



الهيئة العامة للإحصاء  
General Authority for Statistics

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# General Policy for the Dissemination of Statistics in Saudi Arabia

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## Introduction:

Statistics in Saudi Arabia are one of the most important components of information structure of all development planning, decision and policy making operations, in addition to being the most searched information by all regional and international organization, media, researchers, and scholars. Studies, reports, and publications issued by these entities when talking about Saudi Arabia or one of its various development fields are based on these statistics. The dissemination of statistics is one of GASTAT's responsibilities based on paragraph (5) of Article 4 in the regulation of the General Authority for Statistics issued by the council of minister's resolution No. 11 dated 12/1/1437 H, which states that one of GASTAT's responsibilities is to prepare and publish statistical publications and reports of surveys and research.

Due to the importance of regulating Statistics dissemination in Saudi Arabia for all relevant entities, the General Policy for the Dissemination of Statistics was prepared for the purpose of regulating and activating the dissemination of statistics between GASTAT, public entities, private establishments, and other entities.

This document contains – in addition to policy – principles and guidelines for the dissemination of statistics on Saudi Arabia. GASTAT is compiled with developing a work strategy, plans and mechanism for implementing this policy to achieve its objective of leveraging statistics.

This policy is based on a set of rules that regulate the statistics dissemination process in accordance with the following:

- General Statistics law issued by Royal Decree No. (23) dated 7/12/1379 H.
- Regulation of the General Authority for Statistics issued by the council of ministers' resolution No. (11) dated 13/1/1437 H.
- Providing Data for Clients Policy by GASTAT's Board of Directors' resolution No. (37/213/19857) dated 28/12/1437 H.
- National Strategy for the Development of Statistics.
- UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.



- **General Data Dissemination System (GDDS) and Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS).**

## **1. Validity of Approval and Policy Application**

- **This policy is approved by GASTAT's Board of Directors.**
- **Work Procedures Guide and models necessary for implementing this policy are approved by GASTAT's President.**
- **GASTAT is responsible for supervising and following up on the implementation of this policy.**
- **Public entities, private establishments and other entities are responsible for the implementation of this policy.**



## 2. Definitions

1. **Kingdom:** The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
2. **Policy:** Statistics dissemination policy.
3. **GASTAT's Regulation:** Regulation of the General Authority for Statistics.
4. **Law:** Statistics Law.
5. **GASTAT:** General Authority for Statistics.
6. **Board:** GASTAT's Board of Directors.
7. **Statistical Sector:** It is represented by GASTAT as a central body responsible for activating and coordinating the inclusive statistical procedures carried out by directorates, units and departments in all Saudi Arabia's sectors and institutions.
8. **Coordinating committee:** A standing committee formed to coordinate statistical work that is carried out by relevant entities.
9. **Public entities:** Ministries, authorities, institutions, public interests, security agencies, and military sectors including wholly state-owned companies.
10. **Private establishments:** All companies including the companies in which the country own some shares, private individual enterprises, and associations.
11. **Other entities:** public entities, private establishments, associations, authorities, international and regional organizations, and foreign private entities that conduct surveys on Saudi Arabia and individuals, excluding GASTAT.
12. **Statistics:** Data, information, and indicators that are collected or calculated on the society's conditions and activities using scientific methods. They can be tabulated, analyzed to come up with results, expectations, and decisions in accordance with specific variables.
13. **Data:** Numbers and descriptive characteristics that are related to statistical areas with respect to the society's conditions and activities. They can be individual data or a group thereof.
14. **Individual data:** Data that determines the legal person's identity, where s/he provides such data by request.
15. **Information:** All regulations, legislation, decisions, and data related to a specific case and extracted from administrative records that are originally intended for non-statistical



purposes after being processed through tabulation, analysis, summarization, or by any other method to become relevant to statistical fields.

16. **Indicators:** A statistical indicator is a data element that represents statistical data for a specified time, place, and other characteristics. It is usually calculated according to a mathematical equation.
17. **Administrative records:** Paper or electronic records in which data or information are preserved in various entities related to statistical areas with respect to the society's conditions and activities.
18. **National Data Portal:** Official data for data, information, and indicators in Saudi Arabia owned by GASTAT. All public entities can upload their statistics on the portal, so that it becomes the official Saudi electronic channel for publishing statistics.

### 3. Objectives

1. Regulate and unify statistics dissemination in Saudi Arabia.
2. Strength confidence in statistics on Saudi Arabia.
3. Ensure dissemination of accurate statistics that reflect the reality of the society's conditions and activities in Saudi Arabia.
4. Enhance the availability and provision of statistics to their users through up to date and effective dissemination channels.
5. Promote partnership and cooperation with the components of the statistical sector in statistics dissemination.
6. Keep abreast with the development in statistics dissemination field.
7. Promote transparency and disclosure.





## 4. Scope and Type of Disseminated Statistics:

Disseminated statistics are classified into two types according to who is responsible for their implementation:

- A. All statistics issued by GASTAT including: Data, information, and indicators collected or calculated on the society's conditions and activities.
- B. All statistics issued by public entities, private establishments or other entities are based on:
  1. Statistical surveys implemented by public entities and private establishments.
  2. Paper and electronic registers that contain data or information in the various activities supervised by public entities or private establishments, related to statistical fields and the conditions and activities of society, in addition to registers that contain the production processes of these entities.

The policy is applied to the referred two types. Statistics on results of research and studies by researchers are excluded.

## 5. GASTAT's Responsibility in regulating Statistics Dissemination and Confidentiality:

1. GASTAT is the entity responsible for everything related to statistics dissemination in Saudi Arabia, this includes statistical content, used methodologies, publication date, and method.
2. GASTAT disseminates its statistics and the methodologies used in order to meet the needs of statistics users according to previously announced publication dates.
3. GASTAT determines the confidentiality of statistics that should not be disclosed or published for public interest according to defined standards issued by GASTAT's Board of Directors' resolution.

## 6. Public Entities, Private Establishments, and Other Entities'

### Responsibility in Statistics Dissemination:

1. Public entities, private establishments or other entities shall determine the statistics that fall within their activities and disseminate them after written coordination with GASTAT, and such entities and their employees shall not disseminate or disclose other statistics.
2. Public entities, private establishments or other bodies shall not disseminate any official statistical data, information, studies or indicators from statistical surveys or provide them to international and regional organizations and bodies except after coordination with GASTAT and obtaining written permission. GASTAT has the right to amend, delete, add to them, or other technical statistical matters.
3. Public entities, private establishments or other entities shall not consider any statistical data, information or indicators confidential prior to written coordination with GASTAT.



### 7. Statistics Dissemination Controls:

1. GASTAT, public entities, private establishments, and other entities shall comply with the principles of statistics dissemination quality, namely that these statistics should be relevant to the needs of their users, comprehensive, reliable, and disseminated according to specific pre-announced dates.
2. Statistics are disseminated and made available to everyone at the same time with no preference.
3. Statistics are disseminated with full transparency and impartiality.
4. Dissemination of statistics must be accompanied by the necessary explanations and definitions of statistics to avoid any misinterpretation or misuse.
5. Statistics are disseminated in the form of general statistical tables and in no way deal with individual data.



## 8. Statistics Dissemination Channels:

1. After written coordination with GASTAT, public entities, private establishments and other entities can disseminate their statistics through the appropriate channel. They shall upload the statistics at the same time on the National Data Portal as a unified dissemination channel for statistics issued by all entities in Saudi Arabia.
2. GASTAT's official website is the approved official channel for disseminating all its statistics. Statistics dissemination on GASTAT's website must coincide with the dissemination on the National Data Portal.
3. GASTAT, public entities, and private establishments can disseminate and promote their statistics through other channels, such as media, social media accounts, smart applications, after disseminating them on their official channels and the National Data Portal.



## Appendix

1. UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.
2. General Data Dissemination System (GDDS) and Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS).

## Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics

The Statistical Commission,

- Bearing in mind that official statistical information is an essential basis for development in the economic, demographic, social and environmental fields and for mutual knowledge and trade among the States and peoples of the world.
- Bearing in mind that the essential trust of the public in official statistical information depends to a large extent on respect for the fundamental values and principles which are the basis of any society which seeks to understand itself and to respect the rights of its members.
- Bearing in mind that the quality of official statistics, and thus the quality of the information available to the Government, the economy and the public depends largely on the cooperation of citizens, enterprises, and other respondents in providing appropriate and reliable data needed for necessary statistical compilations and on the cooperation between users and producers of statistics in order to meet users' needs.
- Recalling the efforts of governmental and non-governmental organizations active in statistics to establish standards and concepts to allow comparisons among countries,
- Recalling also the International Statistical Institute Declaration of Professional Ethics,
- Having expressed the opinion that resolution C (47), adopted by the Economic Commission for Europe on 15 April 1992, is of universal significance,
- Noting that, at its eighth session, held in Bangkok in November 1993, the Working Group of Statistical Experts, assigned by the Committee on Statistics of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to examine the Fundamental Principles, had agreed in principle to the ECE version and had emphasized that those principles were applicable to all nations,
- Noting also that, at its eighth session, held at Addis Ababa in March 1994, the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers, considered that the



Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics are of universal significance, Adopts the present principles of official statistics:

**Principle 1.** Official statistics provide an indispensable element in the information system of a democratic society, serving the Government, the economy and the public with data about the economic, demographic, social and environmental situation. To this end, official statistics that meet the test of practical utility are to be compiled and made available on an impartial basis by official statistical agencies to honor citizens' entitlement to public information.

**Principle 2.** To retain trust in official statistics, the statistical agencies need to decide according to strictly professional considerations, including scientific principles and professional ethics, on the methods and procedures for the collection, processing, storage and presentation of statistical data.

**Principle 3.** To facilitate a correct interpretation of the data, the statistical agencies are to present information according to scientific standards on the sources, methods and procedures of the statistics.

**Principle 4.** The statistical agencies are entitled to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics.

**Principle 5.** Data for statistical purposes may be drawn from all types of sources, be they statistical surveys or administrative records. Statistical agencies are to choose the source with regard to quality, timeliness, costs and the burden on respondents.

**Principle 6.** Individual data collected by statistical agencies for statistical compilation, whether they refer to natural or legal persons, are to be strictly confidential and used exclusively for statistical purposes.

**Principle 7.** The laws, regulations and measures under which the statistical systems operate are to be made public.

**Principle 8.** Coordination among statistical agencies within countries is essential to achieve consistency and efficiency in the statistical system.



**Principle 9.** The use by statistical agencies in each country of international concepts, classifications and methods promotes the consistency and efficiency of statistical systems at all official levels.

**Principle 10.** Bilateral and multilateral cooperation in statistics contributes to the improvement of systems of official statistics in all countries.

## Press Release: IMF Launches the Special Data Dissemination Standard Plus

Ms. Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, today welcomed the announcement by nine countries to formally commit to higher standards of economic and financial statistical data by adhering to the institution's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) Plus – the highest tier of the Fund's Data Standards Initiatives. "The Fund welcomes the support that this first cluster of countries has shown toward the institution's Data Standards Initiatives, and looks forward to other countries joining them soon," Ms. Lagarde said, addressing the Second IMF Statistical Forum in Washington, D.C.

Over the next 90 days, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United States will disseminate more comprehensive and internationally comparable data that will foster deeper understanding of risks in the financial sector, cross-border-financial linkages, and vulnerabilities of their economies to shocks.

With this action, the authorities in all these countries have reiterated a strong commitment to transparency. Sveriges Riksbank Governor Stefan Ingves said: "Adhering to SDDS Plus is in line with Sweden's views on openness and transparency, as well as the importance of good quality statistics that are internationally comparable. The fact that Sweden is a country with a large financial sector makes it natural for us to follow the IMF's recommendation for systemically-important countries to adhere to SDDS Plus."



The announcement marks the formal launch of the SDDS Plus that was established in 2012 to reinforce and supplement the Fund's Data Standards Initiatives. It builds on the SDDS and its purpose is to assist member countries with regard to the publication of comprehensive, timely, accessible, and reliable economic and financial statistical data in a world of continuing economic and financial integration.

The Data Standards Initiatives were established in the mid-1990s to enhance member countries' data transparency and to promote the development of sound statistical systems. The need for data standards was highlighted by the financial crises of the mid-1990s and again in the late-2000s, when information deficiencies were seen to play a role. The Data Standards Initiatives also include the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) and the General Data Dissemination System (GDDS).

Detailed information on the Data Standards Initiatives can be found on the Dissemination Standards Bulletin Board at [www.dsbb.imf.org](http://www.dsbb.imf.org).





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