

Glossary

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
A		
Administrative data	Data collected by a government department or other public agency primarily for administrative (not research or statistical) purposes.	Administrative data are collected for the purposes of registration, transaction and/or record-keeping, usually during the delivery of a service. They include data in an administrative register (for example, names and addresses of enterprises subject to VAT), and data resulting from administrative transactions (for example, VAT payments).
Administrative register	Register maintained for administrative purposes.	An administrative register is typically maintained by a government ministry, department or agency to assist it in fulfilling an administrative function.
Administrative source	Government department or other public agency that collects administrative data.	
Aggregate data	(same as) macrodata.	Aggregate data are also referred to as aggregated data.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Agricultural holding	A unit of agricultural production under single management comprising all livestock kept and all land used wholly or partly for agricultural production purposes, without regard to title, legal form or size.	Single management may be exercised by an individual or household, jointly by two or more individuals or households, by a clan or tribe, or by a juridical person such as a corporation, cooperative or government agency. The holding's land may consist of one or more parcels, located in one or more separate areas or in one or more territorial or administrative divisions, providing the parcels share the same production means, such as labour, farm buildings, machinery and draught animals.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Anonymization	A process by which individual data records are altered in such a way that the entities to which the records refer can no longer be identified directly or indirectly.	Anonymisation always includes removal of direct identifiers to prevent direct identification. It may involve more than removal of direct identifiers as their removal alone may not be sufficient to prevent indirect identification using other fields in the record. Anonymisation is distinct from pseudonymization, which is a process in which the identifiers of the original data set are replaced with aliases or pseudonyms. Unlike anonymisation, pseudonymization is a reversible process that de-identifies data but allows reidentification later if necessary. The benefits of anonymization are that it may enable access to microdata for research purpose, or transfer of microdata across the boundary of a national statistical system (for example to an international statistical organization) with greatly reduced or negligible risk of unintended disclosure.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Application programming interface Abbr./ Acronym: API	Computing interface which defines interactions between multiple software intermediaries.	An application programming interface defines the kinds of calls or requests that can be made, how to make them, the data formats that should be used, the conventions to follow.
Artificial intelligence Abbr./ Acronym: AI	Development and application of computer systems that are able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence.	The tasks include visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages. The growth in AI has major potential for statistical organizations.
Autonomous national statistical office	National statistical office in which the head of the office reports directly to an executive board and is not accountable to a member of the government or parliament.	Sometimes called semi-autonomous national statistical office. Note that reporting autonomy does not imply financial autonomy. An NSO under an executive board is no more financially autonomous than one reporting to a government minister. In both cases, the NSO budget is determined by the central government budget as decided by the legislative assembly.
B		

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Big data	Data generated by business or government transactions, social media, phone logs, communication devices, web scraping, sensors, etc., characterised by high volume, velocity and variety.	Big data are often largely unstructured, meaning that they have no pre-defined data model and do not fit well into conventional relational databases.
Business	Broad definition: an enterprise. Narrow definition: a commercial enterprise.	Enterprise is a term that is very precisely defined by the 2008 SNA. By contrast, in common usage, business is more broadly defined as an organization engaged in commercial, industrial, or professional activities. It may also refer to the organized efforts and activities of individuals to produce and sell goods and services for profit. Enterprise is a term that is very precisely defined by the 2008 SNA.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Business register	A register of businesses maintained for administrative or statistical purposes.	A business register may be a statistical register or an administrative register of businesses. Here the term business is an adjective and refers to set of units specific to the administrative or statistical purpose. For example, it may refer to the set of entities that are registered as businesses under national legislation, or the set of businesses registered for VAT.
Business survey	Survey in which the sampled population and/or the set of observation units are businesses.	If a survey includes not only businesses but also non-profit institutions and/or government units, it should more precisely be referred to as an economic survey.
C		
Census	Operation of systematically enumerating, acquiring and recording information about the members of a given population.	In some statistical offices, the term census is reserved for situations where the target population is all the units in a country or in a particular region or district. If it is not, the survey may be referred to as a full enumeration survey or a take-all survey rather than a census.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Centralised national statistical system	National statistical system in which official statistics are predominately produced by the national statistical office rather than by statistical units in ministries, departments and agencies.	
Chief statistician	The most senior official statistician in a country.	The chief statistician is typically the chief executive of the national statistical office, leading the strategic development and coordination of the national statistical system, in compliance with statistical legislation and international principles.
Citizen generated data Abbr./ Acronym: CGD	Data produced by non-state actors with the active consent and participation of citizens primarily to tackle issues that affect them directly.	Citizen generated data are innovative data sources (secondary data sources) for the production of official statistics and may be leveraged to support the effective tracking of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Cloud technology	Computing power made available as a utility that can be tapped on demand.	In this way, services such as servers, storage, and application software are delivered to a user via the internet enabling rapid access to shared networks of system resources.
Collaborative project	Website or application that enables users to create and share content or to participate in social networking.	
Commercial data	Data collected by non-government organizations, such as commercial and non-profit organizations, during the course of their operations for their own purposes.	Commercial data happens to be used as secondary data by a national statistical office or other producers of official statistics.
Commercial enterprise	An enterprise that is a corporation or a household unincorporated enterprise.	Non-profit institutions and government unincorporated enterprises are not commercial enterprises.
Common metadata framework	Repository of knowledge and good practices related to statistical metadata that identifies the principles of metadata management.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Common statistical infrastructure	Statistical tools and systems that support the activities constituting a generic statistical process, but that are not part of any specific statistical process, together with the statistical activities required for development or acquisition, maintenance and promotion of these tools and systems.	For example, the subprocesses of designing and building a survey questionnaire (GSBPM subprocesses 2.3 and 3.1) are typically supported by a questionnaire design and construction tool/system, which is independent of the survey. This tool/system is an element of the common statistical infrastructure and is developed or purchased, maintained and promoted by a national statistical organization for use in building the surveys it conducts.
Composite Indicator	An indicator obtained by combining individual indicators based on an underlying model of the multi-dimensional concept being measured	Typically, a composite indicator measures a multi-dimensional concept (e.g. competitiveness, e-trade, or environmental quality) that cannot be captured by a single indicator. Ideally, a composite indicator should be based on a theoretical framework/ definition, that allows individual indicators to be selected, combined and weighted in a manner which reflects the dimensions or structure of the concept being measured.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Community of practice	Network of individuals working with a common, shared purpose, grouped together to facilitate knowledge building, idea creation and information exchange.	
Computer hardware platform	Consists of client and server machines, and in some cases mainframes.	
Confidential data	Data that allow natural or legal persons to which the data refer to be identified, either directly or indirectly.	If confidential data are disseminated, individual data will be revealed.
Confidentiality	(same as) statistical confidentiality.	When the context is evidently statistical, the term confidentiality is used rather than statistical confidentiality.
Content community	Allows users to upload, share, and view multimedia content such as videos, pictures, music or presentations.	Example: YouTube, Flickr, Soundcloud

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Content management system	A system that manages the creation and modification of digital content. The main functions include web-based publishing, format management, history editing and version control, indexing, search, and retrieval.	A content management system typically supports multiple users in a collaborative environment. It supports the separation of content and presentation. Such systems are widely used for organizational content management and web content management.
Corporation	Legally constituted corporation, cooperative, limited liability partnership, notional resident unit or quasi-corporation	This broader interpretation of the notion of corporation, which was developed especially for the SNA, means that every enterprise can be classified a corporation, non-profit institution or unincorporated enterprise. Here notional resident unit refers to an artificial unit created for SNA purposes to account for ownership of immovable assets (such as land, buildings and natural resources) by non-residents.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Coverage	Population of units to which a statistical input or output refers.	For a survey, the population is the survey frame, also referred to as the sampled population. For administrative data, the population is the set of units providing data. For statistical output, the population is the population(s) associated with the input data from which the statistics have been generated. The coverage is the population that is obtained, not necessarily the target population. Units that are in the target population but not the population are collectively referred to as the under coverage. Units that are in the population but not the target population are collectively referred to as the overcoverage.
D		
Data architecture	Rules in place for the collection and storage of data in an organization.	
Data archiving	Process of moving data that are no longer actively used to a separate storage device for long-term retention.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Data ecosystem	The entire network of data collectors, data producers, data analysts and other data users that directly or indirectly collect, process disseminate, analyse and/or otherwise consume data and associated services within a specified country or region.	The data ecosystem within a country is broader than the national statistical system because it includes all producers of data not simply those producing official statistics, and it includes all users of data.
Data integration	Bringing together data from more than one source.	Data integration is a means of expanding coverage and/or content of statistical output.
Data interoperability	Ensuring that systems are using the same set of definitions, classifications and methodology, as well as technologically compatible platforms allowing for full harmonization of interfaces and access protocols.	
Data item	Attribute of an observation unit, or count, or other item derived from such attributes.	Also called a variable or an indicator. Survey methodologists tend to prefer the term variable, economists tend to prefer indicator and survey staff, and IT specialists tend to prefer data item.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Data portal	Web-based interface designed to make it easier to find data.	Like a library catalogue, a portal contains metadata about the information that is available for re-use. Typically, a portal refers to information in the form of raw, numerical data rather than textual documents.
Data provider	An individual or organization providing data to a national statistical office or other producer of official statistics.	The definition is as used in the Handbook and is from the perspective of a statistical organization. A more general definition would be an individual or organization providing data, which would include the national statistical office and other producers of official statistics within its scope.
Data reseller	Pulls data from NSO websites re-packages and re-sells without having to engage in any specific relationship with the NSO.	
Data science	An interdisciplinary field that uses scientific methods, processes, algorithms and systems to extract knowledge and insights from many structural and unstructured data.	Data science is related to data mining, machine learning and Big Data.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Database management system Abbr./ Acronym: DBMS	Collection of programs that manage the database structure and control access to data stored in a database.	Data management and storage is handled by database management systems (DBMS).
Dataset	A collection of data.	Dataset may be written data set. In the case of tabular microdata, a dataset corresponds to one or more database tables, where each column of a table represents a particular variable, and each row corresponds to a particular record in the dataset.
Decentralised national statistical system	National statistical system in which the responsibility for compiling official statistics rests with several national or regional government ministries, departments or agencies as well as with the national statistical office.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Disclosure control	Measures applied to eliminate (or at least significantly reduce) the risk of releasing data about individual legal or natural persons.	The measures usually modify or restrict the amount of the data released. Disclosure control is typically required to ensure confidentiality of statistical outputs.
Dissemination	Activity of making official statistics, statistical analyses, statistical services and metadata accessible to users.	In the Generic Statistical Business Process Model, the Disseminate phase is broken down into five sub-processes, namely: Update output systems; Produce dissemination products; Manage release of dissemination products; Promote dissemination products; and Manage user support.
Dynamic visualisation	Representation that goes beyond static forms, such as printed media. Its defining characteristics are animation, interaction and real-time data access.	
E		

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Economic production	An activity that is carried out under the responsibility, control and management of an institutional unit and that uses inputs of labour, capital, and goods and services to produce outputs of goods and services.	For national accounts purposes, household activities that produce domestic or personal services for final consumption within the same household are excluded, except housing services provided by owner-occupiers to themselves and services produced by paid domestic staff.
Economic survey	Survey in which (1) the sampled population and/or the set of observation units are enterprises, local units, kind of activity units or establishments and/or (2) the primary contents of the survey are economic data.	This definition allows a survey of household income and expenditure to be referred to as an economic survey as well as a household survey.
Enterprise	Institutional unit in its role as a producer of goods and services.	An enterprise may be a corporation, a quasi-corporation, a non-profit institution or an unincorporated enterprise. An enterprise is a precisely defined version of the rather vaguely defined term business.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Enterprise architecture Abbr./ Acronym: EA	Conceptual blueprint that defines the structure and operation of an organization and whose role is to determine how the organization can most effectively achieve its current and future objectives.	
Enterprise group	Association of enterprises bound together by legal and/or financial links.	Enterprises may be linked to one another by complete or partial common ownership and/or a shared management structure. They may also share the outputs and costs of research and development activities. If the ties are sufficiently close it is desirable to consider the enterprises as forming an enterprise group.
Enterprise social media	Online social networks or social relations among people who share business interests and/or activities.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Establishment	An enterprise or part of an enterprise at a single location, engaged in essentially a single activity, and capable, in principle, of providing the data required for the production and generation of income accounts.	Establishment and local kind of activity unit are synonyms. Establishment is the preferred term.
F		
Farm	(same as) agricultural holding.	Farm is the colloquial term; agricultural holding is the precisely defined term used for statistical purposes.
Farm register	Register of agricultural holdings maintained for administrative or statistical purposes.	A farm register may be a statistical farm register or an administrative register of farms.
Federal statistical system	Comprises two independent layers of producers of official statistics, one at the federal/central level and the other at the sub-national level.	A federal statistical system is usually associated with a federal system of government that combines a federal/central government with sub-national governments in a single political system. However, a country that has a federal system does not necessarily have a federal statistical system.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Formal sector	The set of enterprises that are not in the informal sector and are not household unincorporated non-market enterprises.	The ILO Resolution from the 1993 ICLS defines only the informal sector. Thus, the formal sector has to be defined by exclusion of those enterprises that are informal sector and those household enterprises that do not have market production.
Frame	(same as) survey frame.	Frame is used as an abbreviation for survey frame where the context is clear.
G		
Gender	Socially constructed differences in the attributes and opportunities associated with being female or male	Gender refers to social interactions and relationships between women and men. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman, or man, in a given context. In official statistics, gender is distinct from sex.
Gender statistics	Statistics that adequately reflect the lived realities of women and men, girls and boys.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
General economic production	Activities carried out under the control and responsibility of institutional units that use inputs of labour, capital, and goods and services to produce outputs of goods and services.	
Generic quality management system	Quality management system model or standard that can be applied to any type of organization.	Examples are the ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System - Requirements, and the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Model.
Geographic information system portal	Specialised platform for the dissemination and visualisation of geospatial data. Data are combined with maps typically from publicly available sources such as Google Maps.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Geospatial data	Data that combine location information (usually coordinates on the earth), attribute information (the characteristics of the object, event, or phenomena concerned), and often but not always, temporal information (the time or life span at which the location and attributes exist).	
Government unincorporated enterprise	Government unit in its role as an enterprise.	
Government unit	Legal entity that is established by political/ government process and that has legislative, judicial or executive authority over other institutional units within a given area.	The principal functions of a government unit are (1) to assume responsibility for the provision of goods and services to the community or to individual households and to finance their provision out of taxation or other incomes; (2) to redistribute income and wealth by means of transfers; and (3) to engage in non-market production. A government unit may be a ministry, department or agency.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Groupware	Group of persons who share the same living accommodation, who pool some, or all, of their income and wealth and who consume certain types of goods and services collectively, mainly housing and food.	The concept of household is based on the arrangements made by persons, individually or in groups, for providing themselves with food or other essentials for living. A household may be either (a) a one-person household, that is to say, a person who makes provision for his or her own food or other essentials for living without combining with any other person to form part of a multi-person household, or (b) a multi-person household, that is to say, a group of two or more persons living together who make common provision for food or other essentials for living. The persons in the group may pool their resources and may have a common budget; they may be related or unrelated persons or constitute a combination of persons both related and unrelated.
H		

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Household master sample frame	Set of households with characteristics required for sampling and contact purposes available as a frame for household surveys.	Abbreviated master sample frame when the context is clear.
Household register	Register of households maintained for administrative or statistical purposes.	
Household survey	Survey in which the sampled population and/or the set of observation units are households.	
Household unincorporated enterprise	An unincorporated enterprise that is a household.	
Household unincorporated market enterprise	A household unincorporated enterprise that is producing for the market.	The distinction between a household unincorporated enterprise that produces for the market and one that does not (i.e., that consumes its own products) is important in defining the informal sector.
I		

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Identifier	A sequence of characters allowing identification of an individual statistical unit from its name, exact geographical location or identification number.	An identifier allows direct identification, meaning the identification of an individual statistical unit based on one identified, or a combination of identifiers. Identification done by any other means is referred to as indirect identification.
Index	A composite indicator comprising a compound measure of changes in a group of data points that are representative of a particular phenomenon.	A well-known example is the Consumer Price Index (CPI) which provides a measure of the average change over time in the prices paid by consumers for a specified basket (set) of goods and services.
Indicator	Summary measure related to a key issue or phenomenon derived from a series of observed facts or reported opinions, attitudes or expectations.	An indicator may be any summary measure of the data – a mean, count, percentage, etc. It may be related to or based on a conceptual model or context on which it provides information.
Industry	A group of establishments engaged in the same, or similar, kinds of activity.	The Standard International Classification of All Industries (ISIC) Rev 4 provides a prescriptive list of all industries.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Informal sector	The set of enterprises within a country that is (1) engaged in the production of goods or services for the market with the primary objective of generating employment and incomes to the persons concerned, (2) operating at a low level of organization, with little or no division between labour and capital as factors of production, and on a small scale and (3) with labour relations (where they exist) based mostly on casual employment, kinship or personal and social relations rather than contractual arrangements with formal guarantees.	The definition is derived from Resolution II of the Fifteenth International Conference of Labor Statisticians 1993, which also provides a framework for operationalising it. In essence, the informal sector should be defined to comprise the set of household unincorporated market enterprises that are: (1) own account enterprises (optionally, all, or those that are not registered under specific forms of national legislation); and (2) enterprises with employees that have less than a specified number of employees or (optionally) are not registered under specific forms of national legislation, or whose employees are not registered. Agricultural businesses may (optionally) be excluded.
Institutional unit	An entity that is capable, in its own right, of owning assets, incurring liabilities and engaging in economic activities and in transactions with other entities.	There are two types of institutional units, namely legal entity and household.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Inter-governmental organization Abbr./ Acronym: IGO	An international organization that involves two or more countries working on issues of common interest and that has been established by a treaty that acts as the charter founding the organization.	The secretariat of an IGO is the organ that undertakes the central administrative and/or general secretarial duties of the IGO.
International financial institution Abbr./ Acronym: IFI	A financial institution that has been established, or chartered, by more than one country, and hence is subject to international law.	The owners or shareholders of an international financial institution are generally national governments, although other international institutions and other organizations may occasionally be shareholders.
International non-governmental organization Abbr./ Acronym: INGO	A citizen-based organization independent of government involvement, with an international membership, scope, or presence, mobilizing resources and acting as implementer and catalyst to support its members and others.	INGOs are typically non-profit organizations operating without government control and relying on a variety of funding sources from private donations and membership dues to government contribution. It is common to consider INGOs and International Partnerships being part of the same category of international organizations.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
International organization	A body with an international membership, scope, or presence that promotes cooperation and coordination between or among its members.	There are many types of international organizations. One way of categorizing them is to distinguish between intergovernmental organizations, supranational organizations and international non-governmental organizations.
International partnership Abbr./ Acronym: IP	An international body established between inter-governmental organizations, supranational organizations, national bodies, corporations, philanthropic foundations, and/or local and national civil society organizations working towards a similar or shared goal.	(1) An international partnership can benefit its member organizations with an increased fundraising base, more networking opportunities and greater awareness of their common cause. (2) It is common to consider international non-governmental organizations and international partnerships being part of the same category of international organizations.
International statistical system	The international organizations, or structural entities thereof, involved primarily or exclusively in the development, production and dissemination of official statistics at global, regional and sub-regional levels.	In principle organizations or structural entities within the international statistical system should conform to the Principles Governing International Statistical Activities.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Internet-related infrastructure	Hardware, software and services to maintain corporate web sites, intranets, and extranets, as well as web-hosting services and web software application development tools.	
K		
Kind of activity unit	Enterprise, or part of an enterprise, that is situated in a single location and in which only a single productive activity is carried out or in which the principal productive activity accounts for most of the value-added.	An industry is defined in terms of establishments.
Knowledge management	How collective information, knowledge and expertise are used in order to be effective as an organization. Covers the management of data flow, the sharing of “know-how”, knowledge retention, collective information, knowledge and expertise.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Knowledge management system	Any kind of IT system that stores and retrieves knowledge, improves collaboration, locates knowledge sources, mines repositories for hidden knowledge, captures and uses knowledge, or in some other way enhances the knowledge management process.	
Knowledge portal	Web-based application that provides a single point of access to organizational knowledge, integrating knowledge repositories, expert directories, collaboration tools, and other knowledge-intensive applications.	
L		
Legacy system	Older transaction processing system that continues to be used to avoid the cost of replacement or redesign.	Often refers to a system created for mainframe computer.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Legal entity	An entity whose existence is recognized by law or society independently of the persons, or other entities, that may own or control it.	A legal entity has the right to ownership, to dispose of assets, to engage in activities and to enter into contracts and to institute legal proceedings. There are three types of legal entity: corporations, non-profit institutions and government units.
Legal person	(same as) legal entity.	
Legal unit	Legal person or natural person.	In the context of a statistical business register, it is more practical to think of the enterprises as being owned by legal units (i.e., legal persons and natural persons) than by institutional units (i.e., legal persons and households) as the administrative data sources used in constructing the register refer to legal persons and natural persons, not to households.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Linked data	Method of publishing structured data so that it can be interlinked through semantic queries, connecting related data that weren't formerly related.	Linked data build upon standard Web technologies such as HTTP, the resource description framework (RDF) and uniform resource identifiers (URI), but instead of using them to generate standard web content as pages to be read by users, it extends them to connect information in a way that can be read automatically by computers. In this way, data is linked to other data, fully exploiting these connections so its value increases exponentially. Thus, data becomes discoverable from other sources and is given a context through links to textual information via glossaries, dictionaries and other vocabularies.
Local kind of activity unit	(same as) establishment.	Establishment is the preferred term.
Local unit	An enterprise, or a part of an enterprise, that engages in productive activity at or from one location.	Location may be interpreted according to the purpose, narrowly, such as a specific address, or more broadly, such as within a province, state, county, etc.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
M		
Machine-to-machine access Abbr./ Acronym: M2M	Automated transmission of data between systems in a standard format without human intervention.	Machine to machine access occurs when systems access data directly using application programming interfaces and web services.
Macrodata	Data generated by aggregating microdata according to a well-defined statistical methodology.	(1) Macrodata are also referred to as aggregate data or aggregated data. (2) In the case of data from a sample survey, the aggregation methodology includes weighting. (3) Macrodata may refer to a single table or multiple tables. An example of macrodata is a statistical table containing counts of businesses within a country by economic activity and region. Another example is a set of quarterly unemployment statistics.
Mentoring and knowledge transfer	Practice of retaining and transferring knowledge within an organization by mentoring and late-career knowledge transfer to develop talent, skills and careers.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Metadata	Data and other documentation that describe statistical data and statistical processes in a standardised way by providing information on data sources, methods, definitions, classifications and data quality.	In general terms, metadata are data about data. In the statistical context, and hence as defined here for the purposes of the Handbook, metadata are data about statistical data.
Microdata	Data on individual units.	(1) Microdata are also called unit record data. They are non-aggregated observations, or measurements of characteristics of individual units, before or after editing. (2) The units to which the data refer are termed observation units. They may be of any particular type, for example, persons, households, businesses, farms, institutions, transactions, scientific measurements, etc. (3) Microdata may be acquired by survey, from an administrative data source or commercial data source, or any combination of these. (4) Statistics are typically derived by aggregating microdata.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Microdataset	Dataset containing microdata.	(1) Microdataset can be written microdata set. (2) A microdata set comprises a set of records each containing data on individual units.
Modernisation maturity model	Self-evaluation tool to assess the level of organizational maturity against a set of pre-defined criteria.	There are multiple aspects of organizational maturity in the context of modernisation, and there are several distinct dimensions. Within each of these dimensions, an NSO may have different levels of maturity.
Multilateral development bank Abbr./ Acronym: MDB	An international financial institution that provides to its member states financing and professional advice for the purpose of development.	A multilateral development bank can be global (e.g., World Bank) or it can be regional in membership, scope and presence, such as regional development banks.
N		
National statistical institute Abbr./ Acronym: NSI	(same as) National statistical office.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
National statistical office Abbr./ Acronym: NSO	The main producer of official statistics in a country and/or the organization responsible for coordinating all activities related to the development, production, and dissemination of official statistics in the national statistical system.	The actual name given to the national statistical office in a country may be National Statistical Institute (NSI), National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), National Statistical Agency (NSA), Central Statistical Agency (CSA), Central Statistics Agency (CSA), etc.
National statistical system Abbr./ Acronym: NSS	Comprises the national statistical office and all other producers of official statistics in the country.	The national statistical system is sometimes referred to as the national system of official statistics.
Natural person	Human being.	In the context of the 2008 SNA and economic statistics, there are two types of person, namely natural person and legal person.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Network infrastructure	Hardware and software resources that enable network connectivity and communications that provide the communication path and services between users, processes, applications, services and external networks and the internet.	
Non-observed economy	Economic activities that are missing from the basic data used to compile the national accounts because they are underground, illegal, informal, household production for own final use, or due to deficiencies in the basic data collection system.	Collectively underground activities are often referred to as the underground economy or the hidden economy, or the concealed economy or the shadow economy. The underground economy is a subset of the non-observed economy.
Non-profit institution	Legal or social entity created for the purpose of producing goods and services but whose status does not permit it to be a source of income, profit or other financial gain for the units that establish, control or finance it.	In practice, the entity's productive activities are bound to generate a surplus or deficit, but any surplus it happens to make cannot be appropriated by other institutional units.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Non-profit organization	(same as) non-profit institution.	Non-profit institution is the term defined in the 2008 SNA. Non-profit organization is the term most commonly used outside the immediate context of the 2008 SNA.
O		
Observation unit	Unit about which data are acquired and statistics compiled.	Usually but not necessarily the same as the unit comprising the target population or (in the case of a survey) the sampled population.
Official statistics	Statistics produced in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics by a national statistical office or by another producer of official statistics that has been mandated by the national government or certified by the national statistical office to compile statistics for its specific domain.	Typically, official statistics are produced and disseminated in compliance with the respective national statistical legislation and are identified as such in the national statistical programmes. All statistics produced by a national statistical office are assumed to be official with the exception of those explicitly stated by the national statistical office as not official.
Open data	Data and content that can be freely used, modified, and shared by anyone for any purpose.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Open-source software	Software that has its source code made available by use of a license in which the copyright holder provides the rights to change and distribute the software freely to anyone and for any purpose.	Open-source software is frequently developed in a collaborative public manner.
Operating system Abbr./ Acronym: OS	Software that manages the resources and activities of the computer and act as an interface for the user.	The best-known client operating systems are Windows operating systems. Server operating systems are dominated by the various forms of the UNIX operating system or Linux.
Other producer of official statistics Abbr./ Acronym: OPOS	Organizational entity within a government ministry, department or agency, other than the national statistical office, that develops, produces and disseminates official statistics.	Other producers of official statistics have to be professionally independent organizational entities and exclusively or primarily focused on statistical work.
P		

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Peer review	Evaluation of a statistical organization, statistical process and/or statistical output by one or more people with similar competencies to the producer.	Often used for quality evaluation of a national statistical system, statistical process and/or statistical output by peers from within the same statistical organization or from another statistical organization.
Population register	Register of persons maintained for administrative or statistical purposes.	
Primary data	Data collected directly by a producer of official statistics exclusively for official statistical purposes.	Primary data are typically collected by sample surveys and censuses, in compliance with applicable national regulatory frameworks, such as national statistical legislation.
Primary data source	Organization that produces primary data.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Privacy	The limitations on the use, and the degree of protection, guaranteed by a statistical organization collecting data to the entity providing the data.	The definition refers to privacy in the context of a national statistical office or other producer of official statistics. In a general (as opposed to statistical) context, privacy is the ability of an entity to seclude itself or information about itself. When something is private to an entity, it usually means that it is inherently special or sensitive. Privacy thus defined partially overlaps with security, which can embody the concepts of appropriate use and protection of information.
Producer of official statistics	National statistical office or other producer of official statistics.	
Profiling	Procedure for identification of appropriate statistical and observation units for an enterprise or enterprise group.	Based on information about the enterprise collected from the enterprise, and, in the case of corporations, from publicly available annual reports.
Q		

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Quality	Degree to which a set of inherent characteristics of an object fulfils requirements.	This is a general definition from ISO 9000:2015 Quality Management Systems. In the context of a national statistical system, the object being referred to may be a statistical output, the statistical process that produced it, the institutional environment housing the process, or the whole statistical system. Users' needs define output quality, which is typically expressed in terms of a set of quality dimensions such as relevance, accuracy and reliability, timeliness and punctuality; accessibility and clarity; and coherence and comparability. Simpler characterisations of output quality are fit for use and fit for purpose.
Quality assessment	The part of quality assurance that focuses on assessing the extent to which quality requirements have been fulfilled.	In the context of statistical organizations, quality assessment, quality evaluation, and quality review are regarded as synonyms. For brevity where the context is clear, they are all referred to simply as evaluation, the term used in the Generic Statistical Business Process Model.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Quality assurance	The part of quality management focused on providing confidence that needs or expectations regarding quality will be met.	Quality assurance provides an organization's guarantee that the product and service it offers meet accepted quality standards. In the context of a statistical organization, it comprises a planned and systematic pattern of actions necessary to provide confidence that a product, and the process that produces it, conform to established requirements.
Quality assurance framework Abbr./ Acronym: QAF	The procedures and systems that support quality assurance within an organization.	The term quality assurance framework is used in the context of statistical organizations to mean the part of the quality management framework that provides confidence that the stated needs or expectations of users are being met. It is based on the definition of quality, the statistical quality principles, and the methods and tools that are used to ensure the principles are implemented. A quality assurance framework together with the procedures for application of general quality management principles constitute a quality management framework.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Quality evaluation	(same as) quality assessment.	
Quality framework	(same as) quality management system.	
Quality management	Coordinated activities to direct and control an organization with regard to quality.	Quality management includes establishing quality policies and objectives, and processes to achieve these objectives through quality planning, quality assurance, quality control, and quality improvement.
Quality management framework	(same as) quality management system.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Quality management principles	Comprehensive set of principles on which a quality management system is based.	The most widely used articulation of quality management principles is included in the ISO 9000:2015 and accompanying documents. In the context of statistical organizations, and in this Handbook, a distinction is made between general quality management principles, which are associated with an organization as a whole, and statistical quality principles, which are associated with the core statistical infrastructure and processes.
Quality management system Abbr./ Acronym: QMS	Set of interrelated or interacting elements of an organization to establish quality policies and quality objectives, and processes to achieve those objectives.	In the context of statistical organizations, a quality management system is more commonly referred to as a quality management framework, or simply a quality framework.
Quality report	Report conveying information about the quality of a statistical output and/or process.	A quality report is a typical way of recording the results of a quality evaluation.
Quality review	(same as) quality assessment	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Quasi-corporation	An unincorporated enterprise that operates as if it were a corporation and thus must be treated as such.	Typically, this includes enterprises owned by non-resident or government institutional units.
R		
Reference metadata	Statistical metadata that describes the contents and the quality of the statistical data from a semantic point of view.	Examples are explanatory texts on the context of the statistical data, methodologies for data collection and data aggregation, and quality and dissemination characteristics.
Register	List of units maintained for administrative or statistical purposes, including characteristics of the units needed to meet the purposes.	A register may be an administrative register or a statistical register. The characteristics vary according to the purpose but invariably include name and contact details.
Release	Dissemination activity by which official statistics become publicly known for the first time.	
Release calendar	Pre-defined schedule when key indicators and datasets are planned to be released at regular intervals and/or on given dates.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Release schedule	(same as) release calendar	Release calendar is the preferred term.
Residual disclosure	Identification of a value that has been suppressed in a table by reference to the values of other cells in the table.	
S		
Sampled population	The type of statistical unit and the particular population of these units from which a survey sample is drawn.	The sampled population is typically the closest approximation to the target population that can be achieved given the resources available to the survey and taking into account the need for producing coherent statistics, i.e., referring to compatible populations.
Scope	(same as) target population.	
Search engine	Information retrieval tool that connects knowledge seekers with experts and answers.	
Seasonal adjustment	Statistical method for removing the seasonal component of a time series.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Seasonal component	Fluctuations in a time series that exhibit a regular pattern at a particular time during the course of a year which are similar from one year to another.	
Secondary data	Data that are initially collected by a public or private organization for administrative or commercial purposes, not for the purpose of producing official statistics, and that are subsequently acquired and re-used by a producer of official statistics.	Secondary data include administrative data collected by government organizations and Big Data collected by private organizations.
Secondary data source	Organization that produces secondary data.	A secondary data source is sometimes termed a non-traditional data source. Its scope has been gradually extended from administrative data sources to include data collected by non-governmental organizations and citizen-generated data sources.
Server	Computer that is dedicated to managing network resources dedicated to a particular task.	Specialist server roles include print servers, file servers, network servers, database servers and web servers.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Sex	Biological differences between women and men.	Biological differences are relatively fixed and unchangeable and tend not to vary across cultures or over time.
Social media	Websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking.	
Social networking site	Online service, platform or site that focuses on building and reflecting social networks or social relations among people who share interests or activities.	Example: Facebook, LinkedIn.
Social survey	Survey in which the content of the survey primarily concerns social conditions.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Software application	A program or group of programs designed for end-users.	A software application may also termed an application or application software. In the context of a statistical organization, it is an Information technology tool used to manage production activities in the organization from data collection to dissemination. It can be developed by the NSO, or collaboratively with other statistical organization or commercially.
Standard	Set of standard concepts or variables, standard classification, or standard method that underpins harmonisation and/or integration and that typically supports implementation of policies.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Statistical advisory council	Body established by statistical law, by government or by a national statistical office, composed of representatives of the main categories of private and public users, with the mandate to advise the chief statistician and the government on issues of strategic importance to official statistics.	
Statistical business register Abbr./ Acronym: SBR	(1) A statistical register containing a list of businesses and the characteristics of those businesses required to provide frames for business surveys. (2) These data, together with the procedures, systems and human resources that support their use.	The businesses in an SBR can be enterprises or establishments or both. An SBR may include all types of enterprises or may be confined to commercial enterprises. Statistical business register is often abbreviated business register (BR) where the statistical context is clear. As indicated by item (2) in the definition, the term SBR can be interpreted in a broader sense to include not only the data but also the procedures, systems and human resources that support their use.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Statistical confidentiality	Ensuring that individual data collected by, or in possession of, a producer of official statistic are used exclusively for statistical purposes and in such a way that natural or legal persons cannot be identified, either directly or indirectly.	Statistical confidentiality is a fundamental principle of Official Statistics.
Statistical data	Data collected, processed or disseminated by a statistical organization for statistical purposes.	(1) The data that a statistical organization uses to manage its own operations (for example its payroll) are not statistical data. They may be statistical metadata, for example, if they describe statistical production. (2) Data acquired by a statistical organization from an administrative source are administrative data at the point of acquisition. They may be transformed into statistical data during processing.
Statistical farm register	A statistical register containing agricultural holdings identified for statistical purposes.	Abbreviated farm register when the content is clear.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Statistical law	National legal framework governing the development, production and dissemination of official statistics.	The statistical law may be complemented by, and further articulated in, by-laws such as regulations, orders and decrees. The statistical law is applicable to the national statistical office and may be partially or fully applicable to other producers of official statistics.
Statistical literacy	Ability to understand and reason with statistical data.	Applies to all age groups and categories of society so they can better understand data presented to them in its various forms in daily life and can consequently allow them to make better evidence-based and informed decisions.
Statistical metadata	Data and other documentation that describe statistical data and statistical processes in a standardised way by providing information on data sources, methods, definitions, classifications and data quality.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Statistical organization	Organization, or unit within an organization, whose primary role is the production of official statistics.	A statistical organization may be national or international. In the case of a national statistical organization, the term is synonymous with producer of official statistics.
Statistical output	Output from a statistical process accessible by the users.	Statistical output can be in the form of aggregate statistics, analysis, and/or microdatasets. It can be services associated with any of these. It can be by any medium.
Statistical production	Activity that is carried out by a national statistical office or other producer of official statistics and that is aimed at producing statistics.	Statistical production may be abbreviated production where the context is clear.
Statistical unit	Any type of unit that is defined and used for statistical purposes.	A statistical unit can be a survey target population unit, a sampled population unit or an observation unit.
Statistical yearbook	Compendium of statistical information dealing with a wide range of development pertinent topics.	
Statistics	Statistical output in the form of aggregate datasets and tables.	

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Statistics code of practice	Principles governing the development, production and dissemination of official statistics and the institutional environment within which a national or regional statistical system operates.	(1) Also referred to as a statistical code of practice or code of good practice for official statistics. (2) May be at national or regional level. (3) Is typically aligned with the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. (4) In the case of a national level code, is typically aligned with national statistical law. (5) The European Statistics Code of Practice is the first and probably the best-known code of this kind, comprising 16 key principles, each of which is complemented by set of indicators that provide a reference for assessing or reviewing the implementation of the code.
Structural metadata	Statistical metadata that is used to identify, formally describe or retrieve statistical data.	Examples are dimension names, variable names, dictionaries, dataset technical descriptions, dataset locations, and keywords for finding data.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Supranational Organization	An international organization with a mandate, legislative power and authority that go beyond the boundaries of its member states.	A supranational organization differs from an intergovernmental organization in that, within it, decisions are made by institutions specific to the organization and not systematically by meeting of heads of state or their representatives. The European Union is one of the most prominent examples of supranational organization.
Survey	Collection of data for statistical purposes.	A survey may be conducted once or repeated at regular intervals or at irregular intervals. A survey may be a census or a sample survey.
Survey cycle	A single conduct of a survey.	Repetitions of a survey with essentially the same objectives and methodology are referred to as survey cycles, or survey repetitions, or survey occasions. Survey cycles are the preferred term. The whole set of survey repetitions is deemed to constitute the survey.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Survey frame	The set of units comprising the sampled population for a survey together with the attributes of those units required for sampling.	
T		
Target population	The type of statistical unit and the particular population of these units that a survey is intended to cover.	For example, all manufacturing enterprises with employees.
Time series	A set of values of a particular variable at consecutive periods of time.	Time series is a basic building block for many datasets. It groups data that share the same dimension values (for example region or industry) except for the time dimension, allowing users to see changes in values of variables over time, holding all other dimensions constant. Series is the generic concept, of which time series is the most common example.

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Time series analysis	Period to period comparisons in a time series, and detection of the underlying trend which may otherwise be obscured by seasonal and calendar effects.	Time series analysis depends on seasonal adjustment and upon identification and removal of the irregular component from the series, also referred to as extracting the signal from the signal and noise.
U		
Unincorporated enterprise	Government unit, non-profit institution or household in its role as an enterprise that is not considered to be a quasi-corporation.	
Unit record data	(Same as) microdata.	
User group	Group convened by a national statistical office with the aim of collecting feedback on statistical outputs, typically comprising the most important users in a particular subject matter area.	The name user council or user committee is sometimes used for a user group formally established by decision of the chief statistician or of the Statistical Advisory Council.
V		

Term	Definition	Explanatory Notes
Variable	Attribute of an observation unit, count or other item derived from such attributes.	Also called a data item. Survey methodologists tend to prefer the term variable, survey staff, and IT specialists tend to prefer data item.