
The purpose of the present publication (the first revision of the Handbook published first 2001) is to provide countries with a broad overview of census and survey data editing methodology and to provide information for concerned officials on the use of various approaches to census editing. It is also intended to encourage countries to retain a history of their editing experiences, promote communication among subject matter and data processing specialists, and document the activities undertaken in the current census or survey in order to avoid duplicating effort during the next census or survey.

The Handbook reviews the advantages and disadvantages of manual and computer-assisted editing. In large censuses, manual correction is rarely economically feasible. The conditions for such corrections are usually specified in specially-designed computer programs that perform automatic error scrutiny and imputation based on other information for that person or household or for other persons or households. The bulk of the Handbook deals with the automatic correction of data. Computer edits play an important role in error detection and correction. At the computer editing stage, detailed consistency checks can be established in consultation with subject matter specialists. The errors detected can be corrected either by reference to original schedules or automatically. While automatic editing speeds up data processing, it demands careful control over the quality of incoming data.

The publication is divided into an introduction and five chapters. The introduction describes the census process and the various types of errors that occur in a census. Chapter I covers the basics of census editing. Chapters II to V present procedures and techniques for editing census data at various stages of processing. Technical considerations, particularly those pertinent to programming, are covered in the annexes.


Census Knowledge Base