

International Statistical Programs

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Outline

- General structure of international statistical programs
- The top-down view (UN to country)
- International treaty organizations
- National statistical institutes
- Comparability and standards

General Structure of International Statistical Programs

- Data are collected by national statistical institutes, not the international agency
- The international agency promulgates standards and definitions, which are adopted (or not) by the national statistical institutes (*e.g.*, U.S. Census Bureau)
- The international agency prepares compendia of statistical data and reports

The Top-down View

- United Nations (UN)
- World Bank/International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- International Labor Organization (ILO)
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and (OECD)
- Eurostat
- National statistical institutes (e.g., INSEE, StatsCan, National Statistical Office)

The United Nations Statistical Office

- Worldwide coverage
- Main site: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/default.htm>
- Public use products
 - Millenium indicators: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/mi_goals.asp
 - Documentation and methods: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/mi_def_list.asp
 - Sources: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/mi_sources_list.asp
 - Social indicators: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/social/default.htm>
- Licensed products
 - United Nations Statistics Common Database: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/cdb/cdb_help/cdb_quick_start.asp
 - Cornell documentation: <http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/modelun.html>
 - Cornell library gateway: same as above from cornell.edu
 - Documentation and methods: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods.htm>

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

- Covers 30 member countries representing the developed economies of the world:
http://www.oecd.org/document/58/0,2340,en_2649_201185_1889402_1_1_1_1,00.html
- Prepares standardized statistics from these countries using input data from official national sources:
http://www.oecd.org/statsportal/0,2639,en_2825_293564_1_1_1_1_1,00.html
- Public use products in print and pdf format
- Licensed products are available in Economist Intelligence Unit CountryData:
<http://countrydata.bvdep.com/cgi/template.dll?product=101&user=ipaddress> (from cornell.edu)
- Many statistics available on CDROM from OECD but not online. (see university-based data archives)

World Bank/IMF

- Produce standardized national income statistics in the International Financial Statistics (IFS) database:
<http://ifs.apdi.net/imf/ifsbrowser.aspx?branch=ROOT>
- General statistics and documentation:
<http://www.imf.org/external/np/sta/>
- Historical data distributed by the ICPSR in the US

Comparability and Standards

- Must review each source specifically
- In general, OECD, Eurostat data will be quite comparable
- UN data are less comparable due to differences in the quality of the national statistical institutes gathering the data