

Asia-Pacific Regional Programme for Economic Statistics – Screening Tool¹

Summary of Results – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Turkey

One of the first activities of the Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific (RPES)² was to conduct a Capacity Screening of national statistical systems with the objective of providing a baseline for the implementation of the Core Set of Economic Statistics, which provides the substantive framework for the Regional Programme.³

The Steering Group for the Regional Programme on Economic Statistics developed a questionnaire for members of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), which was responded to by 49 countries, including the eight countries above, by May 2013.

This note is prepared by ESCAP to provide a summary of the Capacity Screening results for the countries participating in the Workshop on the Implementation and Links between the System of National Accounts 2008 and the Government Finance Statistics Manual on 20-22 November 2013 in Istanbul, Turkey.

List of countries

Low-income	Lower middle-income	Upper middle-income
Tajikistan	Armenia	Azerbaijan
	Georgia	Kazakhstan
	Mongolia	Russian Federation
		Turkey

Details of these income-groupings are based on World Bank classification using 2011 GNI per capita.

The Capacity Screening questionnaire has five sections: technical cooperation, institutional setting, IT and human resources, (statistical) infrastructure, and the Core Set of economic statistics for which the results are given below.

¹ For the “Report on the Region-wide Capacity Screening of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific” please see <http://www.unescap.org/stat/econ/SGRPES-Oct2013/Summary-of-Results.pdf>

² E/ESCAP/CST(2)/5. Available at <http://www.unescap.org/stat/cst/2/CST2-5E.pdf>

³ E/ESCAP/CST(2)/4. Available at <http://www.unescap.org/stat/cst/2/CST2-4E.pdf>

Section 1: Technical Cooperation

	Table 1: RPES Technical Cooperation	Yes	No	Blank
1.1	Currently involved in international technical cooperation projects and programmes aimed at building capacity for economic statistics.	7	0	1
1.2	Interested in participating in Regional Programme on Economic Statistics (RPES) as a provider of technical assistance to other national statistical systems.	5	2	1
1.3	Interested in participating in Regional Programme on Economic Statistics (RPES) as a recipient of technical assistance from other national statistical systems and international agencies.	6	1	1

Russian Federation left questions 1.1 to 1.3 blank. Azerbaijan replied “No” to both questions 1.2 and 1.3 while Georgia replied “No” to question 1.2.

Section 2: Institutional Setting

The first of the five components of Section 2, statistical legislation, is summarized in Table 2.

	Table 2: Statistical Legislation	Yes	No	Blank
2.1.1	Existence of a Statistical law indicating distribution of responsibilities for producing official statistics. (If no law, skip to 2.2)	8	0	0
2.1.2	Law/regulation to protect confidentiality of respondent's information and ensure that data are used for statistical purposes only.	8	0	0
2.1.3	Law/regulation requires transparent statistical system, meaning that terms, conditions and methodologies of official statistical producers are made public.	8	0	0
2.1.4	There are current/ongoing plans to modify legislation that governs the statistical system.	6	1	1
2.1.5	Statistical law protects the independence of official statistics from political influence.	7	0	1

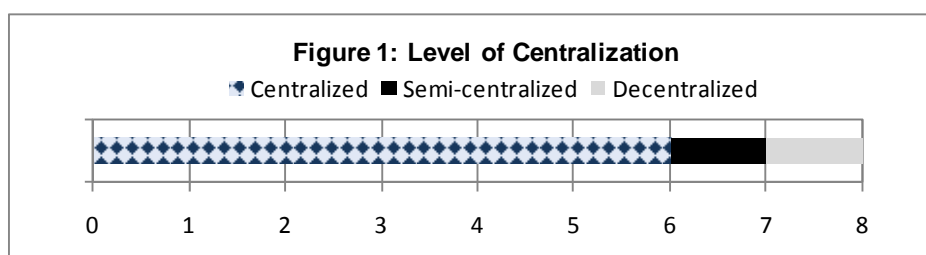
Turkey replied “No” to question 2.1.4 and Kazakhstan left this question blank. Mongolia left question 2.1.5 blank.

Sub-section 2.2, strategic planning, begins with a question about the status of statistical strategic planning. All these eight countries have their **NSDS being implemented**.

Table 3: Strategic Planning		Yes	No	Blank
2.2.2	National strategic plan/NSDS available on public website.	8	0	0
2.2.3	<i>Statistical strategic plan or NSDS covers/includes:</i>			
2.2.3.1	Issues relating to co-ordination across the NSS	8	0	0
2.2.3.2	Government support (and the need for improved advocacy)	8	0	0
2.2.3.3	Adequacy of existing statistical legislation	7	0	1
2.2.3.4	Detailed action plan (including specific activities, responsibilities, timelines) and cost and funding sources for proposed activities	7	1	0
2.2.3.5	Monitoring and review process	8	0	0

Armenia left question 2.2.3.3 blank. Georgia replied “No” to question 2.2.3.4.

In sub-section 2.3, six countries reported a centralized statistical system, Turkey reported a semi-centralized system while Tajikistan reported a decentralized statistical system.⁴



Responses to the follow-up questions in 2.3 are given in Table 4. Azerbaijan replied “No” to both questions 2.3.2 and 2.3.3 while Russian Federation left 2.3.3 blank.

Table 4: National Statistical Coordination		Yes	No	Blank
2.3.2	The distribution of responsibility among agencies for producing the Core Set of economic statistics is clearly specified	7	1	0
2.3.3	Plans are currently being implemented or are under development to improve coordination of production of economic statistics	7	1	1

The remainder of Section 2 was a series of Yes/No questions regarding dissemination and advocacy, displayed in Table 5. Russian Federation left all four questions 2.5.1-2.5.4 blank.

⁴ “Centralized” means that all indicators are compiled by the NSO, with BoP compiled by the Central Bank. “Semi-centralized” means that most indicators are compiled by the NSO, BoP by Central Bank, and some indicators are compiled by other agencies, while “Decentralized” means that some are compiled by the NSO, BoP by Central Bank, and some by other agencies.

Table 5: Dissemination and Advocacy		Yes	No	Blank
2.4.1	Publication policies are in place and available to users and staff	8	0	0
2.4.2	Contact points for each subject/statistical domain are publicized	8	0	0
2.4.3	Catalogues of publications, documents, and other services, including information on any charges, are publically available	8	0	0
2.4.4	Information on how to receive assistance understanding/interpreting data from producing agencies are publicised for users	8	0	0
2.5.1	There are current/ongoing activities to improve awareness and use of economic statistics from official sources within countries	7	0	1
2.5.2	There are current/ongoing activities in country to build analytical/research capacities, develop data analysis methodologies, and increase utilization of official data	7	0	1
2.5.3	There is sufficient awareness, knowledge and appreciation among users/potential users of the relevance of official statistics for economic policy	7	0	1
2.5.4	Seminars or other regular opportunities for communication with users are organized by producers of economic statistics	7	0	1

Section 3: IT and Human Resources

The first question of Section 3 asked whether each country's IT systems were adequate for producing the Core Set. Seven countries replied "Yes" and only Armenia replied "No." The next question asked for the number of staff in the agency that worked on the economic statistics. Georgia and Mongolia reported 16 staff. Armenia reported 50 staff while Russian Federation reported 14782 staff. See Figure 2.⁵

Armenia, Georgia and Mongolia reported "No" to question 3.2.2 in Table 6 below. Georgia replied "No" to question 3.2.4 and Mongolia replied "No" to question 3.2.5.

Table 6: Human Resources		Yes	No	Blank
3.2.2	Human resources are adequate for producing and disseminating the Core Set of Economic Statistics	5	3	0
3.2.3	Skills need / assessment recently conducted within your agency	8	0	0
3.2.4	Staff manuals/guidelines available on statistical processes for internal use	7	1	0
3.2.5	Internal processes (e.g. data editing, metadata documentation, etc.) are documented for internal use and reference by new staff	7	1	0

⁵ Some countries have provided the overall number of staff due to the difficulty of delineating exactly how many staff members work on economic statistics.

Section 4: Infrastructure

The fourth section is made up of 12 sub-sections.

In sub-section 4.1 countries were asked if they use a quality assessment framework (QAF). Six countries responded “Yes” to question 4.1.1 while Mongolia and Turkey responded that a QAF is not available and not used to monitor quality of economic statistics outputs in their respective countries. Both countries currently have plans for implementing a QAF.

Sub-section 4.2 summarizes the Metadata Repository information in Table 9. Russian Federation left question 4.2.1, 4.2.3 and 4.2.4 blank. Georgia replied “No” to question 4.2.1 and similarly with Kazakhstan replied “No” to question 4.2.2. Only Kazakhstan replied “No” to question 4.2.3. Georgia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Tajikistan replied “No” to question 4.2.4.

Table 7: Metadata Repository		Yes	No	Blank
4.2.1	Statistical releases accompanied with comprehensive metadata (source information, relevant accompanying notes and disclaimers for users, etc.)	6	1	1
4.2.2	Centralized national metadata repository available	6	2	0
4.2.3	Metadata format standard implemented	6	1	1
4.2.4	Metadata quality standard implemented	3	4	1

In the first part of sub-section 4.3, all eight countries reported that they have centralized business registers.

Out of the eight countries, only Tajikistan left sub-section 4.3.4 blank. Three countries – Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Turkey use ISIC Rev. 4 to classify units in the business register. Armenia, Azerbaijan use NACE Rev. 2 and Russian Federation uses NACE Rev. 1.1. Georgia uses NACE but did not specify the version.

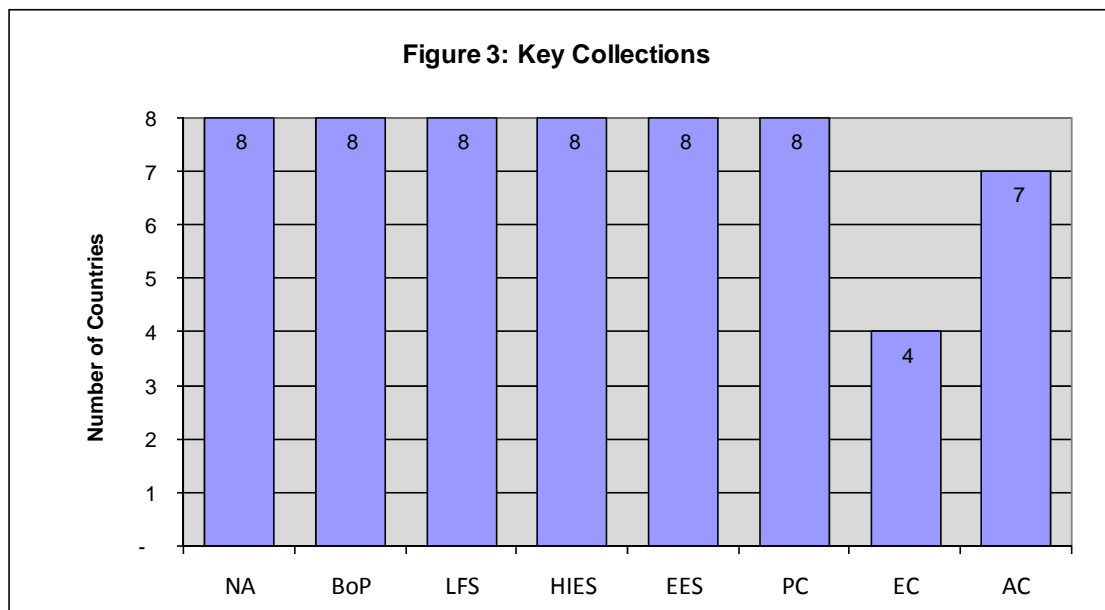
Table 8 summarized responses to sub-section 4.3.3. Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Mongolia indicated that the use business register is not shared among agencies in the national statistical systems. Russian Federation omitted questions 4.3.5 and 4.3.6. Armenia replied “No” to both those questions.

Table 8: Business Registers, Births and Deaths		Yes	No	Blank
4.3.3	Use of business register shared by a number of agencies in the national statistical system	4	4	0
4.3.5	Established method for identifying 'births' (new businesses)	6	1	1
4.3.6	Established method for identifying 'deaths' (disbanded businesses or mergers)	6	1	1

Sub-section 4.4 responses are summarized in Table 9. Armenia and Russian Federation replied “No” to question 4.4.1. Kazakhstan and Turkey replied “No” to question 4.4.2 while Mongolia, Russian Federation and Tajikistan left it blank.

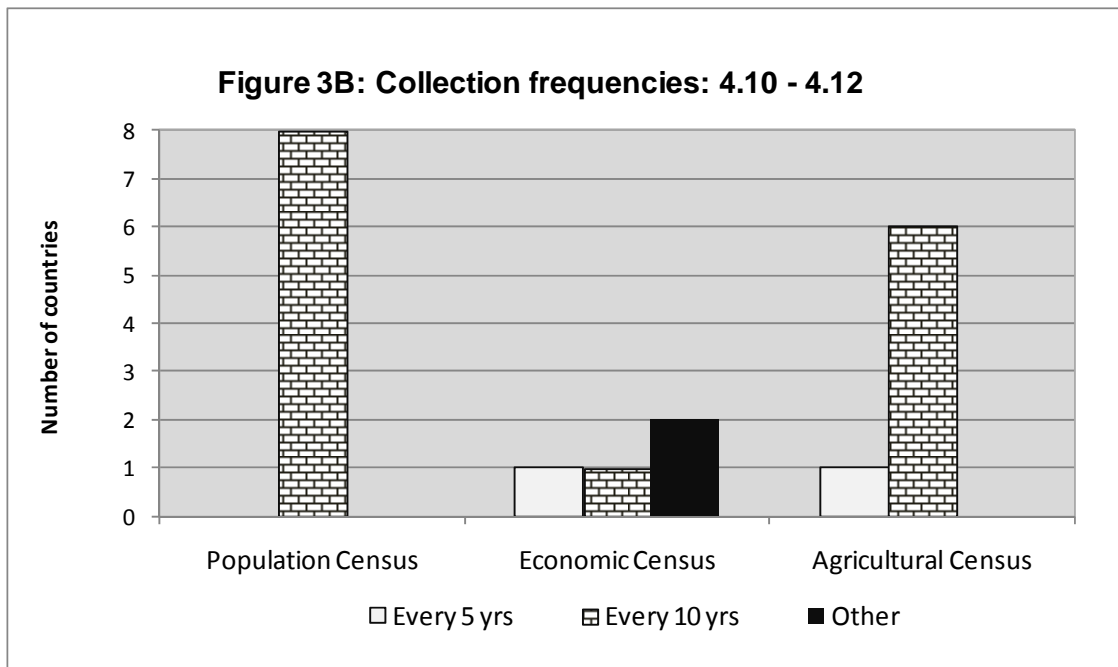
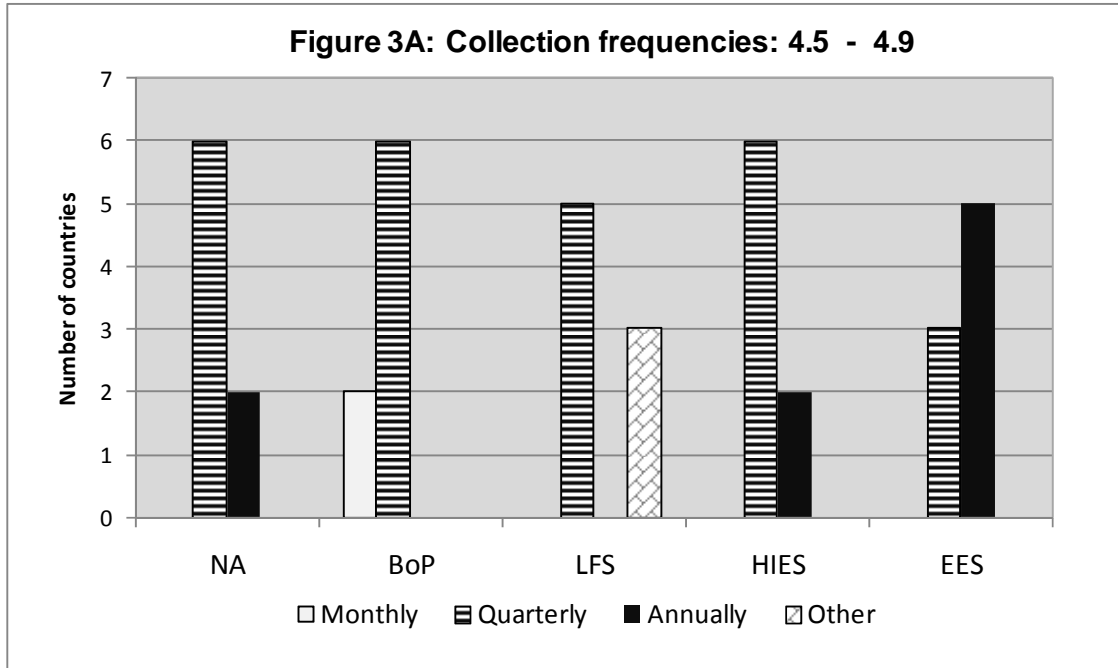
Table 9: Other Statistical Infrastructure		Yes	No	Blank
4.4.1	Documented general guidelines available for survey sampling design	5	2	1
4.4.2	Design of key data collections include method to estimate the non-observed economy, including informal economy and informal employment	3	2	3
4.4.3	Participant in ICP Programme (for calculating PPPs)	8	0	0

Sub-sections 4.5 through 4.12 are a series of key collections in which respondents were first asked to indicate if they report the specified collection, then a series of follow-up questions were administered in each sub-section regarding standards followed, frequency of collections, and timeliness of reporting. Figure 3 gives the number of countries in the sub-region that collect data. Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Russian Federation replied “No” to the question on economic census. Only Armenia indicated that agricultural census has not been conducted in the country.

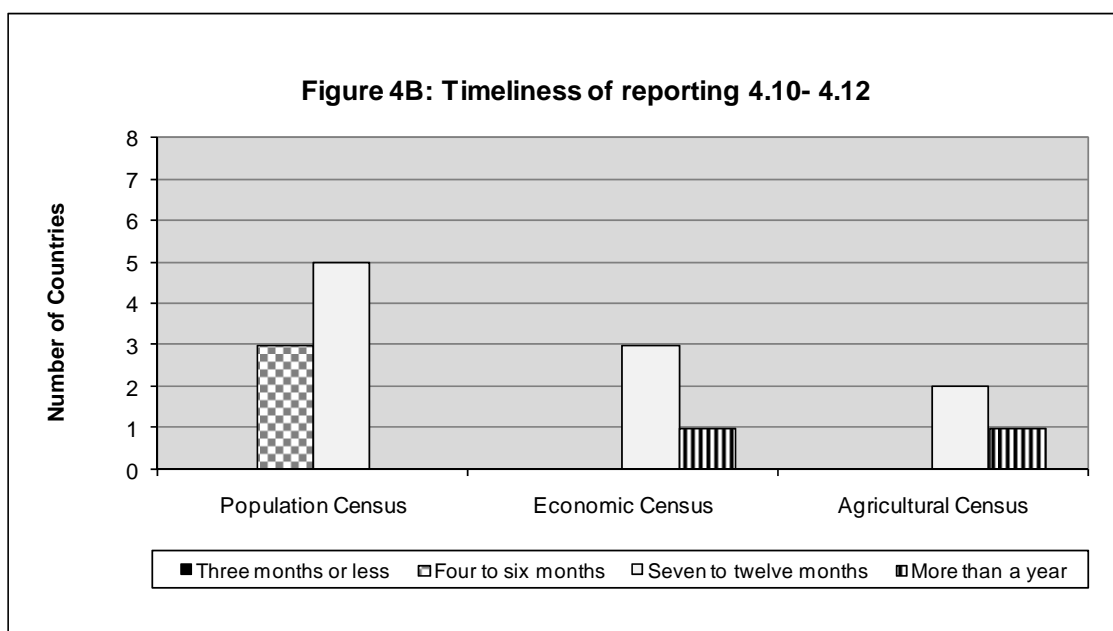
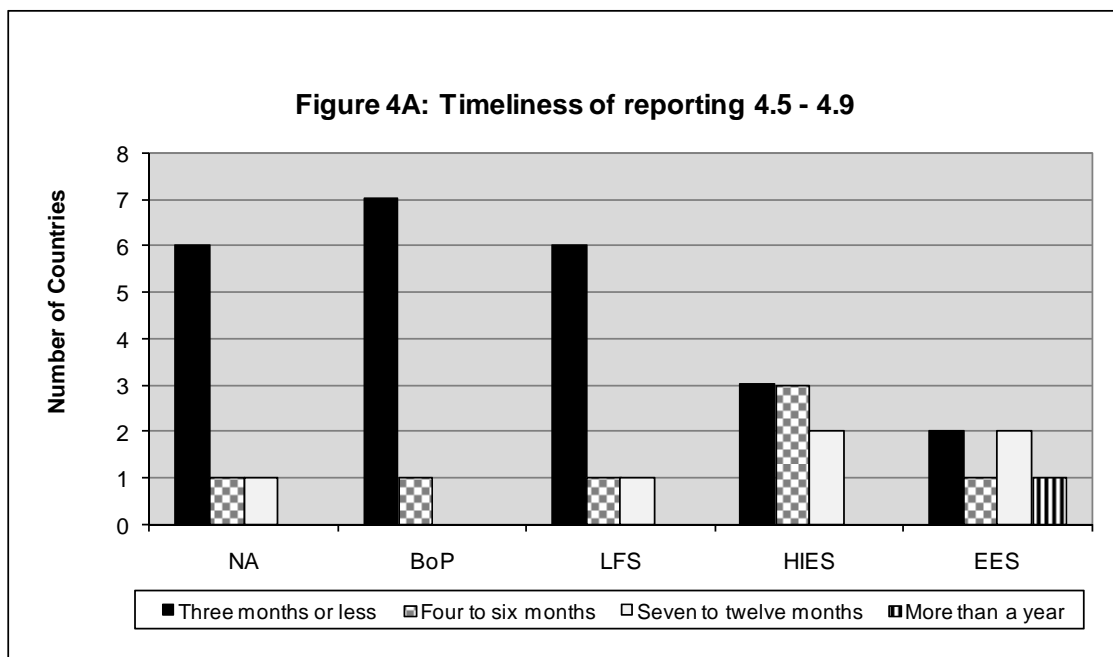


NA = National Accounts, BoP = Balance of Payments, LFS = Labour Force Survey, HIES = Household Income and Expenditure Survey, EES = Enterprise/Establishment Survey, PC = Population Census, EC = Economic Census, AC = Agricultural Census

Figures 3A and 3B summarize the frequencies of collection for each item from Figure 3.



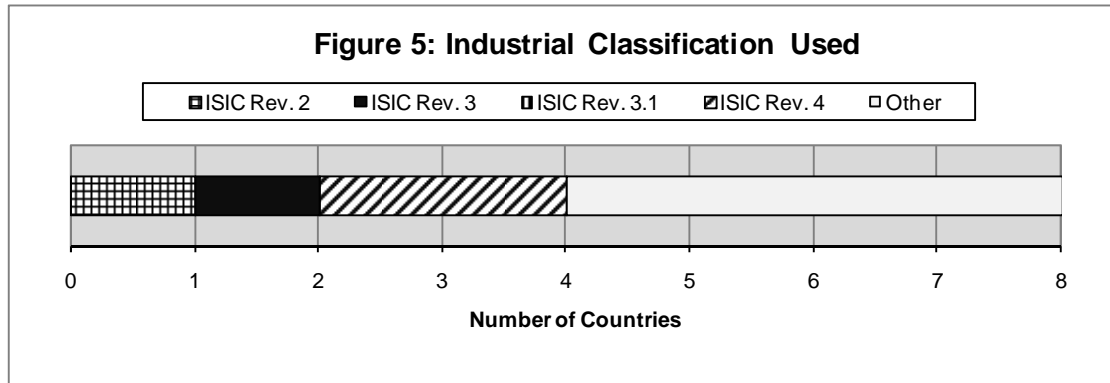
Figures 4A and 4B summarize the timeliness of reporting (in months) for each key collection.



Sub-section 4.5 elaborates on national accounts inquiries. All eight countries reported the use of **1993 SNA** and all have also indicated that there are plans to update to 2008 SNA.

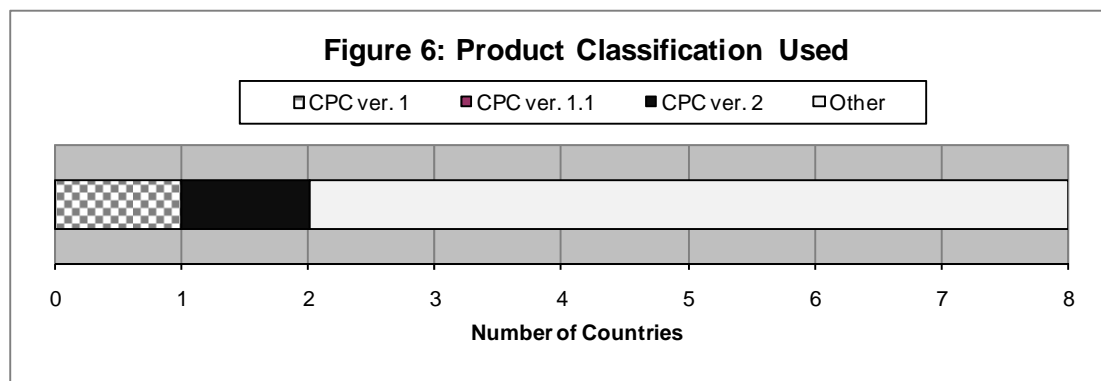
Next, countries were asked to specify which industrial classifications they use in their national accounts compilation. Four countries reported “Others”; Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan are both using NACE Rev. 2. On the other hand, Georgia and the Russian

Federation are both using NACE Rev. 1.1 and both countries have plans to update to ISIC Rev. 4. Tajikistan and Turkey use ISIC Rev. 2 and ISIC Rev. 3, respectively.⁶



For product classification in national accounts, six countries reported “Others”; Armenia is using CPC Rev. 2, Georgia is using CPC 1996, Russian Federation is using CPA 2002 while Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan are both using CPA 2008. Tajikistan indicated that a product classification system used was designed by CIS.

Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Turkey have indicated plans to update to CPC ver. 2.



Remaining classifications in sub-section 4.5 are summarized in Table 10. Russian Federation and Tajikistan replied “No” to question 4.5.10.

Table 10: Other Statistical Infrastructure		Yes	No	Blank
4.5.9	Classification of individual consumption by purpose (COICOP)?	8	0	0
4.5.10	Classification of Functions of Government (COFOG)?	6	2	0

⁶ Only Turkey uses different industrial classifications in the business register and national accounts compilation.

Section 5: Core Set

In the Core Set, a set of thirty-one indicators are listed and each country was asked to specify the frequency of collection for each item.

Tables 11 through 14 summarize which countries meet the recommended frequency by the Regional Programme, which do not meet the recommended frequency, and which indicated ad-hoc collection or do not have the indicators available (N/A). The codes for each column are as follows: M = number of countries meeting or exceeding the recommended frequency; B = number of countries regularly collecting the indicator but at a rate below the recommended frequency; A = number of countries reporting ad-hoc collection; O = number of countries reporting other rates of collection; U = number of countries reporting that the item is unavailable; X = number of countries leaving responses blank.

Table 11: Prices and Costs	Recommended frequency	M	B	A	U	X
Consumer price index (CPI)	Quarterly	8	0	0	0	0
Producer price index (PPI)	Quarterly	8	0	0	0	0
Commodity price index	Monthly	2	0	0	3	3
External merchandise trade price indices	Monthly	4	0	0	3	1
Wages / Earnings data	Quarterly	7	1	0	0	0
Labour costs index / Wage index	Quarterly	4	1	0	0	3

Table 12: Demand and Output	Recommended frequency	M	B	A	O	U	X
GDP (Production)	Quarterly	8	0	0	0	0	0
GDP (Expenditure)	Quarterly	6	2	0	0	0	0
External Trade – Merchandise	Monthly	8	0	0	0	0	0
External Trade – Services	Quarterly	7	1	0	0	0	0
Short-term Indicators – Industry Output	Quarterly	6	0	1	0	0	1
Short-term Indicators – Services Output	Quarterly	4	0	1	0	1	2
Short-term Indicators – Consumer Demand	Quarterly	2	0	2	0	2	2
Short-term Indicators – Fixed Investment	Quarterly	6	0	1	0	0	1
Short-term Indicators – Inventories	Quarterly	3	0	1	0	2	1
Economy structure statistics	Every 5 years	7	0	0	0	0	1
Productivity	Annually	6	0	0	0	0	2

Table 13: Income and Wealth	Recommended frequency	M	B	A	O	U	X
Integrated National Accounts	Annually	7	0	0	0	0	1
Institutional Sector Accounts	Annually	5	0	1	0	2	0
Balance of Payments (BOP)	Quarterly	8	0	0	0	0	0
International Investment Position (IIP)	Annually	7	0	0	0	1	0
External debt	Quarterly	6	0	0	1	0	1
Income distribution	Every 5 years	6	0	1	0	0	1

Table 14: Money, Labour, Government and Natural Resources	Recommended frequency	M	B	A	U	X
Assets/liabilities of depository corporations	Monthly	4	1	0	0	3
Broad money and credit aggregates	Monthly	4	2	0	0	2
Interest rate statistics	Monthly	6	1	0	0	1
General government operations	Quarterly	7	1	0	0	0
General government debt	Quarterly	7	1	0	0	0
Labour supply and demand	Annually	6	0	1	1	0
Hours worked	Quarterly	7	0	0	1	0
Natural resources	Annually	1	0	1	4	2