

Statistical Commission
Forty-third session
28 February – 2 March 2012
Item 4 (h) of the provisional agenda
Coordination and integration of statistical programmes

Background document
Available in English only

Global Inventory of Statistical Standards

Prepared by the United Nations Statistics Division

Global Inventory of Statistical Standards

Background Document

1. Introduction

At the international level, principle No. 9, ("International Co-ordination") of the "Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics" of the United Nations establishes that: *"The use by statistical agencies in each country of international concepts, classifications and methods promotes the consistency and efficiency of statistical systems at all official levels"*.

Under this framework, the **Global Inventory of Statistical Standards** has been developed:

- To compile standards recommended by the main International Organizations, in one database, systematized by types of standard and by statistical or geographical themes and sub-themes of national interest
- To provide basic information about the standard, such as; objective, the international organization that recommends it, version, description of the standard and the URL to the original information source from which the standard is obtained (see: Metadata Model)
- To make clear the network of international organizations involved in the development and dissemination of statistical standards

Document E/CN.3/2012/27 of the forty-third session of the Statistical Commission (Work of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities: Report of the Secretary-General) describes the background leading to the development of the GISS prototype. Reference is also Statistical Commission documents E/CN.3/2010/14 and E/CN.3/2011/30.

2. Home Page

The URL of the home page of the GISS system is <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/iiss>

Global Inventory of Statistical Standards

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Discuss (0)

At the international level, principle No. 9, ("International Co-ordination") of the "Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics" of the United Nations establishes that: *"The use by statistical agencies in each country of international concepts, classifications and methods promotes the consistency and efficiency of statistical systems at all official levels"*.

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United Nations Statistics Division

Version: February 2012

ScrewTurn Wiki version 3.0.4.560. Some of the icons created by FamFamFam.

The navigation menu on the left-hand side provides three ways to access the standards in the system:

1. A list of standards, further divided into three types:
 - Classifications
 - Concepts and Definitions
 - Methodologies and Procedures
2. The DISA¹ classification of statistical activities
3. A list of international organizations who are the maintenance organizations of the standards

View 1: List of Statistical Standards

Below is a screen-shot of the first view, arranged by standard type:

The screenshot shows the 'Global Inventory of Statistical Standards' website. The main content area is titled 'List of Statistical Standards' and includes a search box, navigation links, and a list of standards. The standards are categorized into 'Classifications' and 'Concepts and Definitions'. The 'Classifications' section lists 15 standards, including BEC, COICOP, COFOG, COPPP, COPNI, CPC, and others. The 'Concepts and Definitions' section lists 6 standards, including BMD, CDH, and others. The left sidebar contains navigation links and a search box.

The third type, Methodologies and Procedures, is not visible in the screen shot but appears below Concepts and Definitions.

Clicking on any standard links to that particular card with all the information as described above. For example, the System of National Accounts 2008:

¹ Database of International Statistical Activities in the UNECE region, October 2009 version.

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The System of National Accounts, 2008 (2008 SNA) Discuss (0)

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--|------------------|
| Version | 2008 | RSS |
| Valid from | 2009 | |
| Previous versions | 1993, 1968, 1953 | |
| Description | <p>Internationally agreed standard set of recommendations on how to compile measures of economic activity in accordance with strict accounting conventions based on economic principles. The recommendations are expressed in terms of a set of universally valid concepts, definitions, classifications and accounting rules.</p> <p>The main objective of the SNA is to provide a comprehensive conceptual and accounting framework that can be used to create a macroeconomic database suitable for analysing and evaluating the performance of an economy. The SNA has a very important statistical function by serving as a coordinating framework for economic statistics in two different senses. In the first place, the SNA is seen as the conceptual framework for ensuring the consistency of the definitions and classifications used in different, but related, fields of statistics. Secondly, the SNA acts as an accounting framework to ensure the numerical consistency of data drawn from different sources. The framework of the SNA provides accounts that are comprehensive, consistent and integrated.</p> <p>The SNA measures what takes place in the economy, between which agents, and for what purpose. The accounts of the SNA provide more than a snapshot of the economy at a point in time, since in practice the accounts are compiled for a succession of time periods and at different levels of aggregation.</p> | |
| Maintenance organization | International Monetary Fund (IMF), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Statistical Office of the European Union (EUROSTAT), United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), World Bank (WB) | |
| Statistical domains | 2.2 Economic accounts | |
| Type of standard | Concepts and Definitions | |
| Reference | http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/sna2008.asp | |
| Languages | Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish | |
| Information last updated | 14/02/11 | |

It should be noted that the reference field offers the user, wherever possible, a direct link to the actual standard.

Each standard has the same fields as in the screen-shot above, based on the following information content model:

| Element | Description |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Name | Full official name of the standard, plus any alternative names and acronyms |
| Version | The version of the standard (where applicable) |
| Valid from | Date on which the standard was adopted (or published) |
| Previous versions | References and links to previous versions of the standard |
| Description | Brief description of the standard, including objective, intended use and relationship to other standards |
| Maintenance organisation | The organisation or group responsible for approving and maintaining the standard |
| Statistical domain(s) | The domains in which the standard is used (according to the DISA classification of statistical activities) |
| Type of standard | Categories: (a) Concepts and definitions (b) Classifications (c) Methodologies and procedures (Note: other categories can be added as needed) |
| References | References and links to the standard and any other material that helps understanding or implementation of it |
| Language | Language(s) in which the standard is published |
| Information last updated / validated | The date on which the information above was last updated or verified to be correct |

View 2: Classification of International Statistical Activities

Below is a screen-shot of the second view, arranged by statistical activity:

The screenshot shows the 'Global Inventory of Statistical Standards' website. The main heading is 'Classification of International Statistical Activities'. Below the heading, it states 'Based on the October 2009 version of the Database of International Statistical Activities in the UNECE region (DISA)'. The page is organized into two domains:

- Domain 1: Demographic and social statistics**
 - 1.1 Population and migration
 - 1.2 Labour
 - 1.3 Education
 - 1.4 Health
 - 1.5 Income and consumption
 - 1.6 Social protection
 - 1.7 Human settlements and housing
 - 1.8 Justice and crime
 - 1.9 Culture
 - 1.10 Political and other community activities
 - 1.11 Time-use
- Domain 2: Economic statistics**
 - 2.1 Macroeconomic statistics
 - 2.2 Economic accounts
 - 2.3 Business statistics
 - 2.4 Sectoral statistics
 - 2.4.1 Agriculture, forestry, fisheries
 - 2.4.2 Energy
 - 2.4.3 Mining, manufacturing, construction
 - 2.4.4 Transport

The domain items (1.1 through 2.4.4) are hyperlinked. A navigation sidebar on the left includes 'Home', 'Standards by Type/Category', 'Standards by Statistical Activity/Domain', 'Standards by Maintenance Organization', 'Other Information', 'About', 'Links', and 'Languages'. The top right corner shows 'Welcome Guest • Login'.

The domain items that appear in blue are hyperlinked and each lead to a page listing all standards relating to that domain and item. For example, clicking on 2.2 Economic accounts brings up the following page:

The screenshot shows the 'Global Inventory of Statistical Standards' website. The main heading is '2.2 Economic accounts'. Below the heading, it lists several standards:

- Central Product Classification (CPC)
- International Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities (ISIC)
- Measuring Capital
- Measuring Productivity
- Quarterly National Accounts Manual 2001
- The System of National Accounts, 2008 (2008 SNA)

The top right corner shows 'Welcome Guest • Login'. The bottom of the page includes a footer: 'ScrewTurn Wiki version 3.0.4.560. Some of the icons created by FamFamFam'.

View 3: List of International Organizations

The third and final way to navigate to standards is through the organizations that maintain them. A list of organizations which have submitted standards to the GISS is shown in the screenshot below:

The screenshot shows the website interface for the Global Inventory of Statistical Standards. The main header features the site logo and the title 'Global Inventory of Statistical Standards'. A navigation sidebar on the left includes a search bar, a 'Navigation' section with links to 'Home', 'Standards by Type/Category', 'Standards by Statistical Activity/Domain', and 'Standards by Maintenance Organization', and an 'Other Information' section with links to 'About', 'Links', and 'Languages'. The main content area is titled 'List of International Organizations' and contains a bulleted list of 25 international organizations, including the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), European Central Bank (ECB), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Paris 21 (P21), Statistical Office of the European Union (EUROSTAT), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESWA), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), World Bank (WB), World Health Organization (WHO), World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), and World Trade Organization (WTO). The page also includes an RSS feed icon and a 'Discuss (0)' button.

3. Other Functions

1. About

This page provides background information on the project as well as the information content model and functionality of the system.

2. Links

Other inventories of standards, such as those provided by EUROSTAT – will have links on this page.

3. Languages

The system interface is currently only in English. For the second phase of the project it is planned to add navigation pages to the other five UN official languages.

In addition, each standard card mentions (and, where applicable, links to) the versions of the standards in languages other than English. For example, the screen shot below shows a standard with versions in all six official languages available:



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International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Compilers Manual (2004) Discuss (0)

RSS

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Version | 2004 |
| Valid from | 2004 |
| Previous versions | |
| Description | The Compilers Manual is published by UNSD to assist United Nations Member States in the implementation of the methodological guidelines laid out in International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions (published in 1998). |
| Maintenance organization | United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) |
| Statistical domain(s) | 2.6 International trade and balance of payments |
| Type of standard | Methodologies and Procedures |
| References | http://unstats.un.org/unsd/pubs/gesgrid.asp?id=317 ; http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/methodology%20IMTS.html |
| Languages | Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish |
| Information last updated | 18/08/11 |

4. User Feedback

The inventory in its current version constitutes work in progress. The international organizations of the Committee on the Coordination of Statistical Activities are committed to continuously improve the content and functionality of the system. In this context it would be useful to receive user feedback. We therefore invite users to contact UNSD at statistics@un.org with their questions and comments.