



The descriptions of the topics

The Steering Committee of the Wiesbaden Group has identified topics of interest for the 29th meeting to be held in South Africa, on which contributions are encouraged for submission. These topics of interest are grouped in “Thematic areas”.

The Programme for the meeting will be organised in sessions around these “Thematic areas” and are as follows:

- Modernising the Statistical Business Register
- Globalisation and Profiling of Multinational Enterprises
- Enhancing Data Quality and Coverage including the informal economy
- Using Statistical Business Register to produce business statistics
- Geospatial, Social and Environmental Data
- New Data Sources and tools, Big Data and AI including the Digital Economy
- Classification
- Unique Identifier for Businesses
- African Group:
 - Governance and Maintenance
 - Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing
 - Ethical and Legal Considerations in Data Use

The topics and descriptions are following on the next pages. Please see “Call for papers” for submission guidelines (also included here after the topics and description).



1. Modernising the Statistical Business Register (SBR) - Session leader: Bastiaan Rooijakkers

As a cornerstone for generating economic statistics, the Statistical Business Register (SBR) plays an indispensable role in several critical areas:

- It drives the modernization of statistical production processes, including the adoption of Information Technology (IT).
- It facilitates the coordination and integration/validation of data from diverse sources.
- It supports the development of efficient statistical production methods while ensuring coherence across various outputs.

To keep pace with evolving economic landscapes, such as the digital economy, platform businesses, and green industries, ongoing adaptations to statistical units and industry classifications—like ISIC, SIC, and NACE—are essential. These adjustments are vital for accurately reflecting new sectors within our economic framework.

Discussions around this topic could focus on:

- Experiences from different countries in developing integrated statistical production systems and overcoming challenges related to using the SBR for analysis and data integration.
- The creation of business architecture aimed at enhancing production efficiency and the consistency of statistical products.
- Quality management frameworks that ensure high standards across all stages of the statistical process.
- Microdata sharing practices both within and between statistical offices.
- Best practices for linking microdata effectively to improve overall data quality and usability.
- Technical and statistical standardization efforts specifically tailored for SBRs.
- Cost-benefit analyses that help decision-makers understand the financial implications of modernizing their systems.
- Integration strategies for incorporating SBR into advanced data warehouse systems.
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It is also crucial to share insights on the investments, skills development, cultural shifts, and efficiency improvements achieved through resource reallocation during the modernization process. This knowledge exchange can provide valuable lessons learned and best practices that benefit all stakeholders involved in statistical business registers.



Additionally, papers and presentations should address:

- Strengthening international partnerships to foster greater collaboration among national statistical offices.
- Promoting standardized approaches to ensure uniformity and comparability across different regions or countries.
- Developing training programs and resource materials designed to equip SBR staff with the necessary skills for managing modernised systems and utilising advanced analytical tools, thereby addressing any IT deficits that may exist.

By collectively focusing on these areas, we can continue to advance the SBR as a vital tool in contemporary economic statistics.

An abstract of your paper should be submitted to the session leader (b.rooijackers@cbs.nl) and to the organisers (Wiesbaden2025RSA@statssa.gov.za) by 8 August 2025.



2. Globalisation and Profiling of Multinational Enterprises - Session leader: Enrica Morganti

Economic globalisation is a major challenge for economic statistics. It is accompanied by the development of global production arrangements and increasingly complex enterprise group structures, where the challenge of the SBR is to collect and provide coherent and relevant information in a continuously changing world.

Address the growing complexity of multinational business structures and how to adapt profiling techniques, considering cross-border economic activities and supply chains.

Papers and presentations for this topic are invited to discuss issues such as the requirements for the SBR to deal with economic globalisation;

Papers could attempt to address the following areas:

- are current statistical units adequate for measuring still growing global production arrangements and globalisation effects;
- linkages of enterprises across borders and their foreign affiliates;
- the recording of MNEs in SBRs;
- profiling of multinational enterprise groups;
- introducing new variables on globalisation and deriving indicators on the economic impact of globalisation.

Papers could also consider:

- exploring the areas of establishing of a "Large Case Unit" - plans, challenges and experience
 - development of apps for respondents (profiling)
- alignment with the international statistical standards (e.g. System of National Accounts and Balance of Payments)

An abstract of your paper should be submitted to the session leader (enrica.morganti@ec.europa.eu) and to the organisers (Wiesbaden2025RSA@statssa.gov.za) by 8 August 2025.

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3. Enhancing Data Quality and Coverage - Session leader: Andrew Allen

Explore innovative methods to improve accuracy, completeness, and timeliness of business register data including the use of alternative data sources.

Administrative registers give access to detailed information that can be used to improve the coverage and quality of the SBR and reduce response burden. The challenges in using administrative data include issues with coverage and definitions, which may not be in line with the statistical requirements, timeliness and in some instances confidentiality.

Papers and presentations on this topic could share experiences on using administrative data sources, including:

- how to establish good cooperation with the owners of administrative data/access to data;
 - how to derive statistical units based on administrative/legal units;
 - how to match and link information across registers/data sources;
 - how to deal with conflicting information;
 - how to assess the quality of administrative data for statistical purposes;
- metadata management; and legal and confidentiality issues.

Papers and presentations could also consider integration of data sources with the aim to improve coverage of the SBR: "Green" businesses, micro businesses, NPISHs, Government.

An abstract of your paper should be submitted to the session leader (Andrew.allen@ons.gov.uk) and to the organisers (Wiesbaden2025RSA@statssa.gov.za) by 8 August 2025.

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4. Informal economy - Session leader: Andrew Allen

Addressing the coverage problems due to informal sector is an existing gap that remains to be addressed, in particular for developing and the least developed countries.

Papers and country experiences received can contribute to the discussion in this area. How to account for the informal economy in the SBR – country experience on the treatment of the informal economy in the SBR.

An abstract of your paper should be submitted to the session leader (Andrew.allen@ons.gov.uk) and to the organisers (Wiesbaden2025RSA@statssa.gov.za) by 8 August 2025.

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5. Using Statistical Business Register (SBR) to produce business statistics

Business demography and entrepreneurship statistics are well known topics for statistical output produced directly from the SBR.

Combining information from the SBR with information from surveys or administrative sources offers a far wider range to make use of the SBR for the production of statistics.

Key assets of the SBR to this type of work are the availability of suitable identifiers across data sources and longitudinal information.

Presentations of interest for this topic should include practical experiences in producing business statistics based on the SBR. Also examples of synergised strengths with social and/or population data and combining SBR data with data from domain statistics like trade or foreign direct investment data are welcome. The necessary prerequisites in SBR maintenance could be illuminated on which to build on statistical output. Basics in SBR data infrastructure could be illustrated such as availability of a multitude of identifiers, SBR data models for different statistical units, practical approaches to identify demographic events of statistical units, data structures for longitudinal analyses.

An abstract of your paper should be submitted to the organisers (Wiesbaden2025RSA@statssa.gov.za) by 8 August 2025.

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6. Geospatial, social and Environmental Data - Session leader: Susana Pérez Cadena

Exploring the role of geospatial analytics, social and environmental data in business registers to assess economic activities' sustainability, on several dimensions including social and environmental impact.

Papers and presentations for this topic are invited to discuss the integration of geospatial tools, social (e.g. gender) and environmental data in order to broaden the scope of SBRs.

Issues to discuss could include:

Country practises to integrate geospatial information in the SBR e.g. linking the SBR with the address register, incorporating XY- coordinates into the SBR.

- Business cases for the integration of geospatial, social and environmental information in the statistical business registers
- Experiences in recording the geospatial and environmental characteristics of the business units in the statistical business registers and their potential uses
- Linking statistical business registers with registers of dwellings and buildings, agricultural registers, and statistical registers of the environmental domains
- The challenges in incorporating additional dimensions in SBRs
- The use of statistical business registers for the compilation of official statistics in the social, environmental and cross-cutting statistical domains

An abstract of your paper should be submitted to the session leader (Susana.perez@inegi.org.mx) and to the organisers (Wiesbaden2025RSA@statssa.gov.za) by 8 August 2025.

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7. New Big Data Sources, AI Tools and the Digital Economy - Session leader: Annabelle Mourougane

While there is still little practical experience in using (unstructured) big data for the SBR, big data constitute potential useful sources to enrich SBR, by either adding additional information or helping the validation. The rapid development of AI tools (including Large Language Models) also opens up opportunities to modernise the construction of SBRs and enlarge its scope but is not without challenges. In addition to getting access, structuring and editing the data may require substantial investment both in terms of skills and infrastructure, yet be worthwhile to enhance quality, coverage or timeliness.

One aspect that could be examined during the session would be how SBRs can provide information on the continuing digitalisation impacts on production and trade, which have been priority areas in the 2025 SNA and BPM7. New terms such as, platform work, telework, digital trade and the gig economy have been coined to catch different aspects of digitalisation. The use of big data and AI techniques to develop SBRs along different domains is also welcome.

This session could consider papers and presentations that share experiences or plans of using big data including, e.g. cell phone applications, web pages, telecommunication data, satellite images, news or other textual information and social media data are welcome. Experiences using AI tools, will also be welcome.

Issues to discuss could include:

- experiences on the use of new data sources to supplement or validate existing data sources;
- methods and technologies (e.g. web scraping, large language models) to utilise new digital data sources;
- representativeness of big data;
- the use of big data to derive new statistical products;
- use of transactional data from privately held data sources - plans & challenges;
- IT and skill requirements to make the most of big data;
- how to identify and record digital economy business units in the SBR;
- how the SBR can assist to get a better grasp of the digital economy; and
- how the SBR can assist to disentangle (separate) domestic versus external firm activities.

Papers and presentations could also address opportunities and challenges of leveraging unconventional data sources for statistical purposes, balancing innovation with data privacy and ethical concerns.

An abstract of your paper should be submitted to the session leader (annabelle.mourougane@oecd.org) and to the organisers (Wiesbaden2025RSA@statssa.gov.za) by 8 August 2025.

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8. Digital Economy and the Statistical Business Register (SBR) - Session leader: Annabelle Mourougane

NB: Please take note that this session is now incorporated into session 7 above.

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9. Classification - Session leader: TBC

International Statistical frameworks, adaptation/adoption to national circumstances - Implementation of ISIC Rev. 5 / NACE Rev 2.1

Papers and presentations on this topic may discuss:

- challenges with the identification and classification of statistical units, in particular those that pose measurement challenges, such as special purpose entities and factoryless goods producers.
- share experiences on the utilisation of AI based tools to identify and classify units.
- share plans and strategies for the implementation of the revised economic activity classification (ISIC and NACE), including the use of new technologies and methods for automatic classification, including the implementation of ICSE-18 (International Classification of Status in Employment).

An abstract of your paper should be submitted to the organisers (Wiesbaden2025RSA@statssa.gov.za) by 8 August 2025.

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10. Unique identifiers for Businesses - Session leader: Emilian Karugendo

The inclusion of unique identifiers for businesses in statistical business registers is crucial for linking administrative data sources, improving data quality, and enabling more comprehensive analyses of business activities and trends; however, the lack of a unique identifiers of businesses in many countries poses a significant challenge, hindering the full utilisation of administrative data and its interoperability.

The Global Initiative on Unique Identifiers for Businesses (GIUIB), mandated by the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2023, aims to improve the availability and use of national and global unique business identifiers in business registers, enhancing the access, sharing, and interoperability of administrative business information and their use for the creation and maintenance of Statistical Business Registers (SBRs) and thereby promoting transparency in domestic and cross-border business activities. This session aims to collect country experiences on the implementation of unique identifiers for businesses. Papers and presentations on this topic could cover the following issues:

- Operational and methodological steps for the integration of the unique identifier in the statistical business registers
- Political and legislative barriers for the adoption of unique identifiers for businesses in countries
- Practical use cases on the use unique business identifiers to facilitate access to and sharing of administrative data for the statistical business register
- Opportunity and challenges in the mapping of national unique identifiers to the global unique identifiers

An abstract of your paper should be submitted to the session leader (emilian.karugendo@nbs.go.tz) and to the organisers (Wiesbaden2025RSA@statssa.gov.za) by 8 August 2025.

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African Group - 31 October 2025

11. Governance and Maintenance

Compliance with international Statistical frameworks, collaboration with other stakeholders and resources and other challenges to ensure that SBRs are up to date.

Topics could include:

- coordination with other stakeholders of the classification frameworks;
- automated coding to classify units (both re-classification and new version of classification framework)
- how to balance declining resources (human & financial)
- staff complement to be re-trained in order to keep up with the latest technologies; and
- any experiences on how competition with other data providers are handled (what to look out for)

An abstract of your paper should be submitted to the organisers (Wiesbaden2025RSA@statssa.gov.za) by 8 August 2025.

12. Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing

Explore opportunities for international collaboration to harmonize standards, improve interoperability of business registers, and share best practices across regions.

Topics could include:

- possibility of developing of a common SBR module while keeping in mind capabilities of different NSOs. What are the minimum requirements of such a system?

Share experience on moving to the latest version of the classifications, e.g. ISIC.

An abstract of your paper should be submitted to the organisers (Wiesbaden2025RSA@statssa.gov.za) by 8 August 2025.



13. Ethical and Legal Considerations in Data Use

Address pressing issues related to the establishment and maintenance of an SBR

Topics could include:

Address pressing issues like data privacy, security, and ethics when integrating administrative, private sector, and big data into business registers.

An abstract of your paper should be submitted to the organisers (Wiesbaden2025RSA@statssa.gov.za) by 8 August 2025.

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Submission guidelines:

- Abstract: Submit an abstract of between 300 to 500 words.
- Format: Clearly state the format of your presentation (e.g. power point, Google slides).
- Title: Include a concise and descriptive title.
- Biography: Provide a brief autobiography of the presenter(s).

To note: based on the abstracts received, the session leaders and meeting organisers will select contributions for presentations.

Authors will be informed about the selection of abstracts for presentation. Please note that the duration of the presentations will be 15 minutes.

Submission process:

- Prepare Your Abstract: Ensure your abstract aligns with the submission guidelines.
- Submit via Microsoft Word: Use the provided abstract template on the meeting website to submit your abstract details.
- Submit your abstract by emailing it to both the session leader and Wiesbaden2025RSA@statssa.gov.za

The main deadlines for submitting contributions are:

- 8 August 2025 Abstract submission
- 15 August 2025 Notification of acceptance
- 22 August 2025 Presentation (draft)
- 26 September 2025 Final versions of presentations

For any clarification, please contact the meeting host at Wiesbaden2025RSA@statssa.gov.za

