Introduction to the United Nations and the Statistical Commission

Orientation session for new delegates
Signing of UN Charter
San Francisco, USA
26 June 1945
Purposes of the UN

• To maintain international **peace and security**
• To develop **friendly relations among nations**
• To achieve **international co-operation** in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for **human rights**
• To be a **centre for harmonizing the actions of nations** in the attainment of these common ends
UN principal organs

- General Assembly (GA)
- Security Council (SC)
- Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
  - Principal organ to coordinate economic, social, and related work of the UN
  - 54 Member states
  - The Statistical Commission reports to ECOSOC
- Secretariat
  - Carries out the day-to-day work of the UN (e.g., UNSD executes the work of the Statistical Commission)
- International Court of Justice
- Trusteeship Council
The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Commission state that it shall assist the Council:

• In promoting the development of national statistics and the improvement of their comparability;

• In the coordination of the statistical work of specialized agencies;

• In the development of the central statistical services of the Secretariat;

• In advising the organs of the United Nations on general questions relating to the collection, analysis, and dissemination of statistical information;

• In promoting the improvement of statistics and statistical methods generally.
Statistical Commission membership

• Today, Commission consists of 24 Member States of the UN elected by the ECOSOC
• 4-year terms
• Based on an equitable geographical distribution
• All other states are considered Observers
• Bureau = Chair + 3 vice-chairs + rapporteur

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Current members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Burundi – Madagascar – Sierra Leone – Tunisia – Zambia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Japan – Kuwait – Republic of Korea – Samoa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Czech Republic – Georgia – Hungary – Russian Federation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latin America &amp; the Caribbean</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Brazil – Colombia – Cuba – Mexico</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western Europe &amp; Others</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Australia – Finland – Germany – Netherlands – Switzerland – United Kingdom – United States</td>
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</tbody>
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14th Statistical Commission
Geneva, Switzerland
10-20 October 1966

19th Statistical Commission
New Delhi, India. Group photo at Taj Mahal
8-19 November 1976
Contextualising UNSD, the Statistical Commission and others

United Nations
Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Statistics Division
National Statistical Offices / Country Missions

Discussion
Methods
Classifications
Training

Secretariat
services

ECOSOC resolutions

Report
Elects 24 member countries

Observers
Representatives

Data
Best practices
Working groups

24 Members, 4-year terms
Statistics Division functions

- Secretariat of the UN Statistical Commission

Main functions
- Data
- Methodology
- Capacity development
- Coordination

https://unstats.un.org
Statistics Division work programmes

• National Accounts
• Trade Statistics
• Business Statistics
• Energy Statistics
• Gender Statistics
• Tourism Statistics
• Statistical Classifications

• Demographic and Social Statistics
• Environmental-Economic Accounting
• Environment Statistics
• Geospatial Information
• Development indicators
• Big data for official statistics
The Briefing Note

• The Orientation Briefing Note covers more of the overview and background to this year’s Statistical Commission
• The Briefing Note is available (with these slides) on the website of the Commission
• Includes an overview of the Mandates and Composition of the Commission
• Highlights commonly used acronyms and language
Registering for the Statistical Commission

• Country delegations **must** register through their Permanent Mission to the UN in New York.

• It is encouraged to kindly limit delegations to the experts who will actively participate in the session's work.

• You can find the contact information for your Permanent Mission on the following website: [https://www.un.org/en/about-us/member-states](https://www.un.org/en/about-us/member-states)
• Online platform being used for the 53rd Session
• Simultaneous interpretation into all six official UN languages
• Size of delegation
The Agenda Items of the Commission are primarily supported by two types of document, **Reports** and **Background Documents**:

- **Reports** are formally edited and available in the 6 official languages of the UN. They are subject to a strict word limit and submitted to the Secretariat in December. They carry a formal document reference. For example: E/CN.3/2022/X where E is for ECOSOC, CN.3 is for Statistical Commission, 2022 is the year and X is the document number.

- **Background documents** can accompany a specific agenda item. Not formally edited and therefore do not have a word limit. They are typically available in English only and become available at different times over the days before the Commission session starts. Sometimes, the substantive details of the subject will be included in the background documents rather than in the official documents.
Due to the virtual nature of the session and the limited time of the meetings, Member States and entities were encouraged to submit **written statements** (preferably in English) by Thursday, 17 February 2022.

**Written statements:**
- Provide an opportunity for delegations to contribute to the substantive discussion on the agenda items of the 53rd Session.
- Need to refer to a specific agenda item.
- May be submitted by or on behalf of the Head of Delegation, Representative or Designated official.

• Last year (52\textsuperscript{nd} Session): Commission tasked the Bureau with review the 50-year-old Terms of Reference of the Commission.

• This year (53\textsuperscript{rd} Session): revised Terms of Reference will be discussed at the Commission under agenda item 3(c).
Process of the 53rd Statistical Commission

Monday, 28 Feb
10:00 – 12:00 EST
15:00 – 17:00 EST

- Opening
- Election of officers
- Adoption of agenda

Tuesday, 1 March
10:00 – 12:00 EST
15:00 – 17:00 EST

Wednesday, 2 March
10:00 – 12:00 EST
15:00 – 17:00 EST

Friday, 4 March
10:00 – 12:00 EST

- Items for information
- Programme Statement

15:00 – 17:00 EST

- Report of the 53rd Session
- Dates for the 54th Session

All official documents will be available electronically both on the Commission website (https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/53rd-session/) and on the PaperSmart portal.
The Delegate Experience – Ms. Gabriella Vukovich
Open Floor and Q&A

Over to you....
BETTER DATA BETTER LIVES

28 February – 2 March AND 4 March 2022
Virtual

unstats.un.org
@UNStats #UN53SC

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs