

UN Committee of Experts on International Statistical Classifications
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Background Document to Session 8

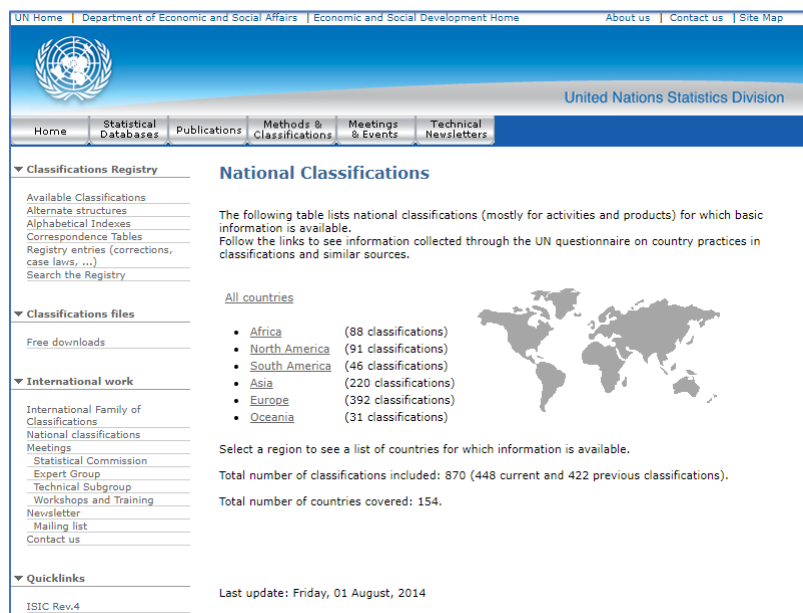
Survey of national implementation and national practices of statistical classifications

Introduction

1. In 2001 the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) extended¹ the classification website to show national implementation and national practices for activity and product classifications. This was based on information gathered from ad hoc questionnaires and workshops, with the intention to keep it updated with current information from countries. This initiative was in response to the need for monitoring country implementation of ISIC and CPC expressed by the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) at its 32nd session.
2. Since then, UNSD has been working on database on national implementation and national practices for classifications through a survey on classifications in countries. A dedicated webpage on national classification was developed to display detailed information by region and by country. Whenever possible, hyperlinks to national classifications were also provided. The last round of the survey was conducted during the period in 2012/2013. After this round the survey was put on pause, and information on national classifications was updated based on ad-hoc requests from countries. Table 1 below provides the screenshot of the webpage on national classifications that was available on the UNSD website.
3. A database was set up to store the information which could be accessed and queried online. However, since 2014 the database has been no longer accessible online. Only a pdf report of the database is available online at the moment.
4. Given the importance of monitoring the implementation of classifications at global level, especially when new revisions of classifications are developed, UNSD has been working to restore the webpage on national classifications and to re-start the survey of national classifications.
5. This note is submitted to the United Nations Committee of Experts on International Statistical Classifications (UNCEISC) to seek its advice and guidance on this activity. Questions for the Committee are in paragraph 13. The survey form used in the past is presented in the Annex.

¹ See para 21 of [E/CN.3/2002/20](#)

Table 1: screen shot of the webpage on National Classifications



Survey of national implementation and national practices of statistical classifications

6. The survey of national implementation and national practices of statistical classifications was sent out to all countries on a regular basis, every two years, to take stock of national implementation and national practices of international classifications in order to: (a) monitor the implementation of international classifications in countries, (b) identify challenges in the implementation and priority areas for technical assistance activities on classifications, and (c) identify topics for future revisions.

7. To this date, the database on national classifications contains information on 900 classifications from 159 countries (478 current classifications and 422 previously used classifications)², which include the following types of classifications:

- Activity classifications
- Product classifications
- Expenditure classifications
- Occupation classifications
- Other classifications (e.g. on education, health, time-use, and environment)

8. For each type of classification (e.g. Activity classifications, Product classifications, Expenditure classifications, Occupation classifications, and Other classifications), the survey covered the following main sections (please see the Annex for the survey form used in the past)

- General information
- Classification structure
- Relationship to international standards
- Classification uses


² Contents of the database are available in PDF format at <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/classifications/Nationalclassifications> Descriptions on the webpage is not up-to-date.

- Implementation / revision status
- Supporting documents
- Contact information
- Other comments

9. Table 2 provide a screenshot of how the information was made available on the various types of classifications.

Table 2:

National Classifications



The following table lists national classifications (mostly for activities and products) for which basic information is available. Follow the links to see information collected through the UN questionnaire on country practices in classifications and similar sources.

Note: Acronyms shown in square brackets are not official and represent generic acronyms assigned just for ease of presentation.

Currently shown classifications are from the survey carried out in 2012. All classifications from previous surveys are accessible in the last column "Previous classifications", regardless whether a revised information was submitted in 2012.

Country / Area	Activity classifications	Product classifications	Expenditure classifications	Occupation classifications	Other classifications	Previous versions
Aruba						P
Bahamas	- ISIC					P
Barbados						P
Belize						P
Bermuda	- BCEA	- [BCT]			- BCED	
Canada	- NAICS / SCIAN	- NAPCS / SCPAN	- CCOFOG / CFAPC	- NOC / CNP	- COA / PC - CGFS / SFPC	P
Costa Rica	- CAECR-2011			- COCR-2011		P
Cuba	- NAE	- SACLAP - CPCU		- CNUO	- CNED	P
Dominica	- ISIC			- ISCO	- <untitled> - <untitled>	P
Dominican Republic						P

10. It is proposed that the programme of work on the survey of national implementation and national practices of statistical classifications is restarted with the same scope in terms of classification as described in paragraph 7 and in term of categories of questions as mentioned in paragraph 8. Additional questions on the existence of a revision cycle for the classification, the availability of the classification in digital format, or other modern dissemination tools such as APIs, and the institutional organization and size of the classification unit in the country could be considered for the survey.

11. The survey could be conducted on a biennial basis (once every two years) and target National Statistical Offices.

12. In the future it could be envisaged that a coordinated approach with the custodians of other classifications could be put in place in order to provide a more complete overview of the implementation of classifications in countries.

Questions to the UNCEISC

13. The UNCEISC is invited to express its views and provide guidance on the following:
 - The plan to re-start the programme on the survey of national classification
 - The coverage in terms of classification types and the scope in terms of category of questions
 - The timeline for the conduct and launch of the survey and provide advice on when to conduct the next survey

Annex 1: Questionnaire on national classifications

Country / Area: _____

Classification category: _____ *(the options are: Activity classifications, Product classifications, Expenditure classifications, Occupation classifications, and Other classifications)*

Date: _____

1. General information

1(a). Name of the current national classification (full name in official national languages and in English with acronyms in brackets, should be given)

1(b). In which language(s) is the classification available?

1(c). Can the classification (or information about it) be accessed on the Internet? If yes, please provide the URL.

2. Classification structure

2(a). Please describe the structure of the classification: How many levels does the classification have? (Please provide labels, such as "Division", "Class") How many categories exist at each level?

2(b). Please provide examples of the coding system used at each level.

3. Relationship to international standards

3(a). Is this classification based on (or linked to) an international standard classification? If yes, please describe.

3(b). Is the classification structure identical to the international standard or, if not, how does it differ? (e.g. have additional levels been added to the international standard or have changes been made within the level of the international structure, such as aggregations or additional breakdowns)

3(c). Please describe deviations from the international standard (in terms of structure, methodology or application rules). Please use examples, if a general statement is not possible.

3(d). At what level of the international standard can data be reported for international comparison? (Please provide examples of programmes / indicators if reporting takes place at different levels of the classification.)

3(e). If no links to international classifications exist or no international standard is used, please state if there are plans to use international norms in the future.

4. Classification uses

4(a). Please state for which statistical purposes (surveys etc.) this classification is used and if there are users outside of the Statistical Office. Please indicate at which level the classification is used for data collection and for data publishing.

4(b). Please give the names of institutions that use the classification for non-statistical purposes (as opposed to statistical purposes in question 4(a)). Also indicate the kind of use (e.g. tax offices, social security, customs, enterprise register, employment services, work permits etc.)

4(c). Please indicate if alternative classifications are used by other institutions of the economy. Are these classifications available and useful for the Statistical Office?

5. Implementation / revision status

5(a). Please state the date of the official adoption of the classification. If not yet adopted, please indicate the current state (e.g. in development, sent for approval, in printing, ready to be distributed etc.)

5(b). Please state the date of use of the classification for individual statistical programmes.

5(c). Are there existing plans for revision or update of the current classification?

5(d). Name of former (previous) national classification (full name in both national tongue and in English with acronyms in brackets, should be given)

5(e). Please describe the link of the former classification to international classifications

5(f). Please describe the structure of the former classification and indicate the number of items at each level of the classification. (similar to question 2(a))

5(g). Do conversion tables exist between the former and current classification?

5(h). When was the former classification implemented?

5(i). Are statistical data still collected or published according to the former classification? Please indicate if this statistical data is collected or published by the Statistical Office or elsewhere.

6. Supporting documents

6(a). Have national explanatory notes and/or guidelines been elaborated?

6(b). Do correspondence tables exist between the national and the international classifications (if applicable)?

6(c). Are correspondence tables between alternative and current classification available (if applicable)?

6(d). Does a national coding index exist?

6(e). Is the classification available in electronic form? If yes, in which formats is it available?(e.g. PDF, TXT, Excel, XML)

6(f). Are the correspondence tables or indexes available in electronic form?

7. Contact information

7(a). Name of institution / office responsible for the development and maintenance of the classification

7(b). Contact address, phone number, e-mail or website for public information and inquiry

7(c). Name and contact information (telephone, e-mail) of the person responsible for the daily management (for UNSD internal use only)

7(d). Did problems occur in the use of the current classification? Please describe the kind of problems that have occurred (interpretation, methodology, etc.)

7(e). Please indicate if assistance from international organizations could be useful and the kind of assistance needed.

7(f). International classifications regularly undergo review processes to determine if revisions or updates are needed. Do you have any suggestions for the relevant international classifications in this case that should be considered in future reviews? What changes would you like to see? Do you know of specific problems that should be addressed?

8. Other comments

8(a). Please provide any other information on this classification that you consider relevant