



SOCIAL STATISTICS

Demographic and Social Statistics, UNITED NATIONS STATISTICS DIVISION
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/default.htm>

Since its inception, the United Nations has been concerned with issues of social development and living standards, pursuant to the promotion of “higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development” as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations (Article 55). The Statistics Division, under the overall guidance of the United Nations Statistical Commission, has supported deliberations and policies on this area of interest through its work in social statistics.

Initial efforts towards improving social statistics at the national and international levels can be traced back to the publication of the first issue of the Statistical Yearbook in 1948, which made apparent the need for research in this field. One year later, and upon request of the Statistical Commission¹, the then Statistical Office of the United Nations, initiated the first of a series of activities and programmes which have led today to some advances in social statistics at the international and national levels.

Those advances include substantive work towards the establishment of a framework for social statistics and indicators; the formulation of standards and guidelines for the collection, compilation and dissemination of data on social issues; and the regular compilation and analysis of selected statistics and indicators in various areas of social concern including: housing, international migration, education, poverty, gender, time-use, crime and disability.

Towards a framework for social statistics and indicators

One of the initial tasks undertaken by the Statistics Division in the field of social statistics was the development of a framework for the systematic organization and compilation of social statistics and indicators. A review of national practices resulted in the publication, in 1954, of two

seminal documents: the *Survey of Social Statistics* and the report entitled “International definition and measurement of standards and levels of living.” These documents were the first to articulate the need for policy-relevant social statistics and indicators. They identified a list of basic statistics and indicators and outlined a number of steps for improving the quality of the data and strengthening national capacity in the field of social statistics.

Subsequent activities led to the formulation of a System of Social and Demographic Statistics (SSDS) in 1972 and also a Framework for Social and Demographic Statistics (FSDS) in 1975. Preliminary “Guidelines on social indicators” were published in 1978. A decade later, the Statistics Division issued the *Handbook on Social Indicators* (1989) as a practical tool for the selection and compilation of social indicators by countries and international organizations. In line with the FSDS, the “Guidelines” and *Handbook* supported the development and use of basic data sources and the harmonization of underlying statistical concepts, classifications and definitions.

During the 1990s, the demand for social statistics and indicators grew significantly as a result of the need to monitor progress in the attainment of the goals and objectives agreed upon at international conferences and summits, particularly the 1990 World Summit for Children, the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, the 1995 World Summit for Social Development, the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, and the 1996 United Nations Second Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II). In response to these demands, the Division adopted in 1997 the Minimum National Social Data Set (MNSDS) to guide countries on the production of basic social statistics. Methodological guidance was provided in a chapter of the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*, issued in 1998, on the extent to which the minimum set could be derived from census data.

The Division has continued to convene Expert Group Meetings and to organize other

¹United Nations (1949) *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*, Ninth Session, Supplement No. 6. para. 128, E/CN.3/82.

activities towards setting the scope and future direction of social statistics. In 2003, the expert group on Setting the Scope of Social Statistics defined specific goals and activities that would further advance the production of social statistics.

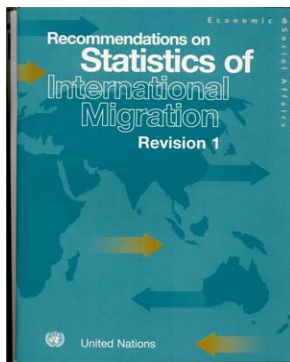
Areas of social concern

As early as 1954, the Division recognized that the development of social statistics involves the arraying of data in such a way as to make possible an analysis of differences among social groups and countries in topical issues, such as housing, health, education, conditions of work and employment; and that special attention should be devoted to the study of conditions of special population groups, including children, the elderly, the unemployed, people with disabilities, etc. Since then, the Division has worked in collaboration with specialized agencies, the regional commissions and other relevant organizations towards the development of statistics in those key areas, as well as in areas such as crime, international migration, gender, time use and poverty.

Methodological developments

Preliminary guidelines for the compilation of **housing** statistics were issued in 1958 in the *General Principles for a Housing Census*. Revisions of those guidelines have been published in the *Principles and Recommendations for Housing Censuses* in 1970 and in the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses* in 1980 and 1998. The latest recommendations in the area of housing statistics will be published as part of the third revision of the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Rev 2 (forthcoming)*.

Methodological work in **international migration** centered from the start on the search for a definition of international migrant that could be adopted globally. United Nations efforts to identify international migrants in a uniform way culminated in the adoption in 1953 of the first set of United Nations recommendations on statistics of international migration. Further efforts to improve the definitions and recommendations led to two revisions, issued in 1976 and 1998. An expert group meeting in 2006 on measuring



international migration concluded that refining and elaborating the 1998 United Nations recommendations would improve their implementation and application worldwide.

Work in the area of **gender** statistics was initiated in 1982, following the proclamation of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (1976-1985). Towards improving the availability of gender statistics, the Division has issued a series of methodological reports aimed at providing practical guidance to countries in a variety of topics including: concepts and methods, training of users and producers, database development and statistical reporting.

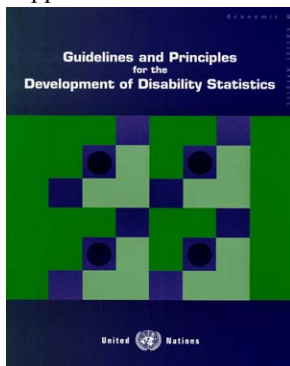


Technical reports in key areas such as women's economic activity (1993), participation in the informal sector (1990), and the development of **time-use** statistics for measuring paid and unpaid work (2004) have also been issued. Methodological work in the area of time-use has resulted in the development and implementation of the trial International Classification of Activities for Time-Use Statistics (ICATUS) in 2005, and a compilation of metadata on national time-use surveys was issued on the Division's webpage at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sconcerns/time-use/default.aspx>.

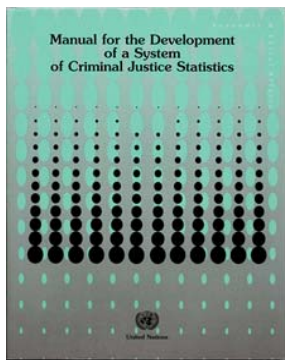


Activities on the development of **disability** statistics were initiated in response to the International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981, the adoption in 1982 of the United Nations World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled

Persons, the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons from 1983 to 1992, and the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in 1993. Results from an initial evaluation on the extent and reliability of national disability statistics were published in 1986 and 1990 in the *Development of Statistics of Disabled Persons: Case Studies and the Disability Statistics Compendium*, respectively. These reviews were followed by the development of a *Manual for the Development of Statistical Information for Disability Programmes and Policies*, published in 1996, and the *Guidelines and Principles for the Development of Disability Statistics* issued in 2001. At present, the Division is working, in collaboration with the Washington Group on Disability Statistics, to develop disability measures suitable for use in censuses and national sample surveys.



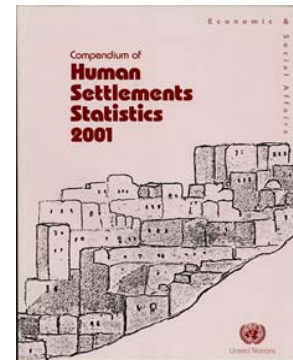
In the mid-1980s the Division, acting on the guidance of the General Assembly and the United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, initiated a set of activities towards the development of **crime** statistics. These activities led to the publication of a series of manuals for the development of national criminal justice statistics in 1983, 1992, and 2003. The latest manual in crime statistics to be published is the *Manual for the Development of a System of Criminal Justice Statistics*, issued in 2003.



A new area of focus is **poverty** statistics, which the Division introduced in its programme in 2003. Under this programme, the Division has organized a series of panel discussions, regional workshops and Expert Group Meetings to promote dialogue and facilitate the development of a system of poverty measurement. One of the outputs of these consultations is a *Handbook on Poverty Statistics: Concepts, Methods and Policy Use*, soon to be published.

Data compilation, analysis and dissemination

The Division regularly compiles, analyses, and publishes the latest social statistics in a variety of formats as part of its dissemination activities. Among these publications are: the *Survey of Social Statistics* in 1954; the 1963, 1967, 1977 and 1988 *Compendium of Social Statistics*; *Compendium of Housing Statistics* in 1971, 1972-74 and 1975-77; *Compendium of Human Settlements Statistics* in 1983, 1985 and 2001; “Selected Statistics and Indicators on the Status of Women” in 1985; and Women’s Statistics and Indicators (Wistat) Database, 1986, 1992, 1995, and 2000.



In 1991, the Division began publishing the series *The World’s Women*—a statistical source-book that provides a comprehensive analysis of changes in the conditions of women and men in such areas as health, family, education, work, public life and leadership. Published at five-year intervals, the reports of *The World’s Women* series have also been important tools for the dissemination of conceptual and methodological developments in the field of gender statistics. The last issue in the series, published in 2005, reviewed the availability of basic statistics for gender analysis as a way of assessing progress made in gender statistics.

As part of the social indicators programme, the Division regularly disseminates online social statistics as well as gender statistics: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/socind/statistics.htm>, <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/in/dwm/statistics.htm>.

Country	Year	Indicator	Value
Algeria	2000	...	...
Algeria	2001	...	...
Algeria	2002	...	...
Algeria	2003
Algeria	2004
Algeria	2005
Algeria	2006
Algeria	2007
Algeria	2008
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Algeria	2015
Algeria	2016
Algeria	2017
Algeria	2018
Algeria	2019
Algeria	2020
Algeria	2021	...	...
Algeria	2022	...	...
Algeria	2023	...	...
Algeria	2024	...	...
Algeria	2025	...	...

Technical Assistance

The Division has over the years provided technical assistance to national statistical offices through training workshops on specific topics in social statistics such as: disability, poverty, international migration, gender statistics, etc. These workshops are generally organized to assist countries with the implementation of international recommendations. Subsequent to the release of the *Guidelines and Principles for the Development of Disability Statistics* and of the *International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health* (ICF) by the World Health Organization, the United Nations Statistics Division has conducted regional training workshops on disability statistics, with the overall objective of strengthening national capabilities to produce, disseminate and use data on disability for policy development and implementation. Interregional and regional workshops have also been organized on a range of topics; such as in 2003, on international migration, in 2002, on dissemination of social statistics from population censuses for the ESCAP countries, and in 1992 on measuring the informal sector.

Additionally, special advisory missions are undertaken to countries upon request, such as a missions to Turkmenistan on the review of survey instruments, including one on economic characteristics; to Mongolia to review existing social statistics produced by the country and assess

their adequacy in answering both national and international needs; to Kenya to support the development of a Women's Statistics and Indicators Database; to Guyana to support the development of social and gender statistics programme within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat; and to Cuba on the design of a national time-use survey. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, several missions were conducted to countries to facilitate their adoption and implementation of the National Household Survey Capability Programme.

Technical inputs have also been provided to regional commissions, regional organizations and countries through UNSD's participation as resource persons in their meetings, such as for workshops on disability statistics in ESCAP and ESCWA; on economic characteristics in ESCWA; on gender statistics in CARICOM; and on poverty statistics in the Economic Community for Western African States (ECOWAS). Support for training in countries includes, to Nigeria, on the review of the National Integrated Survey of Households (NISH) and to Mongolia on gender statistics.

The Division also arranges and supports study tours between NSOs, and has on occasion hosted study visits of NSO staff to the United Nations, during which advances in methods and international standards are presented.