

Approval Process for an International Statistical Classification

Note on updates to the “Approval Process for an International Statistical Classification” prepared for discussion at the meeting of the UN Committee of Experts on International Statistical Classifications

This document outlines the process for the UN Committee of Experts on International Statistical Classifications (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Committee’) to follow and check against, when considering endorsing a classification as an international statistical classification, and for the classification to become a member of the International Family of Classifications.

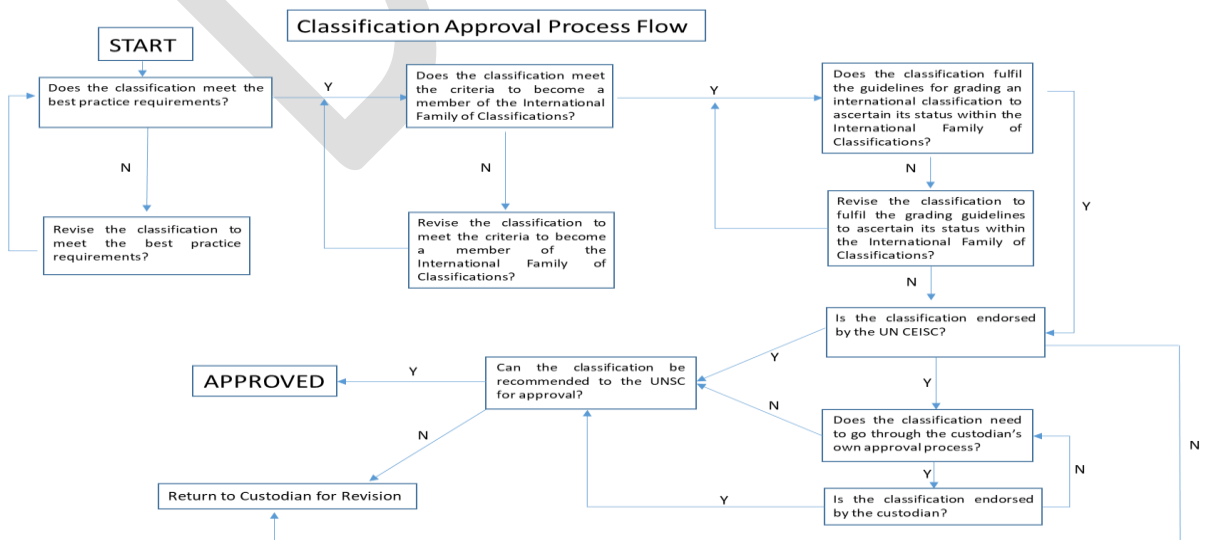
The custodian/developer of the classification needs to comply with the requirements of three documents. These documents are the:

- Best Practice Guidelines for Developing International Statistical Classifications (as detailed in Section A of this document)
- Criteria to become a Member of the international Family of Classifications (as detailed in Section B of this document)
-

The Committee will then be provided with a document and checklist to ensure compliance with the requirements for any endorsement/approval to take place. Section C of this document outlines the final endorsement by the Committee before the classification either proceeds through the custodian’s own sign-off/approval process (if required) or is presented to the UN Statistical Commission for approval.

The following diagram gives an overview of the classification approval process as a series of yes/no steps.

Table 1: Classification Approval Process Flow Diagram



A. Does the classification meet the best practice requirements for developing an international statistical classification?

For an international statistical classification to be considered for membership of the International Family of Classifications, the classification must meet the best practice requirements. The following questions need to be answered and documented by the custodian or organization seeking approval for the classification.

- Does the classification have an identified custodian?
- Is there a well-defined conceptual basis?
- Does the classification have a flat or hierarchic structure?
- Is the classification proposed as an international statistical classification or as a regional or national statistical classification?
- Are the classification categories mutually exclusive?
- Is the classification exhaustive for all possible values of the variable which the classification represents?
-
- Is the classification statistically feasible? In other words, is it possible to effectively, accurately and consistently distinguish between the categories in the classification based on the information available?
- Does the classification have clearly defined classification or statistical units?
- Has consideration been given to time-series comparability?

If the classification meets all of the above requirements it can be moved to the next stage of the process. If not, then the classification needs to be revised to meet the best practice requirements.

B. Does the classification meet the criteria to become a member of the International Family of Classifications?

For a classification to be considered for membership of the International Family of Classifications, the classifications must meet all the requirements as specified

1. Is there a custodian for the classification? (**NB:** This information should be carried over from the previous document)
2. What is the primary use of the classification?
3. What are the underlying concepts used in the classification?
4. What is the scope of the classification?
5. What are the statistical units being measured?
6. How many classification levels are required?
7. Are the category names precise, unique and reflective of the category scope?
8. Is the classification code structure logical and sequential?
9. Has there been a consultation process with users of the classification?
10. Has the classification been tested?
11. Are there correspondences between previous versions and other related classifications?
12. Is there an implementation plan for the classification?
13. Is there a maintenance schedule available?
14. How will the classification be disseminated?

If the classification meets all of the above requirements it can be moved to the next stage of the process. If not, then the classification needs to be revised to meet the criteria.

C. Can the classification be endorsed by the UN Committee of Experts on International Statistical Classifications?

Members of the UN Committee of Experts on International Statistical Classifications may be involved in the development process for the classification, or may have been involved in either a mandated task team reviewing/developing the classification, or part of an Expert Group administered by the classification custodian for that same purpose.

This involvement should enable the Committee as a whole to take advice from those participants, in conjunction with reviewing the relevant documentation. The Committee should check that:

- The classification meets the best practice requirements:
- The classification fulfills the criteria to become a member of the International Family of Classifications.
-

To assist with this task the Committee should be supplied with the completed checklist table as documented in the Criteria to become a member of the International Family of Classifications.

If the Committee is satisfied that all of the above documentation and process has been complied with, it can endorse the classification for approval at the next available UN Statistical Commission meeting. It may also provide endorsement to the governing body of the classification custodian.

If the Committee believes that the classification does not meet all the requirements as specified above, then the classification should be returned to the custodian for revision of the issues of concern

Approval by the Committee on the suitability of a classification to become an International Statistical Classification and be part of the International Family can be achieved by either electronic approval requested by the Bureau of the Committee, or by agreement at any physical meeting of the full Committee – whichever is most appropriate or expedient.