



Basic Information regarding the United Nations Statistical Commission



The United Nations Statistical Commission was created in 1946 by Resolution 8 (I) of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Its main role is to support the Council – one of six principal organs of the United Nations – in coordinating all activities of a statistical nature conducted by individual UN bodies.

The Commission brings together all actors of the global statistical system and is the highest supranational body setting the standards of international work conducted in the field of official statistics. In order to facilitate and improve the comparability of statistical data pertaining to different countries, the Commission also focuses on supporting the development and implementation of these standards at the national level within each country.

Furthermore, it oversees the activities of the United Nations Statistical Division^[1] (UNSD), which is part of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA – which in turn is part of the UN Secretariat, supporting activities conducted within the ECOSOC).

The UN Statistical Division is the organ responsible for compiling and disseminating global statistical information, developing norms and standards for official statistical activities, and supporting member states in their efforts to strengthen their national statistical systems.

The UN Statistical Commission is the highest decision-making body with regard to the coordination of international statistical activities within the global statistical system. The Commission helps in the development of statistical systems, methods and standards at the national level, at the same time making it possible for the global statistical system to gather coherent and comparable statistical data produced by the member states through the application of the above methods and standards. The resulting national data are subsequently transmitted to databases within the UN Statistical Division and other specialized agencies of the United Nations, to serve as the basis for numerous statistical presentations and publications in various disciplines.

Statistics Poland also sends statistical data to the UNSD databases. Every year the Commission organizes a plenary session to discuss the course of development for the global statistical system. Members in attendance include the presidents of national statistical offices from each UN member state (including the President of Statistics Poland), as well as representatives of non-UN member states (the Vatican and Palestine), UN Regional Commissions, international organizations and Eurostat, headed by its Director-General.

The Commission supports ECOSOC in carrying out the points of its resolution regarding:

- Aid in the development of national statistical systems and improvement of national data comparability,
- Coordination of statistical efforts conducted by specialized agencies within the UN,

- Development of key statistical services provided by the UN Secretariat - UNSD,
- Providing general counsel to UN bodies on the gathering, analysis and dissemination of statistical data,
- Promotion of official statistics and methods for their production.

For each ECOSOC session, the Commission prepares a report of the activities that it has carried out, based on its Plenary Session agenda. The Commission may also present draft resolutions and recommendations intended for member states of the United Nations.

The UN Statistical Commission is composed of 24 member nations of the UN. The ECOSOC elects representative countries following the rule of equitable geographical distribution - five members from among the African states; four members from each of the following regions: Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America (including the Caribbean); seven members total from among Western European and other states. The term in office lasts four years.

Within the Commission functions the steering Bureau, composed of the Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur. They are usually elected by acclamation at the beginning of the session, for one year, with the possibility of being re-elected in subsequent years.

The year 2019 marks the 50th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission.

More information about the UN Statistical Commission from its website:

<https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/> and from Statistics Poland:

<http://stat.gov.pl/en/international-statistics/international-institutions-organisations/un-united-nations/>

[1] <https://unstats.un.org/home/>