

Strengthening Coherence and Integration in Trade Statistics and Business Registers in Africa

Meeting of the Task Force on International Trade Statistics (TT-ITS)

Contribution of STATAFRIC and the PAS II Programme

Presented at the 8th UN CE B-TS Meeting — Singapore, 24–26 June 2025

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A CONTINENTAL VISION FOR STATISTICAL INTEGRATION

- **STATAFRIC**: African Union's statistics agency
- **PAS II**: EU-funded programme (2022–2026) supporting statistical harmonisation
- **Focus**: External trade, labour market, informal economy, business register and digital tools
- Collaboration with **NSOs, RECs, UNECA, AfDB, ILO, Eurostat**

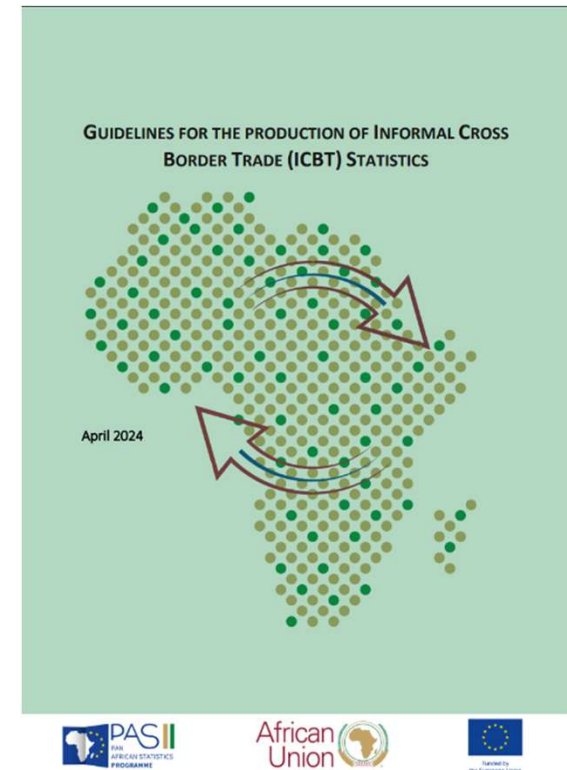
Trade statistics and informal Economy



TRADE STATISTICS: A PAN-AFRICAN FRAMEWORK

Continental Coherence in Trade Statistics

- **Data Transmission Protocol (DTP)** adopted by over 40 countries
- **Guidelines on Informal Cross-Border Trade (ICBT)**
- **Guidelines on Trade Indices (UVI, XPI, MPI)**
- Harmonised templates for metadata and reporting



MIRROR AND RECONCILIATION EXERCISES

Reducing Trade Data Gaps and Asymmetries

- **Bilateral mirror exercises launched under STATAFRIC coordination**
- **Focus on key trade corridors (e.g., Ethiopia–Djibouti, DRC-Zambia, etc.)**
- **Identification of asymmetries, causes, and corrective actions**
- **Documentation and harmonisation of IMTS practices**

Towards a Harmonised African Trade Yearbook

- **ATSY 2024: First African Trade Statistics Yearbook under STATAFRIC leadership**
- **Includes metadata control and regional consistency checks**
- **Supports AfCFTA monitoring and regional integration policies**
- **Support to IGAD ("Facts & Figures" Yearbook (harmonised indicators))**
- **Drafting of "Key Stats" regional statistical snapshot**
- **Design and implementation of a centralised trade statistics database**

ITSS E-LEARNING MODULE

ITSS Training: Accessible, Certified, Aligned with MSITS

- **Launch of e-learning on International Trade in Services Statistics (ITSS)**
 - Based on MSITS 2010
 - Open to NSOs, Central Banks, Ministries, Analysts
- Hosted on the AU e-learning platform (July–Sept. 2025)
- Fully self-paced, with interactive modules and certification
- Supports sustainable capacity building across Africa



INTEGRATED LABOUR AND TRADE STATISTICS

- **Joint work under STG-ES (External Sector) and STG-EIE (Labour & Informality)**
- **Minimum list of indicators for employment and informal economy**
- **Use of existing sources: censuses, household surveys, admin data**
- **Shared metadata frameworks and cross-domain coherence**

GLOBAL STATISTICAL REVISIONS

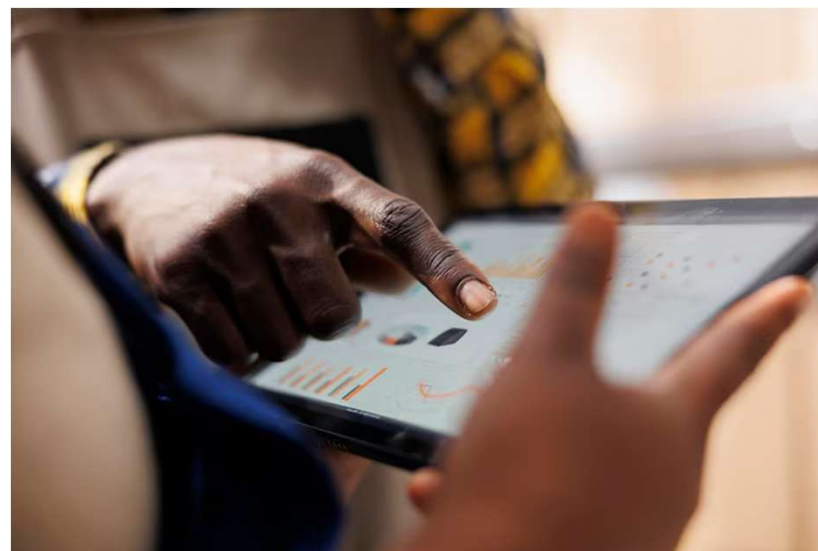
- **Africa's Voice in the Revisions of IMTS and MSITS**
- **Technical inputs to the revision of IMTS and MSITS manuals**
- **Focus areas:**
 - Informal cross-border trade
 - Data from non-traditional sources
 - Digital services and e-commerce
- **Contributions from STG-ES and STG-EIE experts**
- Coordinated through STATAFRIC and PAS II

2025–2026 ACTION PLAN

Next Steps for Coherence and Integration

- **Finalisation and dissemination of:**
 - ICBT Guidelines
 - Trade Indices Guidelines
- **Expansion of the Data Transmission Protocol to all AU Member States**
- **Scale-up of ITSS e-learning and new modules (e.g., ICBT, trade metadata)**
- **Interlinkages: trade ↔ labour ↔ enterprise statistics**
- **Regional support: IGAD, ECCAS, ECOWAS**

Statistical Business Registers



STRENGTHENING STATISTICAL BUSINESS REGISTERS ACROSS AFRICA



- **STATAFRIC, in partnership with ECOBUSAF** (one of the grant from PAS II program) and with the support of international partners launched a continental effort to enhance the capacity of African National Statistics Offices (NSOs) **in establishing and managing Statistical Business Registers (SBRs)**.
- Participating countries include Senegal, Mauritius, Namibia, and more recently Nigeria.
- Joint capacity-building activities include **technical missions, study visits** (e.g., to SSB in Norway and Mauritius), and online trainings.
- These efforts contribute directly to **Agenda 2063 and the Second Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA 2)**.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

- **Joint Study Visits were organized:** Norway (May 2024), Mauritius (Nov 2024) with participation from Senegal, Namibia, and Mauritius NSOs to explore administrative data use, SBR architecture, informal sector coverage, and the **Statbus platform**.
- **Online Training** (Nov 2024): 25 statisticians from 13 AU countries trained on business demography statistics and administrative data integration.
- Joint capacity-building activities **include technical missions, study visits** and online trainings.
- New partnership with Nigeria launched in 2024 with a mapping mission and planned technical missions for 2025 to **support SBR harmonization and Statbus test implementation**.

FROM STRATEGY TO NATIONAL ACTION

- Several countries (Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Cameroon, Tunisia, ..) showcased national SBRs, **with varying progress and tools** (From Excel-based systems, to more customized SBR dedicated tools).
- **Significant efforts toward linking administrative sources** (tax, social security, customs) to ensure comprehensive, regularly updated business registers.
- Increased emphasis **on profiling large enterprises**, use of ISIC Rev.4 and preparation for Rev.5, **geocoding, and technological upgrades** (machine learning for activity coding,..).
- STATAFRIC actively supports technical guidance and coordinates across PAOs and RECs **to harmonize methodologies and monitoring tools**, with the support of PAS II program.

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS FROM DOUALA SBR WORKSHOP

- STATAFRIC organized a workshop on Statistical Business Registers in Douala (March 2024) with representatives from 15 AU Member States, 5 Regional Economic Communities, and several Pan-African and international organizations
- **Major Recommendations from the meeting:**
 - Asked PAOs and partners to **provide technical and financial assistance**, share software solutions (such as StatBus), and coordinate actions on SBR.
 - Encouraged MS to **establish dedicated SBR departments** in NSOs, improve IT infrastructure, conduct regular economic censuses
- **Strategic Coordination:** A technical SBR group was created **under SHaSA II** to sustain collaboration and guide implementation across the continent.

CONCLUSION

Delivering Statistical Integration in Practice

- From fragmented efforts to coordinated systems
- Continental tools rooted in national realities
- Regional and global alignment (AfCFTA, Agenda 2063, SDGs)
- STATAFRIC: A continental hub for coherence and innovation
- Open to collaboration and experience-sharing

*Thank
you* *Merci!*