**Note on the data sources for calculating the scale of assessments**

1. **Introduction**
2. The Statistics Division collects data on national accounts, external debt, population and exchange rates, which are required for calculating the scale of assessments for the contributions of Member States to the regular budget of the United Nations.
3. This note provides an overview of the sources of the data that are used for calculating the scale of assessments according to the methodology applied for the 2013-2015 scale.
4. **National Accounts data**
5. The estimates of annual national accounts data are obtained primarily from individual country submissions of the United Nations national accounts questionnaire (NAQ) to the Statistics Division. The NAQ is sent annually to the national statistical offices and/or institutions responsible for the dissemination of national accounts statistics (more information on the questionnaire is available at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/madt.asp?SB=1&#SBG>).
6. For Member States that do not reply, or reply only partially to the questionnaire, estimates are prepared by the Statistics Division to fill data gaps in order to complete the data set for each of the years required for calculating the relevant scale of assessments. These estimations are based on available information from other official sources, notably from the regional commissions of the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. In some cases, it is also necessary to include estimates prepared by the Statistics Division.
7. The Statistics Division disseminates the national accounts data in two separate databases. The official data submitted by Member States in national currency are disseminated in the *National Accounts Statistics, Main Aggregates and Detailed Tables* (MADT) database, available at: <http://data.un.org/Explorer.aspx?d=SNA>. The data updated to the most recent year, including the estimated values, are disseminated in the *National Accounts Statistics, Analysis of Main Aggregates* (AMA) database, available at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/snaama/Introduction.asp>. The data in national currency from this database are used in the scale calculations.
8. **Population estimates**
9. Midyear total population estimates are obtained from the *World Population Prospects* publications prepared by the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. These estimates are based on the most recently available data sources, such as censuses, demographic surveys, data from vital and population registers. With each new data collection, the time series of fertility, mortality and migration, as well as population trends by age and sex, can be extended and, if necessary, retrospectively corrected. For countries with respect to which there are deficient demographic data or a census or demographic survey has not been conducted in many years, the availability of new data can often lead to a reassessment of historical demographic trends. Further details on the methodology can be found in the publication *World Population Prospects, The 2012 Revision - Methodology of the United Nations Population Estimates and Projections*, available at: <http://esa.un.org/wpp/documentation/pdf/WPP2012_Methodology.pdf>.
10. **Exchange rates**
11. National accounts aggregates reported by Member States in national currencies are converted to United States dollars. As a general rule, the exchange rates used for the conversion of national currencies to United States dollars are annual averages of market exchange rates (MERs) as communicated to the IMF by the monetary authority of each Member State. These rates are published in the IMF publication *International Financial Statistics*, available at: <http://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/IMF041/21064-9781484364772/21064-9781484364772/21064-9781484364772.xml?rskey=PHpu2E&result=1>.
12. As used by the IMF, the term “market exchange rate”, or MERs, could refer to one of the three types of annual average rates:
* Market rates, determined largely by market forces;
* Official rates determined by Government authorities;
* Principal rates, for countries maintaining multiple exchange rate regimes.
1. For non-members of the IMF there are no MERs available and the rates used are average annual United Nations operational rates of exchange. These rates are established primarily for accounting purposes and applied to all official transactions of the United Nations with respect to those currencies. These rates may take the form of official, commercial or tourist rates of exchange and are available at: <http://treasury.un.org/operationalrates/OperationalRates.aspx>.
2. **External debt data**
3. Data on external debt stocks and principal repayments are obtained from the World Bank International Debt Statistics Database available at: <http://datatopics.worldbank.org/debt/ids/>.
4. The principal sources are reports submitted to the World Bank through it’s Debtor Reporting System by member countries that have received either International Bank for Reconstruction and Development loans or International Development Association credits. Total external debt stocks include public and publicly guaranteed long-term debt, private non-guaranteed long-term debt (country reported and estimated by the World Bank), the use of IMF credit, and estimated public and private short-term debt. Principal repayments are part of the total external debt flows (which also include disbursements, net flows and transfers on debt and interest payments) and consist of the amounts of principal (amortization) repaid in foreign currency. Interest payments/receipts on debt are already included as part of primary income, a component added to GDP to obtain GNI.