

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Approved

Meeting of the 2019/2020 Bureau
Aguascalientes, (Mexico), 25-26 February 2020

Item 3 (i) of the Provisional
Agenda

**PROCEDURE FOR UPDATING THE
CLASSIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES**

Prepared by the Secretariat

This paper presents a proposal for the procedure for updating the Classification of International Statistical Activities.

The Bureau reviewed and approved the proposal.

I. BACKGROUND

1. The classification of international statistical activities was established in 2005 to be used as the basis for providing information in the Database of International Statistical Activities (DISA); therefore, it used to be referred to as “DISA classification”. DISA was an annual compendium of information on the statistical activities undertaken by more than 30 international organizations in the UNECE region. It was discontinued in 2016 due to a high availability of information of statistical activities on the web pages of international organizations and a consequent decrease of user demand for the database.

2. The classification itself became a reference at global level for a number of organizations, for example:

- (a) In the [Global Inventory of Statistical Standards](#), maintained by UNSD;
- (b) In the [SDMX content-oriented guidelines](#);
- (c) By Paris21 for [reporting on the capacity building activities](#);
- (d) By Eurostat (e.g. in [collaboration in research and methodology for official statistics](#));
- (e) By FAO in their [programme of work](#)¹;
- (f) By several countries, e.g. Canada (for a centralised metadata repository) and New Zealand (for organising statistical data and metadata).

3. The CES Bureau is the owner of the classification and responsible for its maintenance and authorising its revisions as necessary.

4. The Bureau discussed the classification a few years ago and noted the need to update the classification to include new, emerging areas of international statistical work, such as

¹ In 2018-2019 programme of work, a modified version is used.

climate change related statistics, governance statistics, composite indicators, geo-spatial data, etc.

5. The Bureau decided to launch the update of the CSA classification and asked the Secretariat to prepare a proposal for the updating procedure. It was noted that as the classification is widely used, any changes in the classification have to be consulted with the main stakeholders and users of the classification to take into account their needs. All users should be informed about the new version after the classification will be updated.

6. The update was initially planned for 2015 but was postponed due to lack of resources.

II. THE CURRENT VERSION OF THE CLASSIFICATION

7. The current classification is provided in Annex. Statistical activities in the classification are divided into five domains: (1) demographic and social statistics; (2) economic statistics; (3) environment and multi-domain statistics; (4) methodology of data collection, processing, dissemination and analysis; and (5) strategic and managerial issues of official statistics. These are further refined and divided into 56 statistical areas. The classification is also available on wiki, together with [explanatory notes to the classification](#).

8. The classification has not undergone a major revision until now but there was a minor update in 2009: one statistical area was added and the name of one area was changed².

III. NAME OF THE CLASSIFICATION

9. The classification used to be called DISA classification according to the name of the database for which it was originally created. As the classification has been increasingly used for other purposes, there is no reason to link the name to a database that no longer exists.

10. Furthermore, although originally the classification was used for classifying international statistical activities, it applies as well to statistical activities undertaken at national level. This is evidenced by the use of the classification by several countries.

11. In view of the broad use of the classification and its ownership by the CES Bureau, it is proposed to call it CES Classification of Statistical Activities (CSA).

IV. PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURE FOR THE UPDATE

12. As the classification is used by different organizations and countries, its revision must be carefully considered. It may have implications for structuring statistical programmes or websites, or for databases and software where the classification has been already incorporated. Therefore, it is proposed that the update of the classification be based on the following principles:

(a) Consulting the main users of the classification in the updating process;

(b) Introducing a particular change in the classification only if there is a strong need and widespread agreement;

(c) Keeping the structure of the classification stable; the revision should concern mainly adding new statistical areas that have emerged since 2009 (e.g. climate change),

² The following changes were introduced in 2009: the statistical area 2.9 'Science and technology' was renamed 'Science, technology and innovation', and a new statistical area 3.3.7 'Entrepreneurship' was added.

refining the existing statistical areas and their definition, or adding more level of detail, if necessary.

13. It is proposed that the practical work on the updating would be undertaken by a small group (4-5 persons) coordinated by the Secretariat. The group should include representatives of the main users of the classification: such as SDMX, Paris21, Eurostat and 1-2 countries (e.g. Canada).

14. The following general work plan and timetable for the update are proposed:

	Task	Time
1	Set up of a small Task Team	March 2020
2	Preparing a list of possible changes in the classification	April-May 2020
3	Consultation of the proposal with stakeholders (organizations and countries using the classification)	June-July 2020
4	Preparation of a draft revision	September 2020
5	Consultation of the draft revision with stakeholders and the Bureau	September-October 2020
6	Updating the revision based on feedback from the consultation	October-November 2020
7	Submission of the revised version of the classification to CES Bureau for approval	January (to be approved in February 2021)
8	Informing the main users, CES, etc. about the revised classification; promoting the classification among potential users (organizations and countries)	March 2021 onwards

V. PROPOSAL TO THE BUREAU

15. **The Bureau is invited to review and approve the proposed process of updating the classification.**

ANNEX

CLASSIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES (REV. 1 - October 2009)

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
 - 2.4.5 Tourism
 - 2.4.6 Banking, insurance, financial statistics
- 2.5 Government finance, fiscal and public sector statistics
- 2.6 International trade and balance of payments
- 2.7 Prices
- 2.8 Labour cost
- 2.9 Science, technology and innovation

Domain 3: Environment and multi-domain statistics

- 3.1 Environment
- 3.2 Regional and small area statistics
- 3.3 Multi-domain statistics and indicators
 - 3.3.1 Living conditions, poverty and cross-cutting social issues
 - 3.3.2 Gender and special population groups
 - 3.3.3 Information society
 - 3.3.4 Globalisation
 - 3.3.5 Indicators related to the Millennium Development Goals
 - 3.3.6 Sustainable development
 - 3.3.7 Entrepreneurship
- 3.4 Yearbooks and similar compendia

Domain 4: Methodology of data collection, processing, dissemination and analysis

- 4.1 Metadata
- 4.2 Classifications
- 4.3 Data sources
 - 4.3.1 Population and housing censuses; registers of population, dwellings and buildings
 - 4.3.2 Business and agricultural censuses and registers
 - 4.3.3 Household surveys
 - 4.3.4 Business and agricultural surveys
 - 4.3.5 Other administrative sources
- 4.4 Data editing and data linkage
- 4.5 Dissemination, data warehousing
- 4.6 Statistical confidentiality and disclosure protection
- 4.7 Data analysis

Domain 5: Strategic and managerial issues of official statistics

- 5.1 Institutional frameworks and principles; role and organization of official statistics
- 5.2 Statistical programmes; coordination within statistical systems
- 5.3 Quality frameworks and measurement of performance of statistical systems and offices
- 5.4 Management and development of human resources
- 5.5 Management and development of technological resources (including standards for electronic data exchange and data sharing)
- 5.6 Coordination of international statistical work
- 5.7 Technical cooperation and capacity building

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