

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is statistics?

Answer: Statistics are a form of numerical data where the objective is to quantify some aspect(s) of an individual, group or society. Statistics provide a wide variety of data that would normally be inaccessible to the person in need of data (due to the cost of collection, for example).

2. What are the two kinds of statistical data?

Answer: Official statistics refers to numerical data collected and published by Governments (for example, crime or marriage statistics). Non-official statistics refers to numerical data collected and published by a variety of public and private organizations (The Rowntree Foundation, for example, publishes statistics on poverty).

3. What is the use of official statistics?

Answer: Official statistics are statistics published by government agencies or other public bodies such as international organizations. They provide quantitative or qualitative information on all major areas of citizens' lives, such as economic and social development, living conditions, health, education, and the environment.

4. Who are the users of statistical data?

Answer: There are three types of users: those with a general interest, business interest or research interest. Each of these user groups has different needs for statistical information.

5. What are the two sources of data for statistics?

Answer: Primary, or "statistical" sources are data that are collected primarily for creating official statistics, and include statistical surveys and censuses. Secondary, or "non-statistical" sources, are data that have been primarily collected for some other purpose (administrative data, private sector data etc.).

6. What is a sample survey?

Answer: A statistical survey or a sample survey is an investigation about the characteristics of a phenomenon by means of collecting data from a sample of the population and estimating their characteristics through the systematic use of statistical methodology.

7. What is census?

Answer: A census is a complete enumeration of a population or groups at a point in time with respect to well-defined characteristics (population, production). Data are collected for a specific reference period. A census should be taken at regular

intervals in order to have comparable information available. Therefore, most statistical censuses are conducted every 5 or 10 years.

8. How is the register used as a source of data?

Answer: A register is a database that is updated continuously for a specific purpose and from which statistics can be collected and produced. It contains information on a complete group of units.

9. What is MOSPI?

Answer: The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) is the nodal agency for planning and facilitating the integrated development of the statistical system in the country. The Ministry has two wings viz. National Statistical Organization (NSO), commonly called 'Statistics Wing' and the 'Programme Implementation (PI) Wing'.

10. What is the objective of National Sample Survey?

Answer: The objective of NSS is obtaining comprehensive and continuing information relating to social, economic, demographic, industrial and agricultural statistics through sample surveys on countrywide basis.

11. What are the four divisions of National Sample Survey?

Answer: The NSSO has four Divisions namely, Survey Design & Research Division (SDRD), Data Processing Division (DPD), Field Operations Division (FOD) and Coordination & Publication Division (CPD) to carry out different responsibilities.

12. What is National Statistics Commission?

Answer: The National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) functions under the overall direction of National Statistical Commission (NSC). The National Statistical Commission has the requisite independence and autonomy of decision making in the collection; processing and the publication of NSS data.

13. What data do Annual Survey Industries provide?

Answer: The ASI provides data on various vital aspects of the registered manufacturing sector for use in the estimation of national income, studies of industrial structure and policy formulation. It generates data on input, output, employment, wage bill, capital formation etc., on an annual basis.

14. What is Central Statistics Organisation?

Answer: CSO is the principal data collecting, processing and disseminating agency responsible for coordinating, monitoring and supervising the National Statistical System.

15. What is the responsibility of Central Statistics Organisation?

Answer: The Central Statistics Office is responsible for coordination of statistical activities in the country, and evolving and maintaining statistical standards.