of 2015.

SEEA-Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (SEEA-AFF)

The SEEA AFF is an application of the concepts and structures of the SEEA Central Framework with a focus on integrating economic and environmental information for agriculture, forestry and fisheries. It integrates data across ten primary domains, namely: agricultural production, forestry, fisheries, land, water, energy, GHG emissions, fertilizers and pesticides, soil resources and economic data. The SEEA AFF

captures the complex interactions between production in agriculture, forestry and fisheries and the resource demands (land, water, carbon, biodiversity, etc.) associated with these activities. As such, it can serve as a framework which informs policy makers at national level, and it can directly produce indicators needed to monitor progress towards the post-2015 sustainable development goals and targets. The finalization of the SEEA AFF will take close account of the ongoing process to finalize SDG indicators.

The development of the SEEA AFF guidelines is being led by the FAO and has been resourced within the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics. A draft has been circulated for global consultation in late 2014 and a revised version is expected in the beginning of the second quarter of 2015. It is expected that the SEEA AFF will be published jointly by FAO and UNSD.

UNCEEA

Acknowledging the rising importance and demand for environmental-economic accounting on the international statistical and policy agendas, the Statistical Commission, at its thirty-sixth session in 2005, established the United Nations Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA). The UNCEEA consists of senior experts from countries and international agencies that leads, provides direction, and manages the programme of work on environmental-economic accounting and related statistics

The interim chair of the UNCEEA is Mr. Ian Ewing, Deputy Australian Statistician, Australian Bureau of Statistics. UNSD serves as its permanent Secretariat. The UNCEEA has a Bureau consisting of senior statisticians from countries and international agencies, to assist the UNCEEA with the oversight and day-to-day management of the projects under its responsibility.

London Group on Environmental Accounting

The London Group is a city group established by the Statistical Commission in 1994 to allow practitioners to share experiences developing and implementing environmental accounts linked to the System of National Accounts. It convened its first meeting in March 1994 in London, England. Since its establishment, the London Group on Environmental Accounting has played a leading role in advancing concepts and methods in environmental-economic accounting.

The London Group on Environmental Accounting made substantial contributions to resolving the technical issues for the revision of the SEEA. The Group is chaired by Joe St. Lawrence, Statistics Canada.

Technical Committee on the SEEA Central Framework

The Technical Committee of the SEEA Central Framework was established in March 2014 under the auspices of the Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting. The Technical Committee is responsible to advance the research and implementation agenda of the SEEA Central Framework. A priority of the technical committee's programme of work has been the advancement of work on the SEEA technical notes. In particular, the Technical Committee provides overall technical guidance to the drafting and finalization of the technical notes by working closely with the editor of the notes to provide technical input and ensure consistency with the SEEA Central Framework.

The SEEA technical notes provide guidance to countries on the steps required to begin the implementation of the SEEA. The technical notes summarize in a concise manner for a given topic the policy relevance of the SEEA accounts, possible indicators which could be derived from them (particularly those linked to the SDG indicators), as well as data sources and possible issues in implementation. The first batch of draft notes including notes on water, energy, land and the environmental goods and services sector (EGSS) accounts as well as an overarching note on the implementation of SEEA and the integrated statistics approach are expected to be available by in the first quarter of 2015.

Technical assistance

UNSD is active in providing assistance to developing countries in developing capacities in countries to support the implementation of international recommendations and standards on environmental accounting.

UNSD in collaboration with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), organized a pilot Training of Trainers (TOT) for the worldwide implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting. Participants from fifteen countries and four international organizations attended an obligatory online course to ensure a common level of technical knowledge on the SEEA.

The online course was tutored by an e-learning tutor and accompanied by SEEA-experts from Statistics Canada, Statistics Netherlands and UNSD. The course was developed by GIZ and UNSD and was reviewed by the

Technical Committee of the SEEA Central Framework. The in-person seminar provided a unique opportunity for participants who had already acquired an understanding of basic SEEA concepts to improve their knowledge through practical exercises and discussions on issues in implementation. Furthermore, facilitation skills including techniques to manage group dynamics and meet learning objectives were part of the training course.

The SEEA training course is the first step towards developing a community of practice and sharing experience among countries facing similar issues in implementation. The interactive knowledge base on the SEEA which is being developed by UNSD will facilitate interaction among practitioners. The SEEA training course developed by UNSD and GIZ has been replicated for English speaking countries in Africa. There are plans to replicate the course in the ECLAC and ESCAP regions in 2015. The online course will be translated into Spanish in early 2015 to better serve the needs of Spanish speaking countries.

UNSD has obtained funding for a 4 year project to implement selected modules of the SEEA Central Framework in Kenya, Malaysia, Uganda and Vietnam.

In order to assist countries in the testing of the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting, UNSD under the auspices of the Committee is implementing the project "Advancing the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting in pilot countries" in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Secretariat of Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD), with financial assistance provided by the government of Norway. The objective of the project is development of a national assessment in the seven pilot countries, namely Bhutan, Chile, Indonesia, Mauritius, Mexico, South Africa and Vietnam. The project work in the pilot countries has demonstrated that the SEEA helps in organizing and bringing together a number of uncoordinated monitoring initiatives which are ongoing, by using a common framework towards the development of an information system for sustainable development.

To respond to increasing demand for training on the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting, training materials are currently being developed with the objective of increasing the capacity of national statistical offices and other agencies to test the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting, helping practitioners not from national accounts backgrounds to improve their technical knowledge of the SEEA and deepening their understanding of the accounting principles and basic data needs for compilation of ecosystem accounts.

UNSD has continued to provide technical assistance to countries in the implementation of the SEEA-Water, including Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador Mauritius, Morocco and Peru.

For enquiries please contact the **Environmental-Economic Accounts Section** at: 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 national statistical offices and women's and gender offices of Member States, in collaboration with statistical and gender units of regional and international organizations and other partners.

History

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) and in response to the call for more statistics on the status of women. The programme has been shaped by demands from four UN 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). The programme has been geared to users' needs and has provided technical support to national statistical offices (NSOs) and women's and gender offices of Member States, in collaboration with statistical and gender units of regional and international organizations and other stakeholders..

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

- The need for national statistical systems to take gender issues into account in all stages of data production, analysis and dissemination and in all relevant statistical areas;
- 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

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.

Another aspect of methodological work is the development of methods to collect data on particular issues of concern. In this context, the *Guidelines for Producing Statistics on Violence against Women: Statistical Surveys* have been produced and can be accessed on line at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/default.html>. The Guidelines have been prepared to assist countries in assessing the scope, prevalence and incidence of violence against women. They provide methodological advice regarding selection of topics, sources of data, relevant statistical classifications, outputs, wording of questions and all other issues relevant for national statistical offices to conduct statistical surveys on violence against women.

Also, 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/>). ICATUS is currently under revision by a group of experts to ensure it is meaningful for a broad range of objectives and can be used as a dissemination framework for time use statistics that are internationally comparable and relevant for both social and economic policies. ICATUS is expected to be finalized and available to users by 2016.

In addition, in 2013, UNSD has finalized the manual *Integrating a Gender Perspective into Statistics*, following the decision by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics and addressing the request by the UN Statistical Commission at its 42nd session for the development of manuals and methodological guidelines for the production and use of gender statistics.



The manual will help statisticians to: a) identify gaps in gender statistics and develop a coherent and comprehensive plan for the production of gender statistics; b) ensure that survey instruments and censuses will take into account gender issues and avoid gender-biases in measurement; c) improve data analysis and data presentation and deliver gender statistics in a format easy to use by policy makers and planners. The manual is available online on a dedicated platform at

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

Compilation and dissemination of gender statistics

The compilation and dissemination component of the UNSD gender statistics 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, a wide range of outputs addressing different audiences and areas of policy concern have been produced over the years.

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.

To further facilitate access to and promote the use of key gender statistics and indicators, the Division developed and launched a dedicated web based platform for the *Minimum Set of Gender Indicators* (52 quantitative indicators grouped into three tiers and 11 qualitative indicators covering norms and laws on gender equality), agreed by the Statistical Commission in 2013 as a guide for the national production and international compilation of gender statistics. The platform is accessible since March 2014 at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/default.html>.

Since 1991, another avenue of gender statistics dissemination was introduced through the publication *The World's Women: Trends and Statistics, 1970-1990*. This publication and the two subsequent editions (1995 and 2000) presented a statistical analysis of the situation of women in comparison to men, highlighting gender gaps in various areas of concern. In 2005, the issue focused on the progress made in the production of gender statistics and highlighted the wide variations in statistical capacity among countries. The 2010 issue of *The World's Women*, launched on World Statistics

Day in 2010, again presented a statistical analysis of the situation of women and men, as in the three earlier issues. The preparation of the 2015 issue of *The World's Women* is underway and the Division expects to launch the publication by end of 2015.



Technical cooperation and capacity-building

The Statistics Division provides a variety of technical assistance in gender statistics to national statistical offices, regional programmes and United Nations agencies. This support has ranged from organizing training workshops at the interregional, regional and national levels to providing direct technical assistance to countries, agencies and other institutions. Since the late 1980s, the efforts involved providing technical inputs, in partnership with other regional and international agencies, in national and sub-regional workshops to promote user-producer dialogue on user needs, limitations in the concepts and methods, and challenges in data collection as well as to enhance the capacity of national statistical offices to compile and disseminate gender statistics and more broadly to integrate a gender perspective into statistics. In recent years, the Division has focused on regional workshops on

the integration of a gender perspective into statistics, Time Use Statistics and statistics on Violence against Women.

Another significant area of technical cooperation has been in the implementation of projects at the national and regional levels. For instance, since 2012, the Statistics Division in collaboration with UN-Women, the Asian Development Bank, the African Development Bank, the World Bank, OECD and FAO is implementing the EDGE project (Evidence and Data for Gender Equality) aiming at developing international methods to collect data on asset ownership and entrepreneurship from a gender perspective. Several technical meetings have been organized since 2012 to review available research on the topics and discuss best methods for individual-level data collection through modules attached to existing/planned household surveys. Pilot countries have been identified for the proposed methodologies to be tested in 2014 and 2015.

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 and coordination

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, including the World Bank, UNFPA and UN-Women. Many of the Division's outputs and projects were developed as inter-agency efforts and with the financial support of partner agencies.

The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS),

In 2006, the UN Statistics Division convened the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS) bringing together agencies' representatives and national experts in gender statistics. In order to advance gender statistics at the global, regional and national levels, the group recommended the creation of a Global Gender Statistics Programme (GGSP). Since its establishment, the IAEG-GS has helped foster the development of gender statistics in countries and globally, by developing manuals and methodological guidelines for the production and use of gender statistics, promoting training activities, data compilation and dissemination and exchange of experiences and best practices, and by improving international coordination and a dialogue with countries in all activities related to gender statistics.

Since 2006, the IAEG has met regularly to take stock of and review progress, challenges and emerging needs, and propose actions to advance gender statistics at the international, regional, sub-regional and national levels.

In 2006, the IAEG-GS also agreed to hold a Global Forum on Gender Statistics to promote and advance gender statistics through the exchange of knowledge and experience in this field, with a specific topical focus each time. The Forum represents a venue for statisticians, users of statistics and policy-makers to assess the production and availability of gender statistics and take stock of latest research and analysis on gender issues. Since 2006, five fora have been held, organized by UNSD with the support of the World Bank, UNFPA, UNDP and the regional Development Banks, including: the first one in Rome, Italy in December 2007, hosted by ISTAT, the Italian Statistical Institute; the second one in Accra, Ghana in January 2009, hosted by the National Statistical Office of Ghana; the third one in Manila, Philippines in October 2010, hosted by the National Statistical Coordination Board; the fourth one in the Dead Sea, Jordan in March 2012, hosted by the Department of Statistics of Jordan; and the 5th Global Forum on Gender Statistics, in November 2014 hosted by the National Statistical Office of Mexico-INEGI.

Industrial Statistics

Industrial Statistics provide information on economic activity in the areas of mining, manufacturing, electricity, gas and water supply and waste management activities. The historical scope of “industry statistics” as a measurement of goods-producing activities continues to be an important part of the global economy alongside information on other economic activities, such as the provision of services. Industrial statistics cover information that describe the state and growth of goods-producing branches of the economy and describe the outputs of physical production. Within UNSD, industrial statistics consist of methodological work, capacity building, as well as the collection and dissemination of commodity production statistics and the index of industrial production.

Industrial statistics and the UN

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 included the production of world-wide comparable statistical information and developing 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.

Methodology

Recent methodological guidelines that have been produced by UNSD include the *International Recommendations for Industrial Statistics* (Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 90) and the *International Recommendations for the Index of Industrial Production* (Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 107), which were adopted by the Statistical Commission in 2008 and 2010, respectively.

These publications define the scope and methods used in industrial statistics for the collection of basic economic statistics. The *International Recommendations for the Index of Industrial Production* also provide practical guidance for the compilation of the index of industrial production.

Industrial Commodity Statistics

One of the main focuses of Industrial Statistics is the collection and dissemination of data (in quantities and monetary value) on the production of major industrial commodities.

This data helps policymakers, businesses, academics and others to gauge both the 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 2011 *Industrial Commodity Statistics Yearbook* is the 45th annual compilation and is based on the data of the UNSD Commodity Production Statistics Database,

which includes data starting in 1950. The *Yearbook* provides production statistics in physical quantities and monetary value for about 620 industrial products. It includes data for a ten-year period for about 200 countries and territories.

Data on a subset of eleven commodities is also collected on a monthly basis and is published in the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*.

A revised UN List of Industrial Products has been in use since 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 the 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.

Index of Industrial Production

The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is the other main focus of Industry Statistics within UNSD. The IIP is a widely used tool to measure changes in the volume of industrial production over time, and it is also an important short-term economic indicator for the estimation of national accounts at constant prices. The IIP is 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 monthly IIP data at the global level.

Guiding the IIP are the *International Recommendations for the Index of Industrial Production* (Statistical Papers, Series F, No.107), which have been adopted by the Statistical Commission in 2010. The recommendations provide guidance on matters of basic concepts and of statistical practice to individual countries compiling, or planning to compile, index numbers of industrial production and facilitate conceptual comparability between national index numbers.

IIP data are collected through questionnaires sent to national statistical offices, and are published monthly, quarterly and yearly in the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* (MBS), the *UN Statistical Yearbook* (SYB) and on the UN Industrial Statistics website. Data are currently compiled according to ISIC Rev.4, at the 2-digit level for

the industrial sector, comprising activities in mining, manufacturing, electricity, gas and water production and waste management activities. Monthly IIP data are published at the Section level of ISIC.

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. Since the July 2014 edition of the MBS, the indices are presented using 2010 as the base year. The SYB will use 2010 base year starting with the 2015 edition.

Capacity building

UNSD particularly supports capacity building in industrial statistics in national statistical systems. This assistance is typically carried out in the form of regional workshops. The topics currently at the center of these workshops include the implementation of the International Recommendations on Industrial Statistics and the International Recommendations for the Index of Industrial Production and a series of detailed workshops on different aspects of manufacturing and business statistics.

Assistance to users is also provided via the Industry Statistics Hotline (industry@un.org).

Publications

The primary data publications of Industrial Statistics are:

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

The dataset of Industrial Commodity Statistics is now also accessible free of charge from the [UNdata](http://data.un.org/Browse.aspx?d=ICS) website, at <http://data.un.org/Browse.aspx?d=ICS>

Monthly data for selected commodities and the index of industrial production are published in the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*. Annual data for selected commodities as well as the IIP are also published in the *United Nations Statistical Yearbook*.

Contact the Industrial and Energy Statistics Section for enquiries at: industry@un.org.

Website: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/industry>

Measurement of International Trade and Economic Globalization

At its forty-fourth session in 2013, the Statistical Commission recognized, in its decision 44/106, the need for an overarching measurement framework for international trade and economic globalization. This framework needs to address the growing concerns regarding the limitations of current trade statistics to inform the policy debate, since current production processes are spread among many countries, creating not only economic and financial interdependencies but also social and environmental ones. In order to better measure the various aspects of international trade and economic globalization, data gaps have to be addressed, best practices developed and additional conceptual development pursued. Among those aspects are value added, income and employment generated from intermediate production in global value chains, intra-firm trade, foreign ownership and control relationships, manufacturing services and transfers of intellectual property products. The traditional fields of International Merchandise Trade Statistics (IMTS) and Statistics of International Trade in Services (SITS) will need to address the new demands and adapt accordingly its recommendations.

History in a Nutshell

Especially in the early sessions of the 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.

The Commission adopted a number of key methodological recommendations in 1953, which are still valid today, such as the coverage of international trade statistics 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”, and imports valuation 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. At that time, the Commission already recommended to also estimate aggregate FOB imports for Balance of Payments purposes.

Already in 1949, during its 4th session, the Commission also discussed issues of banking statistics, insurance statistics and distribution statistics. However, it was not until 1989, forty years later (during its 25th session), that

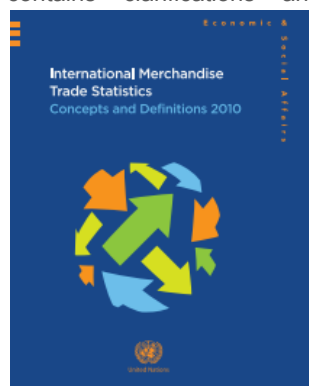
it explicitly recognized that international trade in services was a subject of increasing importance to users and producers of statistics. Since then, things have accelerated. In 1994, at the request of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Commission approved the creation of an Inter-agency Task Force on Statistics of International Trade in Services with the objective of elaborating the statistical requirements of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). In 2001, the Commission approved the first Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services (MSITS) followed by an updated version in 2010 as the international standard for SITS.

International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions 2010

The foundation of standards in IMTS was laid many years ago by the League of Nations when it recommended coverage to be determined by cross-border trade and FOB valuation for exports and CIF valuation 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 the 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. In 2008 UNSD issued the Supplement to the Compilers Manual which discussed a number of measurement problems of IMTS.

The Commission adopted in 2010 the revised and new recommendations as contained in *International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions 2010* (IMTS 2010) and endorsed the outline of an implementation programme, including the preparation of the revised IMTS Compilers Manual. IMTS 2010 contains clarifications and amendments of core



concepts (e.g., goods for processing); includes new chapters on compilation strategies, data quality and metadata; recommends to compile mode of transport as new data item and to include both country of consignment for imports and customs procedure codes in the dataset for statistics; it encourages countries to

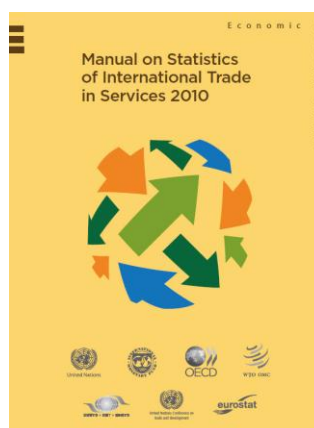
compile imports on FOB basis (in addition to CIF) and country of consignment for exports; further, it encourages countries to identify re-exports and re-imports, trade between related parties as well as trade in goods for processing where no change of ownership takes place; it identifies the linking of business and trade statistics as an important area for both data compilation and analysis; and includes a detailed description of the relationship to the sixth edition of the Balance-of-Payment Manual.

The cornerstone of UNSD's action plan for the implementation of IMTS 2010 is the update of the Compilers Manual, which contains more detailed explanation of certain recommendations and provides guidance for compilers by describing good practices applicable under different circumstances. In December 2013, the edited white cover version was made available to the public at <http://bit.ly/1y3VhR5> (IMTS: Compilers Manual, Revision 1).

Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services 2010 (MSITS 2010)

The GATS negotiators and trade in services policy makers need detailed and internationally comparable statistical information on the supply of services by mode,

type of service and trading partner. The *Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services 2010* (MSITS 2010) is based on the distinction of delivery of services in four modes, namely: cross border delivery of services, consumption abroad, commercial presence, and movement of natural persons. Cross border delivery is mainly captured by the more traditional trade in services between residents and non-residents as given in the balance of payments, where the Travel service item captures the consumption abroad. MSITS 2010 provides a more detailed classification of services (EBOPS 2010) than the main services components of BPM6. Correspondence tables between the various classifications (EBOPS, CPC and ISIC) are provided online.



The Statistical Commission approved in 2010 a program of implementation for MSITS 2010 supported by a UN Expert Group on the compilation of SITS. The program consisted of strengthening the statistical capacity of national statistical systems via training workshops, advisory missions and a Compilers Guide with practical advice and country examples to assist in implementation of the

recommendations.

UNSD maintains the TFSITS website, and is the editor of the TFSITS newsletter. The latest newsletter of the Task Force has been posted on the website in December 2014.

The Compilers Guide for MSITS 2010

The Compilers Guide for MSITS 2010 serves the purpose of harmonizing and improving the ways in which statisticians at the national level collect, compile and disseminate trade in services statistics. While the international standards in economic statistics are in the process of being implemented, this Guide comes timely, providing the statistical community with guidelines, best practices, case studies, and practical advice on the compilation of the trade in services statistics. These statistics consist of transactions between residents and non-residents in services classified by the Extended Balance of Payments Services (EBOPS) categories and by the country of residency; they also include foreign affiliates statistics (FATS) and statistics on modes of supply. The overarching aim of this Guide is to increase the availability and quality of these statistics in order to fulfil the urgent needs and demands for such data by policy makers, researchers, market analysts and the public in general.

The unedited white cover version is available in pdf at <http://bit.ly/1HvsILY>

Working for and with the countries

UNSD undertakes capacity development through workshops and country projects in collaboration with other international organizations. Examples of recent workshops on the compilation of IMTS, trade in services statistics and measurement of trade and economic globalization are:

- Regional Seminar on International Trade Statistics, New Delhi, 3-6 November 2014
- International conference on the measurement of trade and economic globalization, Aguascalientes, Mexico, 29 September - 2 October 2014
- Regional Seminar on International Trade Statistics: Implementation of Recommendations, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12-16 May 2014
- International Seminar on Trade and Tourism Statistics, Jakarta, Indonesia, 7-10 October 2013
- Regional Workshop on Travel and International Tourism Consumption, 14–17 May 2013, Roseau, Dominica
- Regional workshop on IMTS: Implementation of IMTS 2010 and a new vision for trade statistics, Rabat, Morocco, 22 – 26 April 2013
- Regional seminar on international trade statistics for Latin American countries, Bogota, Colombia, 11-14 December 2012

During 2015 UNSD will organize more workshops for developing countries, within the overall framework of 2008 SNA implementation, and will continue working together with countries to support the implementation of IMTS 2010 and MSITS 2010, including the compilation of international trade indices, implementation of statistical business register, the linking of trade and business statistics, FATS, FDI and the improvement of trade data quality and metadata.

SITC, HS, CPC and BEC

Throughout its history the commodity classifications have been the common language in trade statistics. 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 Standard International Trade Classification (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 in 1993 the Commission recommended its use as the principal tool for collection of trade data. Given the central role of HS, the new revisions of the SITC are created using HS subheadings as building blocks. Also the Central Product Classification (CPC), which is used for trade and production statistics, stays close to definitions used in the latest version of HS.

As part of its regular work programme, the Statistics Division provides correlation and conversion tables between the latest version of HS (currently the 2012 version) and earlier versions of HS and other commodity classifications.



The Classification by Broad Economic Categories (BEC) is currently being revised to better reflect current economic reality and by extending its scope, including services as well as goods, while giving extra attention to the definition of products for intermediate consumption.

UN International Trade Statistics Knowledgebase



UNSD has developed a knowledge base on IMTS and SITS where users can access information related to concepts, definitions, and compilation practices. The knowledgebase is regularly updated with Q & A information received from interactions with the users and from relevant methodological documentation published by countries or international organizations. Both knowledge bases on trade in goods and trade in services are accessible through a single portal at:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/tradekb/Knowledgebase/>

UN Comtrade database

During the sixties the Statistics Division created a center for the collection and publication of international data on external trade. This center 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 and cheaper storage space, helped to move this database, commonly known as UN Comtrade, from the mainframe to a server, making it easily available for all interested users around the world through the Internet. UN Comtrade contains more than 50 years of detailed trade data for over 180 countries or areas. For its design and accessibility, UNSD received the 2005 UN21 Award. In 2012, UNSD released UN Monthly Comtrade, a new processing and dissemination system for detailed monthly merchandise trade statistics. In addition, UNSD formally launched a major project to update UN Comtrade, whose main objectives are: (i) to significant enhance metadata, (ii) to include the new data variables recommended in IMTS 2010, (iii) to integrate annual and monthly data into a unified collection, processing and dissemination environment, and (iv) to design and implement global trade SDMX 2.1 (data and metadata structure definition). Moreover, the technology behind UN Comtrade will be significantly upgraded to improve functionality and user experience.

In February 2014, Comtrade Labs and a new data extraction interface for UN Comtrade were released. Comtrade Labs is a place to showcase innovative uses of UN Comtrade data, especially visualizations and tools for mass data extraction, see <http://comtrade.un.org>.

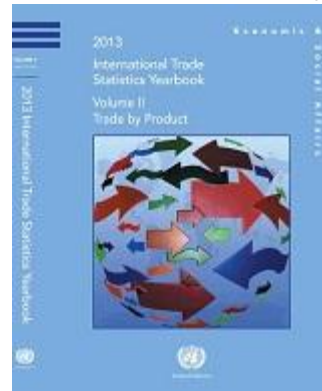
UN Service Trade: Global Database of Trade in Services Statistics

In 2003, the statistical community agreed that UNSD, using its experience with the UN Comtrade database, would create a database for international trade in services in accordance with MSITS, including trade by service category (EBOPS classification) and partner country. UN ServiceTrade is publicly available on the internet and contains currently data for almost all UN member countries covering the years 2000 to 2013 (it is available at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/service-trade>).

International Trade Statistics Yearbook, Volume I – Trade by Country and Volume II – Trade by Product

The International Trade Statistics Yearbook provides an overview of the latest trends of trade in goods and services of most countries and areas in the world. The publication is aimed at both specialist trade data users and common audience at large. The presented data,

charts and analyses will benefit policy makers, government agencies, civil society organizations, journalists, researchers, students, businesses and anyone who is interested in trade issues. The yearbook contains detailed world data tables on merchandise trade, country trade, commodity trade and



services trade profiles for most countries and areas in the world. The profiles offer an insight into the merchandise and services trade performance of individual countries and areas by means of brief descriptive text, concise data tables and charts using latest available data. The yearbook is also made available online at <http://comtrade.un.org/pb>.

Friends of the Chair Group on International Trade and Economic Globalization

At the Statistical Commission in 2013, a report on International Trade Statistics (E/CN.3/2013/7) was presented which gave an overview of topics in this area, such as integrated economic statistics, linking trade and business



statistics, trade and global production, trade in value added, statistics of multinational enterprises and foreign direct investment. The report described the policy questions

regarding international trade in a world in which production processes are spread among many countries creating not only economic and financial interdependencies but also social and environmental ones, and then highlighted the growing concerns regarding the limitations of current trade statistics to inform the policy debate.

The Commission recognized the need for a new framework and agreed to the creation of a “friends of the chair” (FOC) group tasked with preparing a concept paper on the scope and content of the framework (Decision 44/106 in E/2013/24), and on the appropriate mechanism for coordination. The first meeting of FOC group took place in New York in November 2013 followed by a meeting in Aguascalientes in 2014. The

group agreed that the programme of work should have a focus on (i) Drafting a handbook on a system of extended international and global accounts; (ii) Promoting and advancing the creation of a global enterprise group register; (iii) Improving the measurement of firm heterogeneity for GVC purposes; (iv) Addressing asymmetries in bilateral trade and investment; (v) Mainstreaming the development of recurrent global SUTs and IOT, building on work done by OECD, to expand the coverage of the OECD-WTO TiVA database.

The report to the Statistical Commission is available at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/sc2015.htm>

Statistical Business Registers

UNSD regularly contributes to the methodological development and supports implementation of statistical business registers (SBR) in countries due to its central role in the collection, compilation and dissemination of international trade statistics.

UNSD has recently established cooperation with various stakeholders such as African Union Commission and Asian Development Bank to support implementation of SBR and the linking of trade and business statistics in their respective regions. UNSD also supported countries in improving SBR and the linking of trade to the business register. In addition, the topic of SBR is regularly highlighted in various international trade statistics seminars and workshops organized by UNSD. Furthermore, UNSD was actively involved in the drafting process of the International Guidelines for Statistical Business Registers. The guidelines emphasize the role of SBR in the statistical system as the backbone for the production of integrated statistics including international trade statistics, and provide practical guidance on how to build and maintain business registers from the ground up.

What's next?

UNSD will focus on the following areas of work:

- (1) Support the implementation of IMTS 2010 and MSITS 2010 including SBR through regional capacity building;
- (2) Integration of the dissemination of statistics of trade in goods and services;
- (3) Linking trade and other economic, financial and social statistics;

- (4) Addressing asymmetries in bilateral trade and investment
- (5) Support the implementation of IRTS 2008 and the TSA:RMF 2008
- (6) Promoting improved institutional arrangements for the compilation of international trade statistics;
- (7) Revision of the BEC classification (including service) and establishing a classification on Business Functions;
- (8) Support the research on the statistical use of big data for international trade in services statistics.

For enquiries regarding International Trade and Economic Globalization, contact tradedstat@un.org.

National Accounts

The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) contributes to the international coordination, development and implementation of the System of National Accounts (SNA). It undertakes methodological research on issues on the research agenda for the SNA in collaboration with the Inter Secretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA) to periodically update the SNA. Moreover, it drafts and updates normative standards, guidelines, training material and compilation guidance on national accounts and economic statistics for the implementation programme of the SNA and supporting economic statistics.

The Division delivers a statistical capacity building programme for the implementation of the SNA and supporting statistics through a series of regional and interregional workshops and seminars in collaboration with the regional commissions and regional agencies and through a limited number of individual country technical assistance missions.

The Division also collects and disseminates annual national accounts statistics from countries and provides substantive service to the Committee on Contributions of the Fifth Committee of the United Nations on technical aspects of the elements of scale methodology for assessing the contributions to the United Nations by Member States.

The national accounts website is available at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/default.asp>

The System of National Accounts

The latest version of the international statistical standard for the national accounts, adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC), is the *System of National Accounts 2008* (2008 SNA).

- The **2008 SNA** is an update of the 1993 SNA. The update was in 2003 entrusted to the ISWGNA, comprising representatives of the European Commission (Eurostat), Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and the United



Nations, to address issues brought about by changes in the economic environment, advances in methodological research and the needs of users. The first seventeen chapters of the 2008 SNA, comprising the accounting rules, the accounts and tables, and their integration, were adopted by the UNSC in 2008; chapters 18 to 29, comprising the interpretations and extensions of the accounts and tables of the System, were adopted by the UNSC in 2009. The 2008 SNA is the result of a process that was notable for its transparency and the wide involvement of the international statistical community. In its adoption of the 2008 SNA the UNSC encouraged Member States, regional and sub-regional organizations to implement its recommendations and use it for the national

and international reporting of national accounts statistics. The 2008 SNA is available as a searchable PDF document, in all official United Nations languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish), on the UNSD website at:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/sna2008.asp>.

The printed version of the English version can be obtained from the United Nations publications website at:

<https://unp.un.org/Details.aspx?pid=18327>.

At its first session in 1947, the UNSC emphasized the need for international statistical standards for the compilation and updating of comparable statistics in support of a large array of policy needs. Specifically, the UNSC 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 best practises and international comparability. Apart from the 2008 SNA, the following national accounts standards were produced throughout the history of the UNSC:

- The **1953 SNA** was published under the auspices of the UNSC. 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** (also entrusted to the ISWGNA) represented 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.

Methodological work

The SNA is designed to give a realistic and integrated view of the economy that is suitable for policy and analytical use. As the economy changes and policy and analytical needs evolve, the SNA must be reviewed to see if it is still relevant for these purposes. Therefore the UNSD in cooperation with the ISWGNA undertakes methodological research to clarify and interpret the 2008 SNA recommendations for their consistent implementation and to address emerging issues in order to ensure that the SNA appropriately reflects the current economic dynamics.

The advancement of the methodological work is carried out through a formal, transparent and consultative process which involves a widespread consultation and the involvement of both compilers and users in the review process. This process ensures worldwide representation in the deliberation of the issues and the proper implementation of the results in international standards or handbooks.

Implementation of the SNA

Besides the methodological work on national accounts, one of the important objectives of the UNSD is to ensure that countries implement the recommendations of the SNA.

At its fortieth session the UNSC considered and supported the implementation strategy of the 2008 SNA proposed by the ISWGNA.

The implementation of the 2008 SNA represents a global statistical initiative with the objective to assist countries in developing their statistical and institutional capacity to (a) make the conceptual change over from the 1993 SNA to the 2008 SNA and (b) to improve the scope, detail and quality of the national accounts and supporting economic statistics.

The 2008 SNA implementation strategy also aims to support sound macroeconomic management and evidence-based policy formulation through the sustained compilation and reporting of national accounts and related source data.

Assessments of the slow progress in the implementation of the 1993 SNA pointed to structural weaknesses in basic source data and institutional statistical capacity. An analysis of these structural weaknesses indicates the need for strengthening three building blocks of the statistical

production process: a) business registers and frames, b) source data from annual and infra-annual surveys, and administrative sources, and c) institutional statistical capacity.

In addition to these structural weaknesses, there is a need to address user's demand for consistent information on economic activity during a business cycle - such as disaggregated information on segments of the economy - in addition to macroeconomic aggregates. Such data allow users to assess signals on economic, financial and monetary phenomena, which are first provided by short-term statistics and subsequently with the release of quarterly and annual national accounts.

To deal with these issues the implementation of the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics is addressed through an integrated economic statistics approach. This approach uses the 2008 SNA as the umbrella framework that provides the conceptual and numerical coherence for developing the statistical production process for economic statistics, including the required institutional arrangements for integration.

The efficiency and sustainability of the global statistical initiative for the implementation of the 2008 SNA rest on the agreed principles of the implementation strategy, namely: (a) strategic planning; (b) coordination, monitoring and reporting; and (c) improving statistical systems.

The principles of the implementation strategy are operationalised through four elements, namely:

- (a) Use of National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS), or similar national plans setting out priorities, as the strategic planning framework.

NSDS is the most widely used tool for statistical planning in developing countries. Many already have or are updating their NSDS to include the implementation of the 2008 SNA.

- (b) A programme information structure built around the statistical production process, and the scope and compliance of the national accounts and supporting economic statistics.

A programme information structure facilitates the co-ordination, monitoring and reporting on the SNA implementation in a multi-stakeholder environment.

- (c) Statistical capacity building.

Statistical capacity building comprises four modalities: (i) training and technical cooperation, which emphasize institutional capacity building and the development of data sources; (ii) manuals and handbooks, which provide methodological guidance and consideration for the fundamental issues of data sources and quality; (iii) applied research to develop new concepts for meeting

new measurement challenges; and d) advocacy, which aims to support ongoing dialogue among statistical producers, the various levels of government, the business sector, the academic community, and the general public about user needs for official statistics and the progress in meeting those needs.

- (d) The stages of implementation leading to the change over to the 2008 SNA.

Three distinct stages towards the change over to the 2008 SNA are identified, namely: (i) a review of strategic frameworks and detailing of national and regional implementation programmes; (ii) the adaptation of classification frameworks, business registers and frames, surveys, administrative data sources and information technology infrastructure; and (iii) the application of adapted frameworks and source data, backcasting and changeover to the 2008 SNA. Each country determines its own duration of the stages leading to the change over to the 2008 SNA.

The UNSD facilitates the implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics through: regional and interregional workshops and seminars; the development of Handbooks of National Accounting, providing compilation guidance on the recommendations of the SNA; updating the Knowledge Base on Economic Statistics (international recommendations, compilation guidance and country practises); implementation tools to support countries with implementing the SNA, such as the implementation paper, the guidelines for monitoring the 2008 SNA implementation, the statistical system information fact sheet, the survey on the implementation of the SNA, the diagnostic tool, the self-assessment evaluation and the strategy template; posting the country information on the national implementation plans on its website; and monitoring the scope, detail and SNA compliance of the compilation of the national accounts by countries through the collection and dissemination of annual national accounts statistics. More information on these activities is available at:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/impUNSD.asp>

National accounts database

To serve the analytical purposes of the United Nations and the public, the UNSD, mandated by the UNSC, annually collects national accounts data from Member States. The UNSD uses a questionnaire based on the SNA framework to obtain official national accounts data from Member States. Currently, two data sets are compiled and published in two publications, namely:

- National Accounts Statistics: Main Aggregates and Detailed Tables; and
- National Accounts Statistics: Analysis of Main Aggregates.

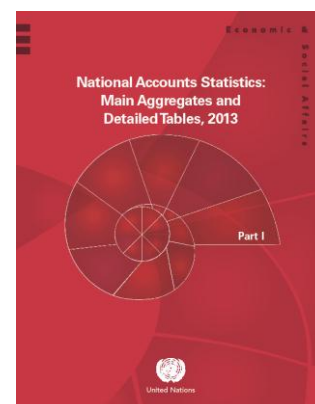
More information can be obtained from the UNSD national accounts website at:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/default.asp>.

National Accounts Statistics: Main Aggregates and Detailed Tables

The first National Accounts yearbook appeared in 1958 and contained data for 70 countries and territories. The most recent yearbook contains data for more than 200 countries and territories.

Data are reproduced as they are reported by the countries in their respective national currencies. These national accounts data can be obtained from the *UNdata* facility on the UNSD website at: <http://data.un.org>.

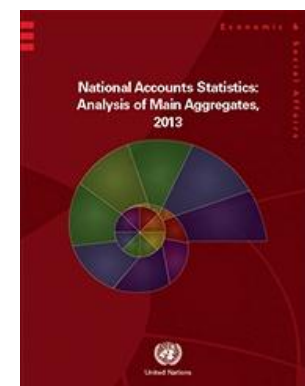


National Accounts Statistics: Analysis of Main Aggregates

To improve the usefulness of the national accounts data, main aggregates of the UNSD national accounts database are updated to the most recent year using secondary sources and estimates. This publication contains data from 1970 on GDP by type of expenditure and by kind of economic 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 national accounts website at:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/snaama/introduction.asp>



Where countries stand

The latest assessment of the level of implementation of the national accounts is based on the reporting of national accounts statistics by Member States to the UNSD through its national accounts questionnaire. The reporting of national accounts data has improved markedly in recent years. At the end of the 2013 reporting period, 95 per cent of developing countries had reported at least once in the reporting periods from 2009 to 2013. Almost all developed countries and countries in transition report national accounts data to the UNSD. An increasing number of developing countries, especially in Africa and the Caribbean are now reporting national accounts data to the UNSD.

In terms of the conceptual compliance, the 1993 SNA or the 2008 SNA have been implemented in a considerable number of the Member States: virtually all developed countries and countries in transition and about 85 per cent of developing countries compile national accounts data according to the 1993 SNA or the 2008 SNA. The reporting of national accounts data according to the 2008 SNA has substantially increased as compared to last year to about 55 Member States as of November 2014.

An assessment of the scope of national accounts data as reported in the national accounts questionnaire shows that almost all developed countries and 66 per cent of developing countries have reported according to milestone 2 level¹ in the 2013 reporting period. This measure of milestone 2 indicates that the country at least reports value added by industries and final expenditures on GDP, either in current prices or in volume measure, and gross national income (GNI). When the scope of national accounts data is evaluated in terms of the minimum requirements data set (MRDS)², 47 per cent of countries were able to provide the seven tables in the 2013 reporting period.

Use of national accounts

Originating from 17th century war economics and set into its 'modern' framework of the Keynesian macro-economic theory by Richard Stone and Simon Kuznets in the 1930s, the measurement of a country's income and expenditure

has a long history before it was formalized in the present System of National Accounts.

Government, businesses and civil society need to know what progress is being made with specific economic agenda. This gives rise to the need, not only to monitor progress but also to evaluate whether or not goals are being achieved. To obtain this overview of the economic processes, data need to be organised in a framework that integrates and reconciles the data.

The essence of national accounting is integration: bringing together data on all economic activities from different sources and arranging them in such a way that they present a coherent picture of the whole economy. This requires the persistent review of basic data sources and their adaptation in using them. National accounting, to a greater degree than in other branches of statistics, is an art, not a science. In this regard, it is important to develop a "feel" for the resources and statistics as well as their use under specific circumstances.

The SNA describes a coherent, consistent and integrated set of macroeconomic accounts in the context of a set of internationally agreed concepts, definitions, classifications and accounting rules. In addition, the SNA provides an overview of economic processes, recording how production is distributed among consumers, businesses, government and foreign nations. It shows how income originating in production, modified by taxes and transfers, flows to these groups and how they allocate these flows to consumption, saving and investment. Consequently, the national accounts are one of the building blocks of macroeconomic statistics forming a basis for economic analysis and policy formulation.

Aggregates, such as GDP and GDP per capita, are widely used as summary indicators of economic activity and welfare. Changes in such aggregates, and their associated price and volume measures, are used to evaluate the overall performance of the economy and hence to judge the relative success or failure of economic policies pursued by governments. The compilation of at least some of the main aggregates of the national accounts on a quarterly basis may significantly improve the monitoring of the behaviour of the economy. It is recommended that the accounts, tables or balance sheets of the SNA are compiled more frequently than once a year, particularly for advanced and emerging economies.

A timely, accurate and a reasonably detailed set of national accounts allow the analysis of leads, lags and structural changes, providing the basic data for business cycle analysis. The national accounts are also used to investigate the causal mechanisms at work within an economy. Such analysis usually takes the form of the estimation of the parameters of functional relationships between different economic variables by applying

¹ The milestone methodology is described in the reports of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts to the Statistical Commission; document E/CN.3/1997/12 and E/CN.3/2011/6.

² The MRDS is defined in the reports of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts to the Statistical Commission; document E/CN.3/2001/8 and E/CN.3/2011/6.

econometric methods to time series data in both value and volume terms compiled within a national accounting framework. The SNA is sufficiently flexible to accommodate the requirements of different economic theories or models, provided only that they accept the basic concepts of production, consumption, income, etc. on which the SNA is based.

Economic policy in the short term is formulated on the basis of an assessment of the recent behaviour and current state of the economy and a view, or forecast, about likely future developments. Short-term forecasts are typically made using econometric models described above. Over the medium or long-term, economic policy has to be formulated in the context of a broad economic strategy using the structural properties of the SNA.

The national accounts are also used for international reporting of national accounts data that conform to standard, internationally accepted concepts, definitions and classifications. The resulting data are widely used for international comparisons of the volumes of major aggregates, such as GDP or GDP per capita, and also for comparisons of structural statistics, such as ratios of investment, taxes or government expenditures to GDP. Such comparisons are used by economists, journalists or other analysts to evaluate the performance of one economy against that of other economies. They can influence popular and political judgements about the relative success of economic programmes in the same way as developments over time within a single country. Databases consisting of sets of national accounts for groups of countries can also be used for econometric analyses in which time-series and cross-section data are pooled to provide a broader range of observations for the estimation of functional relationships.

The national accounts provide a co-ordinating conceptual framework for the design and collection of economic source statistics and also provide a framework for identifying major gaps in the range of available short-term statistics.

Though short-term indicators provide valuable information about specific aspects of current economic developments they do not provide a coherent, comprehensive and consistent picture of the different aspects of the current economic situation for purpose of integration into a consistent analytical framework. However, within the analytical framework of the national accounts the movements of short-term indicators, such as monthly indices of industrial production, consumer or producer prices can be interpreted and evaluated.

Users require transparency in the compilation of the national accounts. Consequently, it is important to provide documentation to users about data sources and the

compilation process. In the case of revisions, transparency is particularly important in handling the continual conflict between timeliness and accuracy.

Resources for statistical purposes are not always available or comprehensive enough. It is time-consuming and expensive to collect adequate, accurate and detailed source data. It is also time-consuming and expensive to compile comprehensive, accurate and detailed national accounts aggregates. To find a solution for the timeliness and accuracy conflict within the resource constraints, it is common to compile preliminary estimates based on a limited set of information that is available at the time and to revise the estimates to incorporate more comprehensive and more up-to-date data as they become available.

SNA News and Notes

The SNA News and Notes is a bi-annual information service 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

Social Statistics

The essential premise of social statistics is that for each social concern there needs to be relevant statistical concepts and definitions, international standards for data collection, recommended topics and tabulations, defined periodicity, and available sources of statistics. Collected data would also need to be disaggregated by population sub-groups and by geographical levels.

History

Since its inception, the United Nations has been focusing on 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 Commission¹, 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.

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.

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.

The Division has continued to convene Expert Group Meetings and to organize other activities towards setting the scope and future direction of social statistics. Most recently, the Division organized the Expert Group Meeting on the Scope and Content of Social Statistics in September 2009. The meeting emphasized the need for producing a comprehensive international inventory of social statistics to allow the identification of areas in need of additional methodological development.

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

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, indigenous people and so forth. 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 work

A considerable universe of social statistics has its source in statistical surveys of households, thus making it imperative to lay sound methodological grounds for designing, conducting and exploiting **household surveys**. In this respect, the Division undertook the work on producing methodological

guidelines, and published

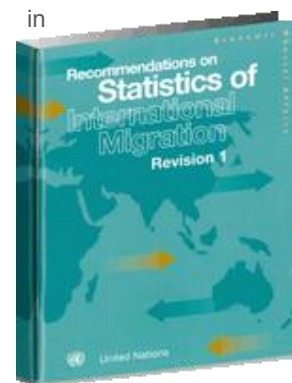
the *Household Samples Surveys in Developing and Transition Countries* in 2005 and the *Designing Household Survey Samples: Practical Guidelines* in 2008; These guidelines provide a comprehensive presentation of sound and contemporary techniques, grounded in statistical theory, for probability sampling to assist national survey statisticians in designing household surveys in an efficient and reliable manner, and to allow users to make greater use of survey generated data. The latest recommendations in the area of housing statistics have been published as part of the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Rev 3*, (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 that effect, the Division conducted an expert group meeting in 2007 and the production of the technical guide on the use of sample surveys and population censuses is now underway.



Work in the area of **gender** statistics was initiated in 1982 (for more details, see a separate section on gender statistics), following the proclamation of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (1976-1985). Over the years, to improve the production of gender statistics, the Division has issued a series of methodological publications 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.

Since 2007 the Division has been working on the measurement of violence against women. Together with the Division for the Advancement of Women (currently part of UN Women) and the Economic Commission for Europe, the Division organized the Expert Group Meeting on Measuring Violence against Women in 2007. The issue was taken up in the 2008 Statistical Commission, which established the Friends of the Chair group to develop a list of recommended statistical indicators to measure violence against women. The Division has since developed a set of *Guidelines for Producing Statistics on Violence against Women*, in line with the list of recommended indicators, and now available online at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/default.html>.

In 2011, UNSD engaged in the preparation of a new gender statistics manual, following the decision by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics and addressing the request by the UN Statistical Commission at its 42nd session for the development of manuals and methodological guidelines for the production and use of gender statistics. The manual will help statisticians to: a) identify gaps in gender statistics and develop a coherent

and comprehensive plan for the production of gender statistics; b) ensure that survey instruments and censuses will take into account gender issues and avoid gender-biases in measurement; c) improve data analysis and data presentation and deliver gender statistics in a format easy to use by policy makers and planners. The manual has been finalized and is available on a dedicated portal at

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

Technical publications 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 (2005).



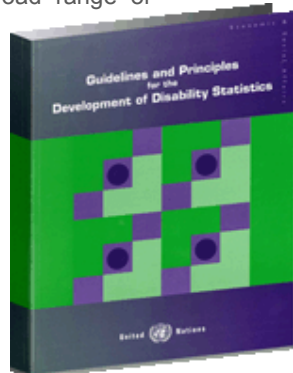
Methodological work in the area of time-use has resulted in the development and implementation of the trial International Classification of Activities for Time-Use Statistics (ICATUS) in 2005 and compilation of metadata on national time-use surveys. (See

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sconcerns/tuse>).

ICATUS is currently under revision by a group of experts to ensure it is meaningful for a broad range of

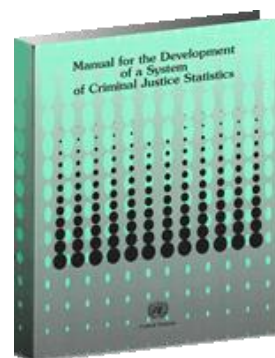
objectives and can be used as a dissemination framework for time use statistics that are internationally comparable and relevant for both social and economic policies. ICATUS is expected to be finalized and available to users by 2016.

Activities for 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.



Finally, the Division has developed, in collaboration with the International Labour Office, 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 in Population Censuses*, published in 2010.

Compilation and dissemination of social statistics

The Division regularly compiles, analyses, and publishes the latest social statistics in a variety of formats as part of its dissemination activities. Key publications on the subject 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, 1975-77 and 2011; 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 publication 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 issue published in 2005 reviewed the availability of basic statistics useful for gender analysis as a way of assessing progress made in gender statistics.

The World's Women 2010: Trends and Statistics was launched on 20 October 2010 on the occasion of the first-ever World Statistics Day. The *World's Women 2015* is underway and should be published in 2015. This unique publication provides statistical analysis on the status of women and men in respect of population and families, health, education, work, power and decision-making, violence against women, environment and poverty. It is accompanied by a comprehensive website that provides references and links to pertinent data collections, accessible at:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/Worldswomen/WW2010pub.htm>

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/gender/default.html>

Technical cooperation and capacity-building

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, time use, violence against women, etc. These workshops are generally organized to assist countries in the implementation of international recommendations. The 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, 2012, 2013, 2014 on dissemination of social statistics from population censuses in 2002, and on time use surveys in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014.

Additionally, special advisory missions are undertaken in countries upon request. Technical inputs have also been provided to regional commissions, regional organizations and countries through UNSD's participation as resource persons in their meetings.

Since 2012, the Statistics Division in collaboration with UN-Women is implementing the EDGE (Evidence and Data for Gender Equality) project aiming at improving methods to collect data on asset ownership and entrepreneurship for gender analysis. The Division also arranges and supports study tours between NSOs, and is hosting study visits of NSO staff to the United Nations, during which advances in methods and international standards are presented.

Statistical Classifications

Classifications form the basis for data collection and data dissemination in every area of statistics. They provide standardized concepts to describe phenomena such as economic activity, products, expenditures, occupation or health. They are necessary to consistently measure these phenomena within and across countries and geographical regions. International statistical classifications serve as models for the development of national, multinational and regional classifications and form the basis for internationally comparable data. They are tools that are used by national statistical organizations, international agencies, academia, the legal community and other users.

Classifications in UNSD

The development of international standard classifications has always been an integral part of UNSD's work programme. Already the first session of the Statistical Commission, after its inaugural meeting, elected a Committee on Industrial Classifications to formulate proposals for an international standard classification of industries. 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 Statistical Classifications, with UNSD functioning as secretariat, provides global leadership in this area of statistics.

Why adopt standard classifications?

International statistical classifications function as "international languages" for communicating in statistics. If you wish your national data to be understood, appreciated, used or quoted widely, international statistical 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 statistical 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.

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.

International standard 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 and facilitates international comparability of definitions and data.

National adaptation of classifications

Classifications are an essential mechanism for harmonization and coordination of data compilations. As a result, they facilitate a country's inclusion in global statistical datasets. When international statistical 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.

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. The majority of countries make use of the international statistical classifications in this manner.

However, the use of national adaptations should still consider requirements of international comparability, such as the recommendation by the Statistical Commission that all Member States adapt their national activity classifications in a way to be able to report data at least at the two-digit level of ISIC, Rev. 4 without loss of information.

While international classifications serve as models for national classifications, national expertise also drives the development of international classifications. Recently revised classifications such as ISIC, CPC, ISCO (International Standard Classification of Occupations) or ISCED (International Standard Classification of Education) have been developed after extensive collaboration and consultation with counterpart classifications developers. Stakeholders such as national statistical offices, international agencies, national ministries and a cross section of

users have been involved in all phases of their development. This included multiple series of regional workshops 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

UNSD provides technical assistance to countries in the form of regional workshops and targeted country visits. The workshops focus on a variety of topics, based on the state of progress of classifications work in participating countries. These topics include: (a) training of countries on the concepts of the international standard classifications and on new concepts introduced in recent revisions (such as for ISIC or CPC); (b) the interpretation and application of these classifications; (c) the adaptation of international standard classifications to national purposes; and (d) the implementation of revised classifications in statistical programmes, including the changeover of business registers, change of survey procedures and backcasting of data. The workshops can be tailored to specific regional needs, also addressing the development of regional classifications.

Technical assistance for classifications is also available in other forms, namely:

Website: A United Nations Classifications website is maintained as part of the UNSD website at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/class/>. The website provides information on meetings and workshops on classifications, updated classification structures (including corrections), indices and correspondence tables for a variety of classifications, as well as information on classifications interpretations maintained in the *Registry*.

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

Classifications Hotline: An e-mail hotline is available at CHL@un.org to provide assistance with regard to the interpretation, structure and use of classifications under custodianship of UNSD, such as ISIC, CPC and the Classifications of Expenditure According to Purpose.

Similar tools are available from other custodians for their respective classifications.

Coordination

International standard classifications exist for different fields of statistics, often maintained by specialized agencies in these fields, such as education or health. To apply common principles, to establish and maintain linkages between classifications, to ensure that new

concepts are introduced consistently across different classifications, and to generally ensure a coordinated approach to the revision of classifications, a coordinating mechanism in form of an Expert Group has been created by the Statistical Commission.

The **Expert Group on International Statistical Classifications** meets biennially to set guidelines, review progress and coordinate international work in the development and implementation of statistical classifications. While in particular the Expert Group advises UNSD on the work related to revisions and updates of ISIC and CPC, the group also provides guidance to other custodians of classifications to facilitate an overall coordinated approach.

The work of the Expert Group is focused on classifications within the Family of International Statistical Classifications. The Group carries out reviews of classifications within the Family on a regular basis to assess the need for classifications revisions or updates.

Publications

The classifications and supporting materials are published in various ways. The standard classifications themselves are published in print form and are available from the UN Publications website (<http://unp.un.org>). They include, among others:

- International Standard Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC);
- Central Product Classification (CPC);
- Classifications of Expenditure According to Purpose (COFOG, COICOP, COPNI, COPP);
- Standard International Trade Classification (SITC);
- Classification by Broad Economic Activities (BEC).

These classifications are also published in various electronic formats on the UNSD Classifications website.

Correspondence tables and similar supporting documents are no longer published in print form and are distributed exclusively in electronic form through the UNSD Classifications website.

Contact the Industrial and Energy Statistics Section for enquiries at CHL@un.org.

Website: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/class>

Tourism statistics

Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon related to the movement of people to places outside their usual place of residence, pleasure being the usual motivation. The activities carried out by a visitor may or may not involve a market transaction, and may be different from or similar to those normally carried out in his/ her regular routine of life. If they are similar, their frequency or intensity is different when the person is travelling. These activities represent the actions and behaviours of people in preparation for and during a trip in their capacity as consumers. Tourism has an impact on the economy, the natural and built environment, the local population at the places visited and the visitors themselves. Only with sufficient and adequate data that generate credible statistics is it possible to undertake different types of analysis of tourism. This is essential in order to evaluate the different aspects of tourism and to support and improve policy and decision-making. To properly reflect the size and international comparability of tourism, the United Nations Statistical Commission adopted international recommendations for tourism statistics in 1993, which were revised in 2008.

History in a Nutshell

The first step towards the development of international definitions on tourism for statistical purposes was taken in 1937 by the Council of the League of Nations which was slightly amended by the International Union of Official Travel Organizations in 1950 and finally, in 1953, the Statistical Commission established the concept of “international visitor”. Given this evolution in terminology and the need to produce more timely and coherent tourism statistics, a manual was adopted by the Statistical Commission at its twenty-seventh session, in 1993, and were thereafter revised in 2008.

International recommendations

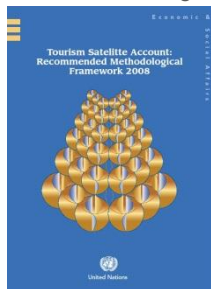
The concepts, definitions, classifications and indicators set forth in *International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008* (IRTS 2008) should be consistent with definitions and classifications used in national accounts, balance of payments, statistics of international trade in services, and household and migration statistics. Additionally, the classifications used should refer, when relevant, to the two main international economic classifications: the Central Product Classification (CPC) and the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC).



Although the development of national tourism statistics is uneven and the resources (both human and financial) vary from country to country, it is nevertheless necessary to strengthen international comparability. Consequently, countries are encouraged to compile

both demand and supply side tourism statistics in line with IRTS 2008 in order to ensure a better information base for analysis of tourism and its economic contributions.

To facilitate the implementation of the recommendations the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) together with UNSD, other agencies and national experts, drafted a Compilers Guide for IRTS 2008 which is available in electronic format on the websites of UNWTO and UNSD, and will appear in print during 2015.



Concepts, definitions, classifications and indicators presented in IRTS 2008 should be viewed as an important foundation of the system of tourism statistics, which is closely linked to the compilation of Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA). In fact, the TSA provides the conceptual framework and the organizational structure for the reconciliation of most tourism statistics internally within the sector, as well as with other economic statistics. From this perspective, it should be seen as an instrument to assist countries in the identification of data gaps and to guide them during the revision of existing data sources, as well as in the development of new sources.

Working for and with the countries

UNSD and UNWTO jointly undertake capacity building activities to improve tourism statistics and TSA in developing countries. Information on recent workshops is available at the website of UNSD.

For enquiries regarding Tourism statistics please contact tradeserv@un.org.

Dissemination of Global Statistics

While the other four branches of the Statistics Division 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 covers the full range of statistical themes.

Most Recent Developments

The Statistical Services Branch continuously aims to modernize and improve the Statistics Division's dissemination methods. To that end, the Branch recently reviewed the Division's mailing lists and undertook a survey of a sample of the current clients who receive complimentary copies of its publications by mail. The objectives of the survey were to learn about the habits of known users and their preferred mode (print versus electronic) of utilizing the Statistics Division's publications. Further details about the publications survey can be found in the Report of the Secretary-General, E/CN.3/2014/12.

Another effort to improve data dissemination across the UN System was the Data Managers Meeting held at United Nations Headquarters in New York, 22-24 January 2014. Data dissemination specialists from various UN agencies, funds and programmes gathered for discussions on the data revolution and official statistics, implementing standards in data dissemination and exchange, and bridging national and international statistics.

One important objective of the meeting was to review and improve **UNdata** - UNSD's internet-based data service for the global user community, which was launched in early 2008. **UNdata** is equipped with all the functionalities for data access, and its development team is continuously adding new databases and features to further enhance user experience.



UNdata brings numerous statistical databases within easy reach of users, free of charge, through a single entry point (<http://data.un.org/>). Some of the tools provided to aid research include Country Profiles, Advanced Search, Glossaries, and the recently introduced SDMX-based Application Programming Interface (API). Also, users can

easily access, through related links, the data resources of national statistical offices. Currently, there are 34 databases and six glossaries containing over 60 million data points and covering a wide range of themes including Agriculture, Education, Employment, Energy, Environment, Health, Human Development, Industry, Information and Communication Technology, National Accounts, Population, Refugees, Tourism, Trade, as well as the Millennium Development Goals indicators.

Another data service for nationally-produced statistics, CountryData (<http://data.un.org/countrydata>), was launched in April 2012 and contains the development indicators of Burundi, Cambodia, Ghana, Liberia, Lao PDR, Morocco, Rwanda, Uganda, Thailand and Viet Nam, as well as the State of Palestine. Development indicators as well as metadata are exchanged from national repositories to the database via nationally managed SDMX registries. Once in the database, discrepancies between data from national sources and international agencies are identified and analyzed.

Additionally, the Statistics Division has been implementing a series of capacity-building projects in this area. So far three Regional Workshops on Data Dissemination and Communication have been held in Manila, the Philippines, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and Amman, Jordan. The workshops were attended by dozens of participants from countries, sub-regional organizations, regional organizations and international organizations.

Keeping with Tradition

The United Nations *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* (MBS) and the United Nations *Statistical Yearbook* (SYB) were two of the original pillars 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-titled *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 45th session, over 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.

Data Compilation and Dissemination

These 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 national statistical offices, UN agencies, and other international and specialized organizations.

Monthly Bulletin of Statistics

The *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* (MBS) presents current monthly and/or annual and quarterly statistics for more than 200 countries and areas of the world. The statistics, which are received from national statistical offices and collected from additional international sources, cover the following topics: construction, earnings, employment, energy, finance, industrial production, international merchandise trade, manufacturing, mining, population, prices, transport and unemployment. The MBS is freely available in pdf and in an online database at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mbs/>. The print version is available for sale at <https://unp.un.org/>. In general, the



available data covers the latest 18 months, along with annual averages or annual totals for the last six years, and are presented in over 50 tables in the print version. The online database contains several additional data series (i.e. hours of work in manufacturing and non-agricultural activities, retail trade indices and world food price indices) and slightly longer time series. The most popular statistical series consulted online are the industrial production indices, consumer price indices, and total imports and exports.

Statistical Yearbook



The *Statistical Yearbook* contains an overview of the statistics compiled by the international community in about 60 tables from 25 sources with most tables providing a historical series for over 200 countries, territories and statistical areas of the world. The topics covered include: agriculture, demography, development assistance, education, energy, environment, external debt, finance, gender, health, ICT, industrial production, labour market, national accounts (economy), science & culture, tourism and trade. . The *Statistical Yearbook* is available in hard copy for purchase. PDF files of the latest *Yearbook*, as well as other recent editions, are available free of charge on the *Statistical Yearbook* website at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/syb>.

World Statistics Pocketbook



The *World Statistics Pocketbook* is an annual compilation of over 50 key economic, social and environmental indicators covering several years, presented in one-page profiles for more than 200 countries and areas of the world. The following topics are covered: balance of payments, communication and information, education, energy, environment, food and agriculture, gender, health, industrial production, international finance, international tourism, international trade, labour, national accounts, population and migration and prices. This popular product is available in hard copy, and can be accessed free of charge online as “Country Profiles” in UNdata and in PDF format on the *World Statistics Pocketbook* website at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/pocketbook/>.

Adapted from the print version of the *World Statistics Pocketbook*, the UN CountryStats app for iPhones and iPads is available for download free of charge from the App store. This data visualisation tool offers portable access to key indicators for more than 200 countries and areas. Its easy-to-use interface enables users to: view complete country profiles; compare indicators for several countries and years at a time; display them as bar graphs; and save them as favourites. The app is available to download from the *Pocketbook* website at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/pocketbook/> and also found in the App store.



Quality Assurance Frameworks

The Statistical Services Branch participates in the ongoing work of the Expert Group on National Quality Assurance Frameworks which was established at the request of the United Nations Statistical Commission. The Expert Group developed a generic national quality assurance framework (NQAF) template based on several of the already existing quality frameworks, and established a mapping to them. The Group continues its efforts to enhance the guidelines it drew up to accompany the template, to build upon the a glossary it compiled of the main quality-related terms, and to update and maintain the NQAF quality assurance website on which documents and links to nationally and internationally developed quality tools and references are posted to provide a platform for the exchange of information and experiences on quality assurance work.

For more information on the work of the Expert Group on National Quality Assurance Frameworks, see <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/dnss/QualityNQAF/nqaf.aspx>.

Contact the Statistical Services Branch for enquiries about its work at statistics@un.org.

Geospatial Information

Since 1948, the United Nations has been promoting better understanding of cartography, geographical names and geospatial information through the organization of international and regional conferences, publications, training courses, and technical projects (the UN Statistics Division is the substantive office responsible for organizing and servicing these activities). There is a general recognition that the enhanced availability of reliable and trusted geospatial information is critical to address global issues such as climate change, food crisis, and humanitarian assistance, and to help design and implement effective development projects.

The United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM)

Following the recommendations made by the 18th United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific (UNRCC-AP) and the 41st session of the Statistical Commission, a comprehensive report of the Secretary General on Global Geospatial Information Management (E/2011/89) was prepared and presented to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at its substantive session in July 2011. This report had benefited from wide-ranging consultations with Member States and relevant stakeholders.



In recognition of the growing importance of geospatial information globally, ECOSOC established the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) on 27 July 2011 (see ECOSOC resolution 2011/24). UN-GGIM is a formal inter-governmental body tasked with making joint decisions and setting directions on the production and use of geospatial information within national and global policy frameworks. This includes consulting on the rapidly changing field of geospatial information, holding regular high-level and multi-stakeholder discussions on global geospatial information, and promoting national, regional and global efforts in order to foster the exchange of knowledge and expertise and to assist developing countries in building and strengthening their national capacities in this field.

The United Nations Committee of Experts on GGIM convened its inaugural session on Wednesday 26 October 2011 in Seoul (Republic of Korea), which was attended by representatives from 90 countries and major international/regional organizations. The substantive work of the session discussed the contribution of this professional community to the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20, June 2012) and decided to create a task force to prepare a document for the summit. The Committee also established a working group that has prepared an inventory of major issues to be addressed by the Committee, and devised a work plan of actions to be implemented over five years.

The Committee, in advancing its mandate has been focusing on over 10 **work items** covering critical topics such as:-

- A global geodetic reference frame,
- A global map for sustainable development
- Adoption and implementation of standards
- Determining global fundamental data sets
- Geospatial information supporting Sustainable Development and the post 2015 development agenda
- The development of a knowledge base
- Identification of trends in national institutional arrangements in geospatial information management
- Integrating geospatial, statistics and other information
- Legal and policy frameworks
- Development of a statement of shared guiding principles
- The creation of regional committees on global geospatial information management.

Four sessions of the Committee of Experts and three interactive High Level Forums, have now been convened, which brought together government experts from over 100 Member States, relevant international organizations and other major global stakeholders from the geospatial information industry and civil society.

Over the past four years the Committee of Experts has made a significant impact across the globe in the geospatial information management arena. This has been reflected in increased levels of participation on work items, the feedback and interventions from discussion with Member State representatives and from the comments received on the meeting evaluation questionnaires. The following table details the number of Member States and participants who have attended the four sessions of the Committee of Experts.

Session	Location	Member States	Attendees
1 st - October 2011	Seoul, Korea	90	350
2nd - August 2012	New York	61	148
3rd - July 2013	United Kingdom	66	238
4 th - August 2014	New York	87	280

In general, over 90% of the participants said that the content and conduct of the meetings were good. They also indicated that substantial knowledge was gained on the building of national GIS, developing core data sets and developing a global geodetic network. Participants also shared that some of the most useful elements of the meetings were, networking, making new contacts and learning from others, sharing and discussing best practices and the passing of important resolutions.

A major achievement of the Committee has been the endorsement of the resolution “**A Global Geodetic Reference frame for sustainable development**” in August 2014 by over 40 Member States at its 3rd session, and its subsequent adoption in November 2014 by the Economic and Social Council.

Clause 3 in the resolution “*Urges Member States to implement open sharing of geodetic data, standards and conventions to contribute to the global reference frame and regional densifications through relevant national mechanisms and intergovernmental cooperation, and in coordination with the International Association of Geodesy*”.

A more sustainable global geodetic reference frame will ensure that more consistent locational positioning will be available across the globe. This is especially important as precise positioning is being applied in virtually every aspect of people's lives, from civil engineering and transportation, climate change and sea level monitoring, to sustainable development and emergency management. The Permanent Mission of Fiji to the United Nations has indicated its intention to sponsor the move to have the resolution endorsed in the General Assembly in 2015.

In furthering its mandate to **provide information and knowledge**, the GGIM Secretariat with the support of the Committee continues to improve the content on the GGIM website, <http://ggim.un.org/default.html>, inclusive of the knowledge base



<http://ggim.un.org/knowledgebase/Knowledgebase.aspx>.

Additionally at its third session in 2013, the document “**Future Trends in Geospatial Information Management: the five to ten year vision**” was endorsed and is now available in hardcopy and digital format in all



six United Nations languages and Korean. It provides a detailed analysis of the main themes and trends that will impact the geospatial information management industry and also serves as a technical guide for Member States in the preparation of their geospatial information strategies and plans.

Another major area of work and achievement has been the **forging and strengthening of partnerships** within the United Nations and with international bodies such as the Group on Earth Observation Systems (GEOS) the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) and the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC). The Committee has partnered with these entities to prepare a number of important technical papers such as “A Guide to the Role of Standards in Geospatial Information Management” and “A Guide to the Role of Standards in Geospatial Information Management”, which have been discussed and endorsed as methodological guidelines to assist Member States in implementing and adopting geospatial standards within their national frameworks.

Work is ongoing in **strengthening geospatial information management capacities in Member States**. This has been afforded with the support of the China trust fund and UNSD development account, where participants have been supported to attend technical forums, workshops and expert group meetings such as the Chengdu Forum in October 2013 in China. Convened by the UNSD in collaboration with the National Administration of Surveying, Mapping and Geoinformation (NASG) of China, under the theme “Development and Applications in Urban Hazard Mapping”, participants met and shared experiences and methodologies in the production, management, analysis, modeling and dissemination of hazard related geospatial information.

The work of the Committee of Experts is underpinned by a **global coordination mechanism** consisting of five regional committees in Asia-Pacific, the Americas, the Arab States Europe and Africa. UN-GGIM Americas <http://www.un-ggim-americas.org/> and UN-GGIM for Asia and the Pacific <http://www.un-ggim-ap.org/> were outgrowths from existing regional entities, (Permanent Committee for geospatial Data Infrastructure for the Americas - PCIDEA and Permanent Committee for Geospatial Information for Asia and the Pacific -PCGIAP respectively), connected with the United Nations regional cartographic conferences. UN-GGIM Europe <http://un-ggim-europe.org/>, UN-GGIM for Arab States and UN-GGIM Africa were created over the period 2014 to January 2015. The UN-GGIM Regional Committees play a vital role liaising with the UN-GGIM Secretariat on topics of interest and major developments in the intervening periods between Sessions of the Committee of Experts. They also facilitate regional development and discussion, and formally report back to the Committee of Experts.

Increasingly member states are recognising the critical role of geospatial information management and the need for strengthened collaboration and joined initiatives, to advance its development and use to support sustainable development and related global agendas.

UN-GGIM Committee of Experts				
UN-GGIM Asia-Pacific (2012)	UN-GGIM Africa	UN-GGIM Arab States (2014)	UN-GGIM Americas (2013)	UN-GGIM Europe (2014)
China Rep. of Korea Japan	South Africa UN ECA	Member States to be elected in Feb. 2015	Mexico Chile Mexico	Sweden Netherlands/ Spain
WG 1 Geodetic Reference Frame for SD	CODIST-Geo	To be determined	Working Groups & Region Vocals	European Commission + Eurostat
WG 2 Data Sharing & Integration for Disaster Mgmt.	AFREF African Reference Frame	UN-GGIM Arab States placed under the auspices of UN ESCWA Commission	PAIGH Pan Amer. Inst. of Geography and History	Euro Geographics
WG 3 Place-Based Information for Economic Growth	UN ECA. Geoinfo merged with Statistics. 3/2013 CODIST meeting recommended CODIST-Geo. become UN-GGIM Africa. Yet to be ratified.	Formally established in August 2014. Inaugural Meeting to be held in Riyadh in Feb. 2015	SIRGAS Geocentric Reference System for Americas	European Environment Agency
			GeoSUR Geo. Network for Latin America & Caribbean	WG1: France WG2: Germany

Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information

In making decision 44/101 (see E/2010/24, chapter I.C) at its forty-fourth session, the United Nations Statistical Commission “strongly supported the linking of socio-economic and environmental data to a location in order to enrich and maximize the potential of statistical information”, and “welcomed the proposal of an international conference as a way of outreach and best practices, bringing together both statistical and geospatial professional communities” as well as “the proposal to develop an international statistical geospatial framework”.

At its third session, held in the United Kingdom in July 2013, the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) adopted decision 3/107 (see E/C.20/2013/17) and “supported the decision by the Statistical Commission to create an Expert Group on the integration of geospatial information and statistical information, comprising members of both the statistical and geospatial communities”.

In pursuance of Statistical Commission decision 44/101 and UN-GGIM decision 3/107 as described above, UNSD has established the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information, composed of experts with an even professional mix of statistical and geospatial expertise, and with good geographical representation, to carry the work on developing a statistical spatial framework as a global standard for the integration of statistical and geospatial information.. The first meeting of the Expert Group was held in New York, from 30 October to 1 November 2013, and was attended by 34 experts from the statistical and geospatial communities, and international organizations.

UNSD convened the first Global Forum on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information in New York, 4-5 August 2014, in conjunction with the 4th session of UN-GGIM. The Global Forum brought together more than 200 participants from 73 countries to discuss the strategic vision and goals for the integration of statistical and geospatial information, continuing the global consultation on the development of a global statistical-geospatial framework initiated by the Expert Group.

Prior to the Global Forum, UNSD and the National Administration of Surveying, Mapping and Geo-information (NASG) of China jointly organized an International Workshop on Integrating Geospatial and Statistical Information, held from 9 to 12 June 2014 in Beijing. The Workshop was attended by more than 147 participants from 40 countries, 25 among them (all of them from developing countries) were financially supported by the host country.

Supporting Geospatial Activities

UNSD promotes the concept of National Spatial Data Infrastructure, stresses the use of geospatial information in developing countries, organizes training courses, seminars, and expert group meetings on GIS, particularly in support of census and statistical activities, and collaborates with the UN Geographic Information Working Group.

Regional Cartographic Conferences

Following the recommendation of ECOSOC in 1948 that Governments of Member States stimulate surveying and mapping of their national territories, the first regional cartographic conference was hosted by the Government of India from 15 to 25 February 1955. Since then, the United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific (UNRCC-AP) has convened every three years (the 19th UNRCC-AP was held in Bangkok from 29 October to 1 November 2012). The United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas (UNRCC-A) started meeting every four years in 1976 (the 10th UNRCC-A was held in New York from 19 to 23 August 2013), <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/RCC/unrcca10.html>.

The next regional cartographic conference will be for Asia and the Pacific, 5-9 October, in the Republic of Korea.

Group of Experts on Geographical Names

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

Today, UNGEGN functions through 24 geographical/linguistic divisions, 10 working groups and two task teams, addressing issues of the standardization of geographical names, capacity building in the management of national toponymic organizations, the creation and maintenance of gazetteers, romanization systems, and the protection of geographical names as cultural heritage.

UNGEGN Sessions provide the global forum where these experts are able to learn of and share best practices,

cooperative ventures, new developments in geographical names administration and practical outcomes of names standardization. The 29th Session of UNGEGN is scheduled to be held from 25 - 29 April 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand.

UNGEKN Methodological work

A key area of work is the preparation of **training and educational material** to support toponymic training programmes. On-line self-paced toponymic training is available at http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEKN/docs/_data_ICA_courses/index.html

The following are manuals that are available in hard copy and on-line.

- *Multilingual Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names.*
- *Handbook on GIS and digital mapping for population and housing censuses.*
- *Handbook on Geospatial Infrastructure in Support of Census Activities.*
- *Manual for the national standardization of geographical names* (2006).
- *Technical reference manual for the standardization of geographical names* (2007), available in English only.



<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEKN/publications.html>

The United Nations Statistics Division has continued to provide support for the planning and delivery of **toponymy training courses**. From 17 to 21 June 2013, an UNGEGN training workshop was held in Antananarivo, Madagascar. Three experts and participants from five countries were provided travel support; and training material for the course was shipped.

Publicity Material

- The UNGEGN brochure, “*Consistent use of place names*” (2001).
- The UNGEGN brochure, “*Geographical names as vital keys for accessing information in our globalized and digital world*”, (2007).
- A media kit is available at:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEKN/mediakit.html>

Four issues of the **UNGEKN Information Bulletin** (Nos. 43 to 46) were prepared, circulated to the UNGEGN mailing list

and published on the website¹ in March 2014, October 2013, May 2013 and December 2012. An attempt was made to improve the look and appeal of the Bulletin, beginning with the October 2013, issue number 45.

The UNSD continues to maintain the **UNGEKN website** <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEKN/default.html> which is a comprehensive repository of over 1,600 technical documents related to early meetings of the UNGEGN Expert Group and UNGEGN Sessions, and some 1,800 Conference documents. It is recognized by toponymic experts as the only place in the world with this knowledge base.

World Geographical Names Database

The UNGEGN Secretariat continues to maintain and support the **Geographical Names Database** that was developed in 2004, in pursuance of resolution IX/6 of the ninth Conference on the standardization of geographical names.

Users are able to access short and full names of countries (193 United Nations Member States), their capitals, and the major cities (population over 100,000) via the World Geographical Names Database web application. Authoritative city endonyms are provided mainly by national name authorities and sound files are being added to assist users with pronunciation of city names.

The database is currently updated quarterly, and has 5,876 geographical names, consisting of 193 countries and 3,343 cities. There are also 974 sound files. The Secretariat appreciates all past submissions and greatly encourages experts to send additional material or corrections.

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

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

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>.

Contact address:

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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

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.



The era of UNSIS

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

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

The PC era

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 2015 all major statistical production systems are Internet/Intranet based providing enhanced capabilities for data collection, processing and dissemination. The Division established presence on social media and reaches out to users using Facebook and Twitter.

Recent Developments

UNSD recently launched **UNdata** a new internet-based data service for the global user community, which is fully equipped with functionalities for data search, access and download. The **UNdata** development team is continuously working on adding new databases and



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27 databases - 60 million records
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features to further enhance user experience.



UN Intranet | DESA Intranet

statistics division

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UNESIS Applications

The United Nations Economic and Social Information System (UNESIS) is a collection of statistical applications developed by UNSD in the areas of economic, energy, environment, demographic and social, and trade statistics. The applications listed below are Intranet applications for collecting and processing data, printing yearbooks and questionnaires as well as applications for administering and monitoring Internet databases. A list of Internet dissemination databases is available on the [UNSD Internet page](#).

Contact Manager

The UNSD Contact Manager enables staff members to maintain and print address lists of statistical and international organizations and individuals. Users can maintain customized lists and create mailmerge files for use with Microsoft Word.

Energy Yearbook Application

The Energy Yearbook Application is a data management and printing application for the creation of energy yearbooks and energy balances applications.

SYB Application

The Statistical YearBook(SYB) Application is a data management and printing application for the creation of Statistical yearbooks and CD-ROMs.

SNA Application

The System of National Accounts(SNA) Application is a data management and printing application for the creation of National Accounts yearbooks and questionnaires

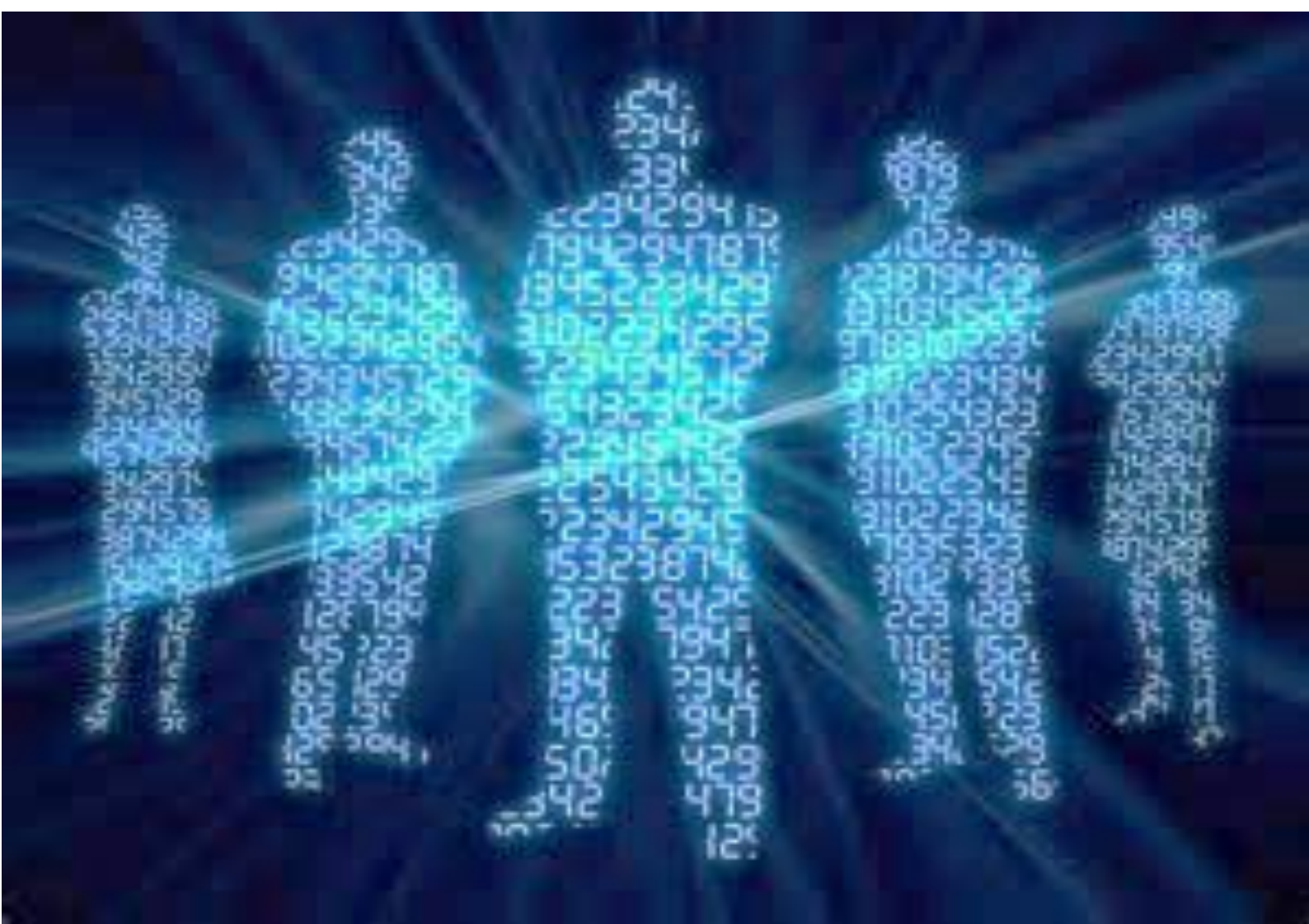
DYB Application

The Demographic YearBook(SYB) Application is a data management and printing application for the creation of Demographic yearbooks and CD-ROMs.

UNdata brings numerous statistical databases within easy reach of users, free of charge, through a single entry point (<http://data.un.org/>). Some of the tools provided to aid research include Country Profiles, Advanced Search and Glossaries. Currently, there are 27 databases and 6 glossaries containing over 60 million data points and covering a wide range of themes including Agriculture, Crime, Education, Energy, Environment, Health, HIV/AIDS, Human Development, Industry, Information and Communication Technology, Labour, National Accounts, Population, Refugees, Tourism, Trade, as well as the Millennium Development Goals indicators.

For more information please contact: statistics@un.org

Part Three



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