

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

# Manual

for the Production of Statistics  
on the Information Economy

**2009**  
Revised Edition



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## NOTE

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The English version of the *Manual* is currently available on the Internet at the address indicated below. Versions in other languages will be posted as they become available.

**[Measuring-ict.unctad.org](http://Measuring-ict.unctad.org)**

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## PREFACE

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Producing statistics on the information society is becoming an important component of the work programme of national statistical organizations. The demand for ICT statistics continuously increases as more countries seek to design, monitor and review national policies and strategies to take advantage of the rapid advances in information technology. In addition, business communities require information about access to, and use of, ICTs by various consumer groups, as well as information about the impact of ICTs. This is a particular challenge for the developing countries, many of which are just starting their statistical work on measuring the information society. At the international level, comparable ICT indicators are critical to cross-country comparisons of ICT development, to monitoring the global digital divide and to establishing policy-relevant benchmarks.

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is a founding member of the global Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development (see <http://measuring-ict.unctad.org>), which promotes the measurement of the information society at the international level. One of the key achievements of the *Partnership* is the development of a core list of ICT indicators for the production of internationally comparable statistics, which was endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission at its 38th session in March 2007. The UN Statistical Commission encouraged countries to use that list in their data collection programmes and a first version of the *Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Information Economy* was published at the end of 2007. UNCTAD prepared this *Manual* to guide statisticians from developing countries in all steps involved in the production and dissemination of business ICT statistics.

To reflect the evolving nature of many ICTs, the core list of ICT indicators was revised in late 2008. UNCTAD and the UN Statistics Division (UNSD) collaborated to subject the *Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Information Economy* to an extensive consultation process. Through this process, national and international experts have provided detailed feedback and suggestions aimed at making the *Manual* as practical a tool as possible for staff of national statistical organizations responsible for measuring the information economy. The process was supported by members of the *Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development* and an expert group meeting was held in Geneva in May 2008. Further discussions on the *Manual* were facilitated by an online forum hosted by the UNSD and moderated by UNCTAD.

This second edition of the *Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Information Economy* will be introduced to the 40<sup>th</sup> UN Commission for Statistics in February 2009. It is a valuable tool in our common efforts towards enhancing the availability of internationally comparable indicators of the information economy.



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The first version of this *Manual* was prepared by a team consisting of UNCTAD staff members Susan Teltscher (team leader), Scarlett Fondeur Gil, Muriel Guigue, and Sonia Boffa, under the overall supervision of Geneviève Feraud. The main author of the Manual was José Luis Cervera Ferri and substantive editing was provided by Sheridan Roberts, both consultants to UNCTAD.

The *Manual* was submitted to a consultation process in view of its revision in order to improve its content and practical usability by beneficiary countries. This revision process was organized by Susan Teltscher and Torbjörn Fredriksson (team leaders), Scarlett Fondeur Gil, Sonia Boffa and Rémi Lang, under the overall supervision of Mongi Hamdi. José Luis Cervera Ferri drafted most of the modifications.

Monica Morrica provided administrative support and helped in the formatting. The overall layout, graphics and desktop publishing were done by MédiaCime. Sophie Combette designed the cover and the text was edited by Graham Grayston.

Useful comments on various aspects of the Manual were provided by Aarno Airaksinen (Statistics Finland), Henri Laurencin, Head of UNCTAD's Central Statistics and Information Retrieval Branch and Ralf Becker, Chief of the Economic Statistics and Classifications Section of the United Nations Statistics Division. The UNCTAD team also acknowledges the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development, the OECD and Eurostat, whose work provided the basis for several of the chapters.

A number of national statistical offices provided useful information to this *Manual*, in particular those of Kazakhstan, Morocco and Thailand. National statistical experts also provided useful contributions to the revision of the *Manual*, in particular Tapas Kunar Sanyal, Candido Astrologo, Mohamaed Jallouli, Sihar Lumbantobing and Yusif Yusifov, as well as most of the participants to the *Expert Group Meeting for the revision of the Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Information Economy*, which took place in Geneva on 26 May 2008.

Finally, the United Nations Statistics Division offered valuable support to the elaboration of the publication, including by providing the online forum that hosted the discussions for the revision.

All contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

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