



**United
Nations**

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

Why a Global Initiative on Unique Identifiers for Businesses?

Julian Chow, UNSD

First meeting of the Webinar Series on the Global Initiative on Unique Identifiers for Businesses

11 October 2023



Outline

- Brief outline on Statistical Business Registers
- Their role in the National Statistical Office
- Importance of administrative data
- Rationale for the Global Initiative on Unique Identifiers for Businesses

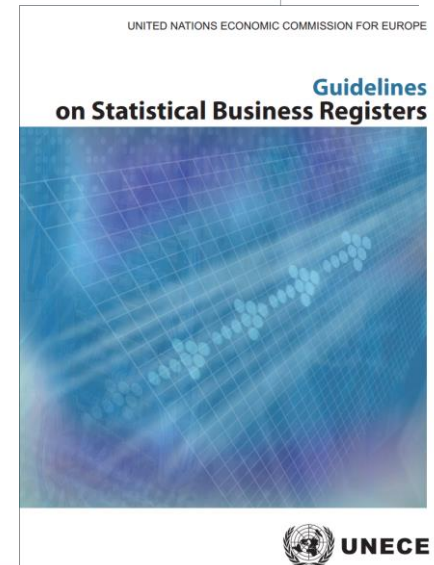


International work and guidance on SBRs

- **United Nations** [Guidelines on Statistical Business Registers, 2020](#)
- **United Nations** [The draft Manual on the Statistical Business Register Maturity Model for Statistical Business Registers ,2022](#)
- **Eurostat**, [European business statistics methodological manual for statistical business registers, 2021 edition](#)
- **Eurostat**, [European Business Profiling Recommendations Manual, 2020 edition](#)
- **Eurostat**, [Business Registers Recommendations Manual \(2010\)](#)
- **Eurostat and OECD**, [Manual on Business Demography Statistics \(2007\)](#)
- **UNECE**, [UNECE, Guidelines on the use of statistical business registers for business demography and entrepreneurship statistics \(2018\)](#)
- **UNECE**, [Guidelines on Statistical Business Registers \(2015\)](#)
- **African Development Bank**, [Guidelines for Building Statistical Business Registers in Africa \(2014\)](#)



MANUALS AND GUIDELINES | eurostat



What is a Statistical Business Register?

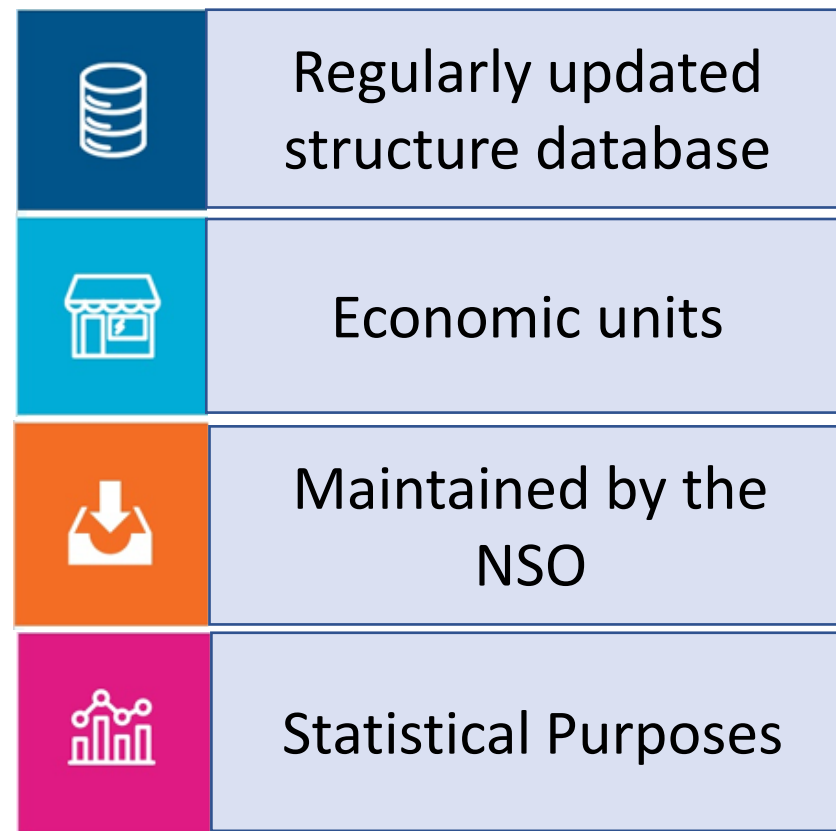
A Statistical Business Register is a regularly updated, structured database of economic units in a territorial area, maintained by the Statistical Office, and used for statistical purposes.

SBR is established and maintained by the National Statistical Office

SBRs as backbone of **statistical infrastructure** for **official statistics**

Generally, SBRs contain the following types of variables:

- Identification and Contact
- Demographic information (e.g. starting date)
- Stratification information (e.g. size)
- Links between units



What is a Statistical Business Register?

- An SBR is primarily established in order to provide the frame population for economic surveys, and for other statistical purposes
- The requirements for an SBR are quite different from the requirements of an administrative register
- Even if the SBR is based on information from administrative registers, the concepts, characteristics, methods of maintenance, etc., SBR need to be based on statistical concepts
- The SBR is only to be used for statistical purposes. It may not be used for other purposes, especially for administrative purposes.
- Data on individual natural persons or businesses collected by NSOs for statistical compilation are to be strictly confidential and used exclusively for statistical purposes

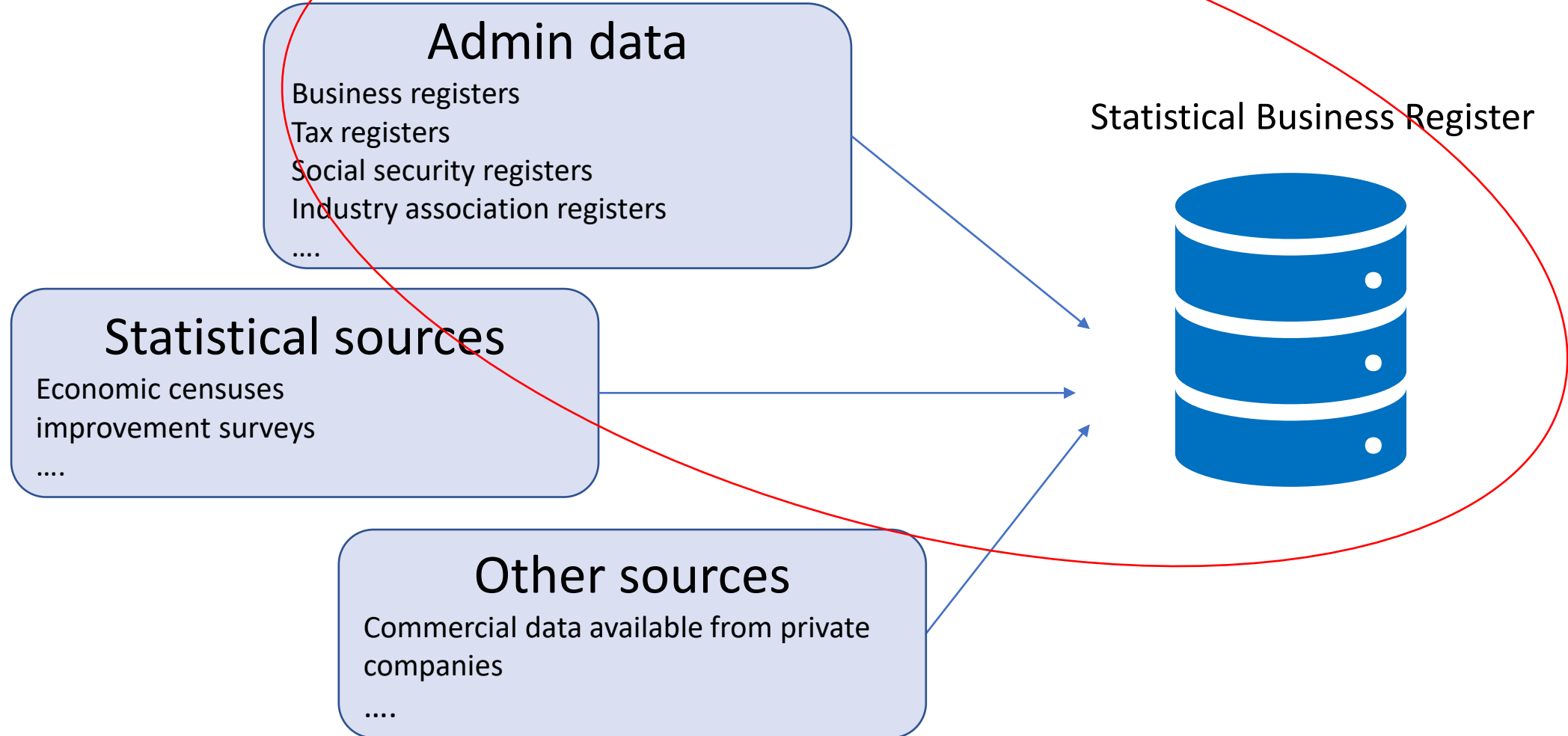


Roles of the Statistical Business Register

	Role	Goal
1	Live Register	Provide the gateway between data from various input sources and statistical units
2	SBR snapshot and frozen frame	Provide populations of statistical (and possibly administrative) units at fixed points in time
3	SBR survey frame	Provide a set of statistical units for a survey, valid for a specified reference period, with all characteristics required.
4	Survey support	Monitor survey response and response burden
5	SBR Statistics	Produce statistics based directly on the SBR
6	SBR information source	Provide lists of enterprises, their locations and other characteristics
7	SBR international data exchange	Facilitate coherence in international statistics
8	SBR in the modernization of statistical production and services	Promote integration of SBR within the production processes for economic statistics

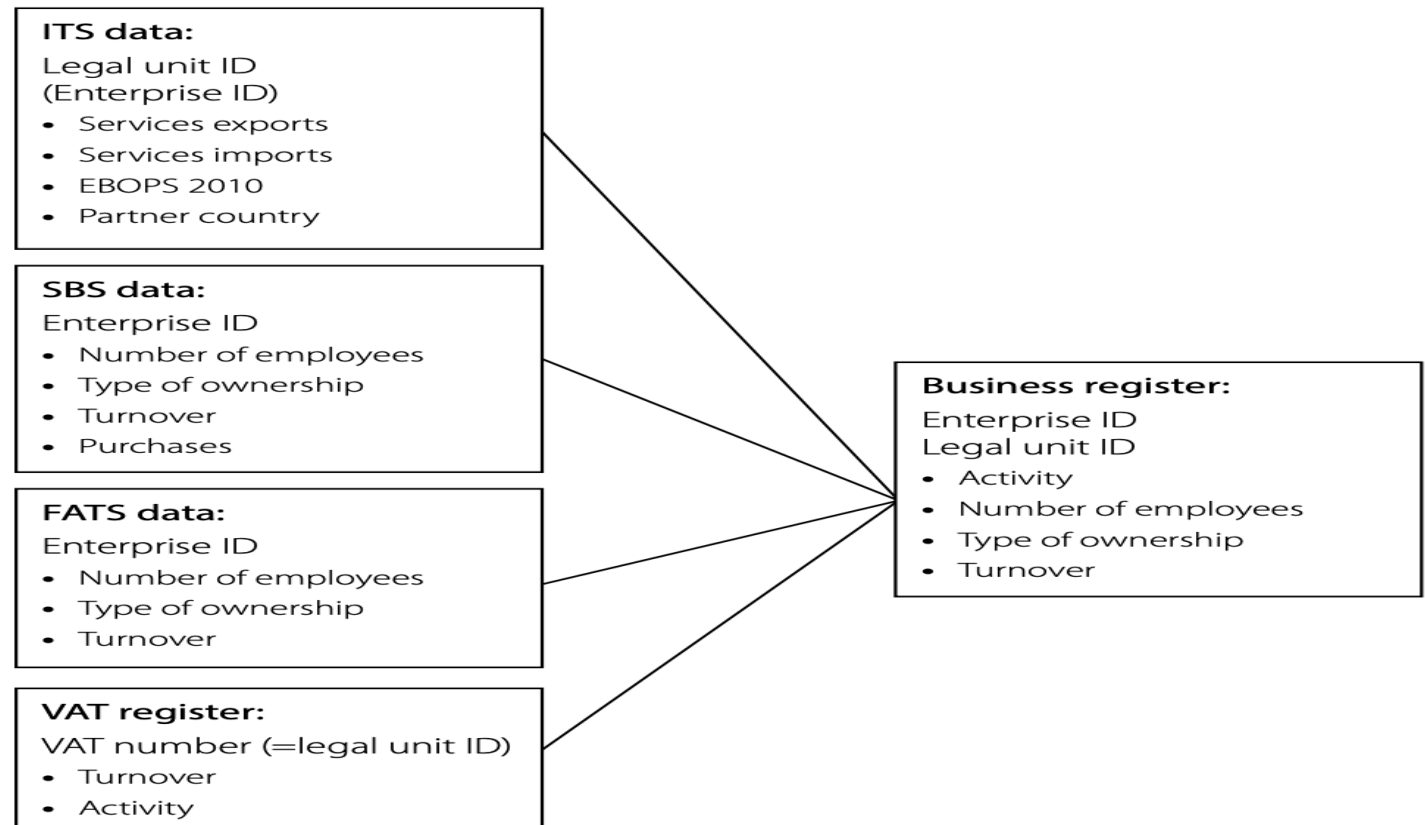


Data sources for SBRs



Importance of linking information

- Information on the same company has to be linked when combining information from different sources
- The availability of a unique legal identifier (among administrative data) is key for an efficient and effective micro data linking





Business registrar vs Statistical Business Registers

Business Registrars



It contains legal entities

Typically, businesses have to register in order to carry out the economic activity

Typically maintained by the business registrar authority

Statistical Business Register



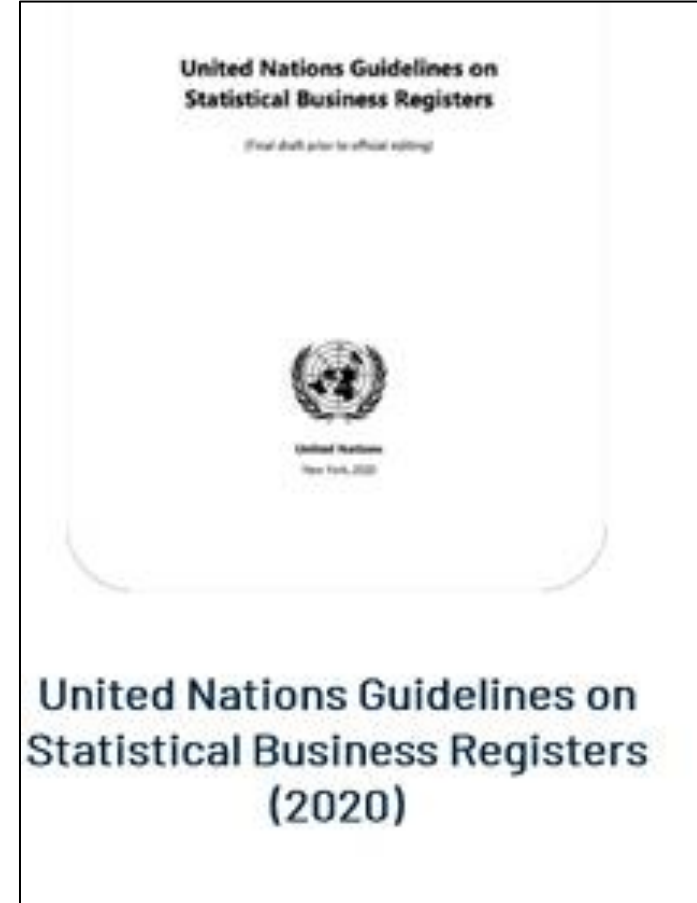
It contains statistical units for the collection and compilation of economic statistics

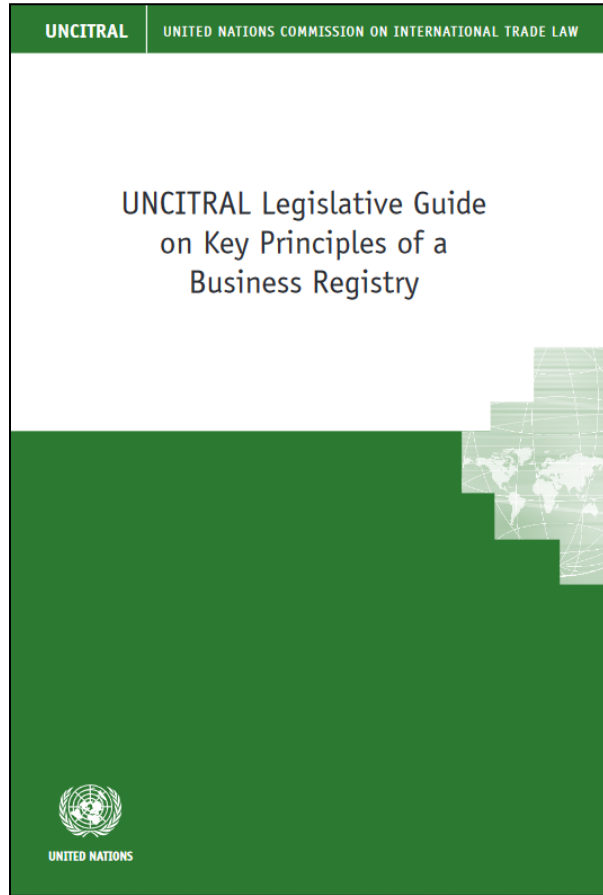
Maintained by the National Statistical Office



Rational for this initiative

- One of the main issues in the establishment and improvement of Statistical Business Registers (SBR) in countries is the lack of a unique identifier
- The existence of a unique legal identifier is essential for a better use of administrative data in the SBRs and the linking of data from various sources.
- UN Guidelines on Statistical Business Registers recommends the adoption and promotion of the use of a unique identifier to link information among different data sources and facilitate the subsequent use of the data in the units in the SBR





- The recommendation on the use of a unique identifier in a country is not only recommended in the statistical guidelines for the establishment of Statistical Business Registers in countries.
- The United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) developed The Legislative Guide on Key Principles of a Business Registry
- Recommendations to facilitate efficient domestic business registration and cooperation among registries in different national jurisdictions to facilitate cross-border access to registries

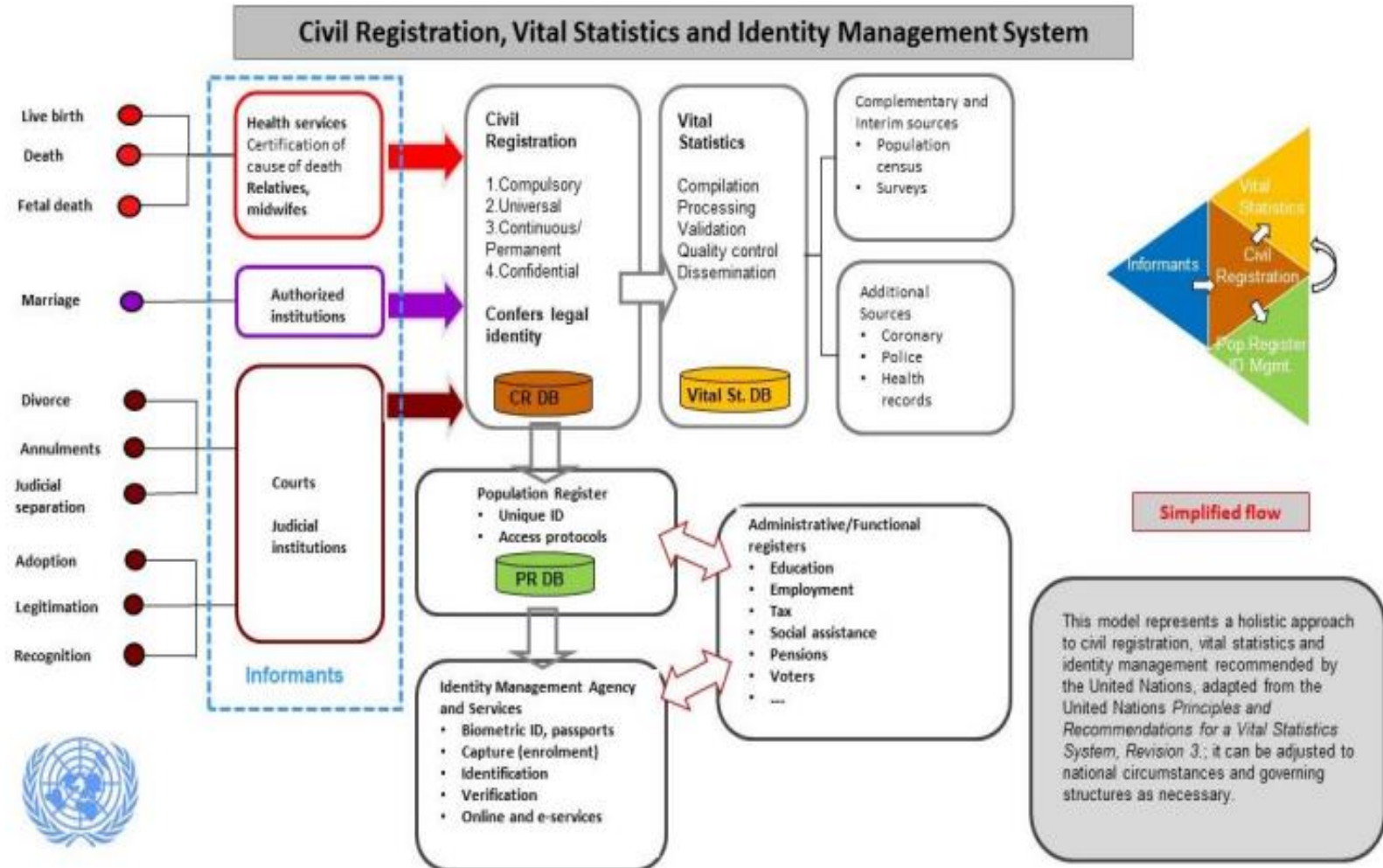


Rationale for this initiative

- A holistic approach to strengthen SBRs takes into account:
 - a legal business registration system
 - an identity management system
 - a statistical business register (SBR)
- Improving the registration of businesses and the identity management system for businesses greatly facilitates the establishment and the maintenance of Statistical Business Registers
- This is a similar approach to Civil Registration, Vital Statistics and population registers
 - Guidelines on the Legislative Framework for Civil Registration, Vital Statistics and Identity Management (UN 2019)
 - Handbook on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems: Management, Operation and Maintenance, Revision 1 (UN 2018)

Similarities with the approach to Civil Registration and Vital Statistics

- [United Nations Legal Identity Agenda](#)
- Global initiative that was launched as a “One UN” approach to:
 - establish a common approach to the issue of functional registration and legal identity; and
 - to support of Member States building holistic, country-owned, sustainable civil registration, vital statistics and identity management systems.
- 13 UN agencies





Rationale for this initiative

- To better understand globalization and facilitate the establishment and maintenance of global registers detailing the legal structure of multinationals, it is also critical to be able to link the unique national identifiers of multinational organizations to a global unique identifier
- The availability of a global legal entity identifier enables linkage across data sources, reduces manual efforts to reconcile different local identifiers, provides information on company ownership and can facilitate the process of integrating information on cross-border transactions (e.g., international flows of goods and taxes).
- The use of a global unique identifier also benefits the development of global registers, such as the Multination Information Platform developed by UNSD and OECD.



Global Initiative on Unique Identifiers for Businesses

- Initiative aimed to:
 - strengthen the transparency on businesses in countries by improving their registration
 - improve the availability of unique business identifiers in administrative data sources in countries
 - promote access to and sharing of administrative data for statistical business registers
 - demonstrate the importance and benefit of linking national identifiers with global identifiers, such as the LEI.
- It is intended to bring together interested international/regional organizations active in the domain of SBRs and business registration and statistical legislation to support countries seeking to improve their statistical business registers and business registration systems
- Leverage on the various organizations to develop a common approach



Process

- It is the outcome of a consultation process that started in 2020 between UNSD, UN Committee of Experts on Business and Trade Statistics (UNCEBTS) and the Global Legal Entity Identifier Foundation (GLEIF)
- **53rd session of the UNSC in March 2022:** *The UNSC “Supported the development of a global initiative aimed at improving the availability of unique business identifiers in administrative data sources, considered essential to help countries in strengthening statistical business registers and better understanding globalization; and requested the Committee to further elaborate the initiative and to report to the Commission at its fifty-fourth session, in 2023.”*
- **54th session of the UNSC in March 2023:** *endorsed the global initiative on unique identifiers for businesses, supported its main elements as described in the background document, and encouraged countries and relevant organizations to coordinate their activities in this area in an effort to provide solid infrastructure for statistical business registers”*



Webinar series on the Global Initiative

- A webinar series is being organized by UNSD in collaboration with the United Nations Committee of Experts on Business and Trade Statistics (UNCEBTS) and the Global Legal Entity Identifier Foundation (GLEIF) to:
 - Create awareness of the Global Initiative on Unique Identifiers for Businesses and establish a collaborative environment for countries and international organizations to strengthen the registration system in countries
 - Identify possible pilot projects to demonstrate the importance of a sound registration system to improve Statistical Business Registers and the benefits of mapping to a global unique identifier (LEI) and their use to jump start their national systems of unique business identifiers
 - Elaborate a work plan to further guide this initiative by seeking synergies between the business registers and civil registration registers



Webinar series on the Global Initiative

- Three webinars are planned for the following dates:

11 October 2023, 7am – 9:30am (NY time) to provide an overview of the global initiative

7 November 2023, 7am – 9:30 am (NY time) to bring together the statistical community and the community of business registers to understand the challenges and opportunities of increased collaboration

19 December 2023, 7am – 930 am (NY time) to draw conclusions from the discussion and identify possible pilot projects and the main elements of a work plan under this initiative

It brings together various stakeholders such as National Statistical Offices, Central Banks, Regulatory authorities, international organizations active in business registration and statistical business register, and LEI issuing organizations

Thank you!