



United Nations
Office on Drugs and Crime



INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF CRIME FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES (ICCS): IMPLEMENTATION MANUAL



International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS):
Implementation Manual



United Nations
Office on Drugs and Crime

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Preface

In 2015, the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) and the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (UN-CCPCJ) endorsed the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS) in line with plans approved by UNSC in its decision 44/110 and by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2013/37. ICCS is the international standard for defining and classifying criminal offences when producing and disseminating statistical data on crime and criminal justice.

Since its adoption in 2015, the interest in aligning national crime statistics with ICCS has grown worldwide, assisted by awareness raising and technical assistance activities carried out by UNODC as well as other national and international stakeholders. Alignment with ICCS is vital for improving the availability of high-quality, comparable statistics on crime and criminal justice at the global level. A number of countries have already made substantial progress in setting up structures for ICCS implementation and in mapping their national crime categories or criminal codes into ICCS. These efforts to align national crime statistics with ICCS are starting to be reflected in more comparable data at the national, regional and global levels.

The present implementation manual is aimed at providing guidance to countries on their ICCS implementation journey. It draws from a decade of experience implementing ICCS around the world. The manual offers concrete steps to promote the uptake of ICCS, determine the scope of implementation, build a correspondence table and produce data in line with ICCS.

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1 Contents

Preface.....	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Reader guide.....	1
Part I: Understanding the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS) and the road map to its implementation	2
1 Introduction to ICCS.....	3
1.1 Rationale for the development of ICCS	3
1.2 ICCS development process.....	4
1.3 What is a statistical classification?.....	5
1.4 Benefits of ICCS	6
1.5 Structure of ICCS.....	10
2 Road map to ICCS implementation.....	14
2.1 Phase 1: Build the case.....	16
2.2 Phase 2: Assess and plan.....	21
2.3 Phase 3: Implement the national workplan.....	30
2.4 Phase 4: Manage the classification	35
Part II: Technical guidelines to ICCS implementation	37
3 Boundaries of ICCS	38
3.1 Criminalized versus non-criminalized acts.....	38
3.2 How ICCS approaches different national definitions of crime.....	38
3.3 National ICCS applicability	39
3.4 Boundaries of ICCS in the context of different legal systems	40
4 Building a correspondence table	43
4.1 Technical advice	43
4.1.1 ICCS hierarchy	44
4.1.2 Match types	45
4.1.3 ICCS mapping guidance	48
4.2 Step-by-step process.....	51
4.3 Correspondence table template	55
5 Disaggregating variables in ICCS	59
5.1 Overview of ICCS disaggregating variables	59
5.2 Benefits of disaggregating variables.....	63
5.3 Additional disaggregating variables in other statistical frameworks.....	66
5.4 Implementing disaggregating variables.....	67
6 Producing data in line with ICCS.....	70
6.1 Generating statistical outputs from aggregate or unit record data	70
6.2 Explaining the impact of ICCS implementation on existing statistics.....	71
6.3 Designing new statistical outputs and releasing statistics.....	74
6.4 Prioritizing key offences in national crime statistics.....	75
7 Counting rules for compiling statistics	78
7.1 Diverse counting rules	78
7.2 Preferred counting rules in UN-CTS.....	79
7.3 Towards the standardization of counting rules.....	81
Annex 1: Mapping selected United Nations Conventions into ICCS offence categories.....	83
Annex 2: Example of a correspondence table.....	85
Annex 3: Case Studies	87
Colombia: Process of adapting ICCS	87

Germany: Key role of correspondence tables	89
Italy: Experience of ICCS implementation	92
Republic of Korea: In-depth research aimed at improving matching	97
Kyrgyzstan: Promoting interoperability through ICCS adoption	101
Maldives: Identifying stakeholders and organizing a national working group	102
Mexico: Aligning a national classification of crime with ICCS	105
Endnotes	107

Figures

Figure 1	Inclusions and exclusions of ICCS category 0101 intentional homicide	12
Figure 2	Phases of the ICCS implementation process	14
Figure 3	Example of stakeholder mapping	16
Figure 4	Hierarchical structure of ICCS section 04	44
Figure 5	Example of one-to-one matching	45
Figure 6	Example of many-to-one matching (combination)	46
Figure 7	Example of one-to-many matching (decomposition)	47
Figure 8	Example of ICCS inclusions and exclusions	49
Figure 9	Example of additional categories in section 07	50

Tables

Table 1	Sustainable Development Goal indicators and ICCS	7
Table 2	Level 1 categories of ICCS	10
Table 3	Example of ICCS numerical coding scheme	13
Table 4	Sample assessment questions	22
Table 5	Example of basic Gantt chart	28
Table 6	Examples of the digital dissemination of crime and criminal justice statistics ..	33
Table 7	National ICCS applicability	40
Table 8	Examples of ICCS boundaries in the context of different legal systems	41
Table 9	Building a correspondence table step-by-step	51
Table 10	Matching German criminal code articles and statistical offence categories with ICCS	54
Table 11	Structure of correspondence table template	55
Table 12	Disaggregating variables in ICCS	59
Table 13	Example of data recording system utilizing selected ICCS disaggregating variables	68
Table 14	Change in intentional homicide data in the Russian Federation after ICCS implementation	72
Table 15	Change in serious assault data in the Russian Federation after ICCS implementation	72
Table 16	Change in intentional homicide data in Germany after ICCS implementation	73
Table 17	Change in serious assault data in Germany after ICCS implementation	73
Table 18	Change in serious assault data in Sweden after ICCS implementation	73
Table 19	UN-CTS annual and rotating offence categories	76
Table 20	Summary of UN-CTS-preferred counting rules	81
Table 21	Mapping United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) articles into ICCS categories	83

Table 22	Mapping United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) articles into ICCS categories.....	83
Table 23	Mapping the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children into ICCS categories.....	83
Table 24	Mapping the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air into ICCS categories.....	84
Table 25	Mapping the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition into ICCS categories .	84
Table 26	Mapping other United Nations Conventions into ICCS categories.....	84
Table 27	Example of correspondence between NIBRS and ICCS classification systems for location type.....	85
Table 28	Example from the German correspondence table.....	90
Table 29	Italy: 2023 data complication	96

Boxes

Box 1	National experiences with ICCS governance	19
Box 2	Experience of determining the scope of ICCS implementation in Germany	26
Box 3	Essentials of metadata	57
Box 4	Example of the availability of disaggregated data in Germany	64
Box 5	Disaggregated crime data in the United States of America	65
Box 6	Impact of ICCS adoption on international reporting	72

Reader guide

Purpose of the Implementation Manual

The present manual provides guidance for the national implementation of the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS). The manual is aimed at assisting countries throughout the implementation process, helping set realistic goals and ensuring sustainability of data collection, production and dissemination processes in line with ICCS. The specific objectives of the manual are to offer concrete guidance on:

1. Establishing the institutional framework for implementation and monitoring
2. Developing a national workplan for implementation and maintenance
3. Assessing the boundaries of ICCS implementation
4. Developing a correspondence table and mapping national crime data into ICCS
5. Enabling the recording of comprehensive information about offences through disaggregating variables
6. Producing and disseminating statistical data in line with ICCS

The proposed strategies for ICCS implementation presented in this manual are based on lessons learned from countries' experience with ICCS implementation to date and from the involvement of UNODC in ICCS capacity-building activities around the world.

Intended audience

The present manual is intended for all relevant producers and users of data in the area of crime and criminal justice statistics interested in implementing ICCS, including the police, the prosecution service, the courts, the prison system, the national statistical office, other relevant government institutions, civil society organizations and other non-governmental actors. The ICCS implementation process will inevitably differ depending on a country's existing capacities, available resources, national priorities, and technological and institutional environment. Nonetheless, the manual is designed to assist all countries, regardless of existing criminal justice data production capabilities, from those at the very earliest stage of development to those with more advanced crime and criminal justice statistical systems.

Structure of the manual

Part I of the manual presents a general overview of ICCS, including why it is important and how it can be implemented. The reader is presented with information on the development process of the classification, its intended benefits and the structure of ICCS. Additionally, part I presents a phased implementation process that can serve as a road map for countries.

Part II offers concrete guidelines on technical issues faced by countries when implementing ICCS, including determining the boundaries of ICCS implementation, developing a correspondence table, reviewing and standardizing disaggregating variables and producing statistical outputs in line with ICCS.

Annex 3 of the present manual contains a series of case studies from 7 countries around the world showcasing different elements of the ICCS implementation process.

Part I: Understanding the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS) and the road map to its implementation

In the first part of the present manual, chapter 1 discusses the rationale behind the development of ICCS, the development process, the benefits and structure of the classification and how it can benefit the criminal justice system. Focusing on the road map to ICCS implementation, chapter 2 describes the process for building the case for the classification with stakeholders, assessing the current criminal justice statistical system, constructing a correspondence table, implementing the classification and producing relevant statistical outputs.

1 Introduction to ICCS

1.1 Rationale for the development of ICCS

The purposeful collection of crime and criminal justice data and the organization of those data into statistical form is essential to the production of information that can feed into evidence-informed decision-making processes. Through the provision of high-quality, granular statistics, the criminal justice system, policymakers and the general public can assess changes in crime trends and patterns, monitor the State response to crime, evaluate crime prevention strategies and better understand the various facets of crime in different contexts. As noted in the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (A/RES/68/261), statistics provide an indispensable element in the information system of a society and are to be compiled and made available on an impartial basis to honour citizens' entitlement to public information.

However, the comparison of crime statistics between agencies, over time or between countries is often a highly challenging endeavour with no standardized concepts to make such comparisons possible. The various data providers in the criminal justice system can use different definitions and concepts to organize crime and criminal justice data often based on legal rather than statistical principles. For example, for an offence to be considered an assault, one country may require physical contact to have taken place, while another country may not.

Data may be further organized and categorized in accordance with legal provisions, such as articles in the penal code, rather than statistical principles and reflect the operational focus of the organization recording the data. This close and intertwined relationship between legislation and statistics creates problems from an analytical perspective. As such, the data are not always relevant from a policy-making standpoint or easily utilized in analysis and compiled for meaningful dissemination and use.

Furthermore, comparability over time and between jurisdictions can be hampered by inevitable changes in legislation and, for example, by the fact that the same act can be criminalized under very different legal provisions across countries. Because of this lack of legal homogeneity, the comparison of criminal justice or community safety outcomes between jurisdictions is highly challenging.

ICCS addresses these issues by providing a common framework based on internationally agreed concepts, definitions and principles for statistical purposes. Importantly, as noted in more detail in chapter 3 of the present manual, implementation of the classification does not call for changes to existing criminal legislation and is purely for statistical purposes. Offences are grouped in a meaningful and systematic way, resulting in an improvement in the capacity to collect, produce, disseminate and use crime and criminal justice statistics in order to inform the public and tailor policies and programmes in the areas of crime prevention, the rule of law and criminal justice reform.

1.2 ICCS development process

The report of the international group of experts on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders (E/CN.5/231) first highlighted the importance of preparing a standard classification of offences in 1950. However, successive attempts to develop such an international crime classification were fraught with challenges due to disparities in definitions, national legislations and reporting systems.

Concrete steps to overcome such limitations were made in 2009 when the Conference of European Statisticians established a Task Force, led by UNODC and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), to develop a crime classification framework based on behavioural descriptions rather than legal codes. The resulting framework for an international classification of crimes for statistical purposes (ECE/CES/2012/6) was approved by the Conference of European Statisticians at its sixtieth plenary session in June 2012.

The proposal to develop a full international crime classification was discussed at the forty-third session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) and the twenty-first session of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ). At the next sessions of UNSC and CCPCJ, both Commissions approved the plan to develop an international classification of crime for statistical purposes, in consultation with statisticians and experts from national statistical offices, other national government institutions and regional and international organizations.

Three consultation meetings were held between 2012 and 2014 and two large-scale pilot testing exercises of successive versions of ICCS were undertaken during the same period. Both pilot testing exercises confirmed the feasibility of developing and implementing ICCS, with a view to gradually applying it to statistics produced at the national level. A final draft version of ICCS was sent to Member States and other relevant organizations by UNODC and UNSD in August 2014.

At its forty-sixth session, in March 2015, UNSC endorsed ICCS as an international statistical standard for data collection, both from administrative records and survey generated data, and as an analytical tool to elicit unique information on crime drivers and factors.

Developed with the active participation and collaboration of experts from several countries, ICCS is the result of extensive consultations and collaboration between national statistical offices, other national government institutions, regional and international organizations, including UNODC, the UNODC-INEGI (National Institute of Statistics and Geography) Center of Excellence in Statistical Information on Government, Crime, Victimization and Justice, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Eurostat, the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the Organization of American States (OAS). Furthermore, ICCS was reviewed by the United Nations Committee of Experts on International Statistical Classifications, the central coordinating body for the work on international classifications established by UNSC.

1.3 What is a statistical classification?

ICCS is an international statistical classification that organizes and standardizes the recording of criminal acts for statistical purposes. Statistical classifications group and organize information meaningfully and systematically in exhaustive and structured sets of categories that are defined according to a set of criteria for similarity. A primary purpose of a statistical classification is to provide a simplification of the real world and to provide a useful framework for collecting, organizing and analysing data, as well as providing a framework for the international comparability of statistics and supporting policymaking.¹

A statistical classification can be defined as a set of discrete, exhaustive and mutually exclusive categories that can be assigned to one or more variables used in the collection and presentation of data. An example from everyday life is a restaurant menu in which the drinks and dishes represent the units to be classified, with the items being listed in different categories (e.g., starters, main courses, desserts and drinks) and subcategories (e.g., meat, fish and vegetarian options). In ICCS, the unit of classification is the act that constitutes a criminal offence. ICCS offers a list of categories that define specific criminal offences, such as "robbery", and subcategories, such as "robbery from the person" or "robbery of an establishment".

ICCS provides a comprehensive framework of internationally agreed crime concepts and definitions that serves to enhance the collection, production, dissemination and use of statistical data on crime. In addition, ICCS facilitates the collection of further data such as the characteristics of criminal acts, victims, perpetrators and motives through a set of disaggregating variables. The classification is built on established statistical principles:²

- *Hierarchically structured* – ICCS features four levels of aggregation, with the most general categories at the top and the most detailed categories at the bottom. The most detailed categories can be aggregated into the more general categories (e.g., "serious assault" and "minor assault" are level 4 categories that can be aggregated into the level 3 category "assault").
- *Mutually exclusive* – There is a clear boundary in the scope and reach of every criminal offence at the same level of the classification, avoiding ambiguities and overlap. In principle, each criminal act should only be classified to one category in ICCS.
- *Exhaustive* – The classification contains a comprehensive list of criminal acts aimed at capturing acts or events generally known to constitute criminal offences in a sufficient number of countries. This allows for the classification of most crimes to the extent that this is feasible.

In addition to the above, ICCS strives to be universally applicable. The categories of the classification are based on a behavioural approach rather than strict legal specifications derived from criminal law. Crimes as defined in criminal law are typically associated with actions or behavioural and contextual attributes that are universally considered to be an offence (for example, purposely wounding or injuring a person, or taking property without consent). Utilizing a behaviour-based approach avoids issues created by legal complexities, resulting in a simplified and globally applicable classification with fewer ambiguities. Put simply, it is easier to classify offences that are defined by behaviours and actions rather than by legal definitions and intent. This allows for systematic application across countries, institutions and legal systems, regardless of the specificities of national criminal legislation.

ICCS is thus a fundamental component in improving the quality, comparability and granularity of data across all relevant actors of national criminal justice systems. As ICCS is implemented across more and more countries, the resulting increased statistical comparability stands to improve analytical opportunities at the (sub)national, regional and international levels.

1.4 Benefits of ICCS

Common statistical terminology

ICCS was developed in order to organize and harmonize crime and criminal justice data for statistical purposes. The classification's scope includes all main types of criminal offence and, as such, constitutes a comprehensive framework of definitions for producing national crime statistics. Based on statistical concepts and definitions, ICCS provides a comprehensive long-term perspective when building or reviewing a national crime statistics system as it is not sensitive to changes in national legislation and regulatory frameworks. This standardization of offence categories fosters and coordinates data integration across criminal justice agencies and across different data sources encompassing administrative records and statistical surveys.

Furthermore, ICCS enables data linkages between the different stages of the criminal justice system. When consistently applied by all relevant data producers, ICCS can be used to measure the flows between the different stages of the criminal justice system. For example, links could be made between the recorded number of a given offence, the number of arrests for the same type of offence and, in sequence, the prosecution, conviction and sentencing of persons for the same type of offence. The result is a unification among institutions as they are provided with a common language for the communication and exchange of interoperable statistical information so that they can effectively understand the national situation on crime and the functioning of criminal justice processes.

Greater granularity

ICCS enables the collection of detailed offence data and can be applied in relation to events and conditions related to the criminal justice process, such as arrests, prosecutions and convictions. Furthermore, through the collection of disaggregating variables, ICCS highlights the many facets of crime and responds to the need for highly detailed crime and criminal justice information to inform policymaking. The set of disaggregating variables included in ICCS provides contextual information about criminal offences that supports more sophisticated, in-depth analysis of those offences. Such data are often critical to improving understanding of crime trends.

Disaggregating variables can relate to the characteristics of an individual crime event or the characteristics of the victim or offender. To illustrate, statistical data on intentional homicide are more valuable if they are disaggregated by the sex of the victim and offender, the use of a firearm, the motive for the killing and whether the killing happened in the context of organized crime. Such data offer the opportunity to delve into the different aspects of homicide, including the trends in and patterns of homicide figures for specific subgroups of interest and a comprehensive analysis of the complex dynamics involved.

Improved international comparability

At the international level, ICCS improves the comparability of crime statistics across countries by standardizing concepts and definitions, allowing for the systematic collection, production and dissemination of data and responding to increased demand for in-depth research and analysis on transnational crime. When investigating cases of organized crime, in particular those of a transnational nature, the efficacy of the criminal justice response can be hampered by the complex nature of the crimes and the fact that the investigation of organized criminal groups often crosses institutional and (inter)national borders. Article 28 of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (A/RES/55/25) highlights the need for States Parties to develop common definitions, standards and methodologies to improve their understanding of the nature of organized crime. ICCS contributes to this objective by offering a standard classification of offences and a set of policy-relevant disaggregating variables.

Moreover, ICCS is one of the primary tools for supporting national efforts in collecting high-quality data for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Definitions applied in several Sustainable Development Goals related to the areas of public security and safety, trafficking, corruption and access to justice are aligned with ICCS (see table 1). Implementation of ICCS will thus enable countries to produce high-quality data for accurately reporting on the Sustainable Development Goal indicators. For example, to be able to monitor the two indicators for target 16.5 (*Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms*) countries need accurate data on the prevalence of bribery, as defined in ICCS, among the population and among businesses. Moreover, the indicators require the collection of disaggregating variables such as age and sex. These disaggregating variables are included in ICCS.

Table 1 **Sustainable Development Goal indicators and ICCS**

Indicator	ICCS code
5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months	Assault (0201) Other acts intended to induce fear or emotional distress (02089) Sexual violence (0301)
5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months	Sexual violence (0301)
11.7.2 Proportion of persons victim of non-sexual or sexual harassment in the previous 12 months	Harassment (0208) Non-physical sexual assault (030122)
15.7.1 Proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked	Trafficking of protected species across national borders (100312)
16.1.1 Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population	Intentional homicide (0101)

16.1.3 Proportion of population subjected to (a) physical violence, (b) psychological violence and/or (c) sexual violence in the previous 12 months	Assault (0201) Robbery (0401) Other acts intended to induce fear or emotional distress (02089) Sexual violence (0301)
16.2.2 Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population	Trafficking in persons (0204)
16.2.3 Proportion of young women and men aged 18–29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18	Sexual violence (0301)
16.3.1 Proportion of victims of (a) physical, (b) psychological and/or (c) sexual violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms	Assault (0201) Robbery (0401) Other acts intended to induce fear or emotional distress (02089) Sexual violence (0301)
16.4.2 Proportion of seized, found or surrendered arms whose illicit origin or context has been traced or established by a competent authority in line with international instruments	Trafficking of weapons and explosives (09012)
16.5.1 Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months	Bribery (07031)
16.5.2 Proportion of businesses that had at least one contact with a public official and that paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials during the previous 12 months	Bribery (07031)

ICCS and the United Nations Survey on Crime Trends and the Operations of Criminal Justice Systems (UN-CTS)

ICCS has also been integrated into the definitions of the United Nations Survey on Crime Trends and the Operations of Criminal Justice Systems (UN-CTS), which is sent to Member States annually by UNODC to facilitate international data collection and is the official mechanism for submitting data for eight indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The UN-CTS was first introduced through General Assembly Resolution A/RES/3021(XXVII) in 1972 and was further formalized when the United Nations Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1984/48 of 25 May 1984, requested that the Secretary-General of the United Nations maintain and develop the United Nations crime-related database by continuing to conduct surveys of crime trends and the operations of criminal justice systems. The major goal of UN-CTS today is to collect data on the incidence of reported crime and the operations of criminal justice systems in line with ICCS. The survey results provide an overview of trends and interrelationships between various parts of the criminal justice system in order to promote informed decision-making, nationally and internationally.

The data collected through UN-CTS are disseminated through the UNODC Data Portal (<https://dataunodc.un.org/>). Also used to monitor progress towards key Sustainable Development Goal 16 targets, the data are presented in several analytical publications, such as the *Global Study on Homicide* (<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and->

[analysis/global-study-on-homicide.html](#)) and short research briefs included in the Data Matters series (<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/data-matters.html>). UN-CTS data pertaining to crime-related Sustainable Development Goal indicators are also published on the United Nations SDG Global Database (<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/dataportal>).

UN-CTS relies on a network of national focal points responsible for coordinating the distribution of the questionnaire among relevant ministries and agencies and – once the available information has been compiled – submitting it to UNODC whose work forms the cornerstone of international statistics on crime and criminal justice. For more information on UN-CTS and its operations, refer to the UNODC website (<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/United-Nations-Surveys-on-Crime-Trends-and-the-Operations-of-Criminal-Justice-Systems.html>).

ICCS and related classifications on crime and criminal justice

ICCS provides a common framework for the production of crime statistics based on internationally agreed concepts, definitions and principles for statistical purposes. As such, the classification has been a vital resource for the development of other statistical classifications in the field of crime and criminal justice in recent years. Highlighted here are three classifications that build on the ICCS structure by providing additional categories to classify specific crimes.

The *Statistical framework for measuring the gender-related killing of women and girls* was jointly developed by UN Women and UNODC to provide a comprehensive statistical framework for measuring such killings and was approved by the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2022.³ Besides providing a statistical definition for femicide, the framework identifies a typology of gender-related killings and the list of variables that can be used to identify and count the various types of such killings. The proposed definition and typology are aligned with the structure and framework of ICCS, which can therefore be applied independently from the specific national legislation on such crimes.

Developed by the International Organization for Migration and UNODC, the *International Classification Standard for Administrative Data on Trafficking in Persons* offers a more detailed classification for trafficking in persons and a number of additional disaggregating variables for facilitating the production and dissemination of high-quality administrative data relating to various aspects of the crime of trafficking in persons.⁴ Countries that are impacted by this crime are strongly encouraged to adopt the working version of the classification and expand upon ICCS.

The *International Classification of Violence against Children* (ICVAC) – developed by the United Nations Children's Fund and endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2023 – responds to a fundamental need for internationally agreed operational concepts, definitions and principles to ensure a standardized and consistent approach to classifying statistical data on violence against children.⁵ Many of the statistical definitions applied in ICVAC coincide with or are derived from ICCS and it largely follows the structure of ICCS. ICVAC does differ from ICCS in that it also includes acts that are not necessarily considered crimes.

1.5 Structure of ICCS

As noted in section 1.3, ICCS is structured in a hierarchical manner and groups offences at four different levels – levels 1 (sections), 2 (divisions), 3 (groups) and 4 (classes). The 11 level 1 categories highlighted in table 2 are designed to cover all offences in ICCS. These top-level categories are quite broad and typically only used to produce highly aggregated overview figures, or when more detailed data of sufficient quality are not available.

Table 2 **Level 1 categories of ICCS**

Code	Level 1 category description
01	Acts leading to death or intending to cause death
02	Acts leading to harm or intending to cause harm to the person
03	Injurious acts of a sexual nature
04	Acts against property involving violence or threat against a person
05	Acts against property only
06	Acts involving controlled drugs or other psychoactive substances
07	Acts involving fraud, deception or corruption
08	Acts against public order, authority and provisions of the State
09	Acts against public safety and state security
10	Acts against the natural environment
11	Other criminal acts not elsewhere classified

Source: International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS).

Criminal offences at Levels 2, 3 and 4 are more specific disaggregated behaviours, which can be combined to provide observations at more aggregated levels. For example, to compute the total number of burglaries (level 2 category 0501), the different level 3 and level 4 categories that belong to this category can be added together. Conversely, provided that detailed data are available, observations at higher levels can generally be subdivided into lower-level categories. The four levels of ICCS are intended to encompass every criminal offence generally known to constitute criminal offences in a sufficient number of countries. However, not all Level 2 categories are further subdivided into Level 3 categories, nor are all Level 3 categories subdivided into Level 4 categories, as the lower-level categories are not always necessary for identifying policy-relevant groupings of offences.

Application of ICCS to data

ICCS can be applied to both administrative data and survey methodologies, offering a comprehensive approach to understanding crime trends and patterns. Through administrative data, law enforcement agencies can utilize the classification to categorize and report crimes in a standardized manner, enabling authorities to monitor crime rates, allocate resources effectively and devise targeted crime prevention strategies. Additionally, in the realm of survey data, in particular crime victimization surveys, the classification provides standardized definitions to enable the collection of information on various types of crime experienced by individuals or households. This enables researchers and policymakers to

assess and compare the prevalence and nature of crime victimization, identify vulnerable populations and formulate preventive measures.

Scope of ICCS

ICCS is designed to cover every possible manifestation of crime. The offences included in the current version of ICCS provide a basis for such a comprehensive endeavour and capture acts that generally constitute criminal offences in a substantial number of countries. For this reason, ICCS only captures offences at a certain level of detail, focusing on policy-relevance at the national and international levels. However, future versions of the classification may include other crimes as it is revised in order to maintain relevance in the ever-changing criminal landscape and incorporate feedback on the experience of its adoption by Member States.

As a consequence of its overarching goal of covering every possible manifestation of crime, ICCS may include events or behaviours that are not criminalized in some countries. ICCS neither supports nor legitimizes the criminalization of any offence listed within it. The scope of ICCS is limited to statistical purposes and the classification is not intended to influence or modify the penal codes of any of the countries that implement it. When a behaviour in ICCS is not considered a criminal offence in a country, the category relating to it can be considered out of scope for implementation (for further guidance see chapter 3 of the present manual). Moreover, the aim of ICCS is not to classify events that generally constitute administrative or minor regulatory offences and should, in most circumstances, only be used to categorize criminal offences.

Primary unit of classification

The primary unit of classification of ICCS is the behaviour or act that constitutes a criminal offence. The description of the criminal offence is provided in terms of the behaviour shown by the perpetrator(s) of a crime. The apparent behaviour is in most cases sufficient to define an offence for the purposes of ICCS. In some cases, however, additional elements need to be taken into account, such as the intention (state of mind) of the perpetrator or characteristics of the victim (for example, whether they are a minor). In other cases, a crime is defined by a more complex sequence of behaviours, as in the case of trafficking in persons described in annex II of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (A/RES/55/25), for example. Trafficking in persons involves three key elements, namely the act (what is done), the means (how it is done) and the purpose (why it is done), resulting in a complex chain of behaviours and actions that is more challenging to capture.

Definition of ICCS categories

All categories, at every level of the classification, are defined in detailed terms in ICCS. Each of these definitions offers a description of the act comprising the criminal offence, the core set of actions and, in some instances, behavioural and contextual attributes. Four complementary criteria are used to identify categories at the various levels:

- Policy relevance (e.g., protection of property rights or protection of health)
- Target of the act (e.g., person, property, natural environment or the State)
- Seriousness of the act (e.g., acts leading to death or acts causing harm)
- Means by which the act/event is perpetrated (e.g., through violence or threat of violence)

Apart from their descriptions, categories are accompanied by a list of inclusions and exclusions to assist coders in identifying the most common criminal offences included in, or excluded from, the category (see figure 1). Presenting commonly used names of offences that typically fall within the definition of each category, the inclusions and exclusions listed are examples and are not intended to be exhaustive. However, priority should be given to the actual definition of the offence, rather than the simple name given to it.

Figure 1 **Inclusions and exclusions of ICCS category 0101 intentional homicide**

<p>0101 Intentional homicide</p> <p>Unlawful death inflicted upon a person with the intent to cause death or serious injury</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>Inclusions: Murder; honour killing; serious assault leading to death; death as a result of terrorist activities; dowry-related killings; femicide; infanticide; voluntary manslaughter; extrajudicial killings; killings caused by excessive use of force by law enforcement/state officials</p>
	<p>-</p>	<p>Exclusions: Death due to legal interventions; justifiable homicide in self-defence; attempted intentional homicide (0102); homicide without the element of intent is non-intentional homicide (0103); non-negligent or involuntary manslaughter (01031); assisting suicide or instigating suicide (0104); illegal feticide (0106); euthanasia (0105)</p>

Source: International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS).

For example, in a national classification where the criminal offence "theft" has a subcategory "theft with aggravated circumstances", the subcategory is defined as unlawfully taking or obtaining property through forced entry. While the first part of this definition is consistent with the ICCS definition of 0502 *Theft*, the part on forced entry points to unauthorized access and unlawful entry. In ICCS, "theft after unauthorized access to premises" is listed as an exclusion under 0502 *Theft* and points to 0501 *Burglary*. Under 0501 *Burglary*, unlawful entry with intent to commit theft is listed as an inclusion. Therefore, an offence nationally classified as theft with aggravated circumstances should be classified under a different offence category in ICCS. This offence should be thus excluded from any figure reported for 0502 *Theft*.

The description, inclusions and exclusions often contain footnotes that are meant to provide further guidance on the exact meaning of specific terms. For example, under 0101 *Intentional homicide*, murder is defined in footnote 36 of ICCS as "an unlawful death inflicted upon a person with the intent to cause death or serious injury, including when premeditated and/or with malice aforethought". Using the detailed information contained in the description, inclusions, exclusions and additional footnotes, users of ICCS are therefore able to classify crimes as accurately as possible for statistical purposes.

Defining and classifying offences for statistical purposes is thus the primary focus of the classification. To accomplish this, the legal provisions, national classifications and national crime indicators that exist in a country are matched with the categories of ICCS. However, countries should continue to define offences in the most appropriate way given their national legal systems and legislation, and it is important to reiterate that the legal provisions that exist in a given country should remain unaffected by ICCS implementation. ICCS is used to assign each offence to a category regardless of the respective legal system for use solely in the collection, production, dissemination and use of statistics.

ICCS numerical coding scheme

Given the need for international data harmonization, comparability and straightforward integration into national statistical systems, ICCS utilizes a numerical coding scheme for each category. As an example, table 3 breaks down the numerical coding for ICCS category 050121 *Burglary of permanent private residences*.

The ICCS numerical coding scheme reflects the classification level. Level 1 categories have a two-digit code (e.g., 05); Level 2 categories have a four-digit code (e.g., 0501); Level 3 categories have a five-digit code (e.g., 05012); and Level 4 categories have a six-digit code (e.g., 050121). Each category in ICCS has a unique code that is assigned to that category alone. This ensures categories of the statistical classification are mutually exclusive and easily distinguished from one another.

Table 3 Example of ICCS numerical coding scheme

Level	Code	Description
Level 1	<u>05</u>	Acts against property only
Level 2	<u>0501</u>	Burglary
Level 3	<u>05012</u>	Burglary of private residential premises
Level 4	<u>050121</u>	Burglary of permanent private residences

Source: International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS).

In the above example, every recorded *burglary of private residential premises* under code 05012 should also be included at a higher level in the hierarchy in the figures of *burglary* under code 0501. All burglaries, together with all thefts and all other acts against property only are aggregated in the level 1 category 05 *Acts against property only*.

ICCS disaggregating variables

In addition to providing an exhaustive classification of offences, ICCS also provides a set of disaggregating variables. These disaggregating variables serve as descriptors that provide additional contextual information about the offence to support more sophisticated, in-depth analysis of criminal offences and are often critical in understanding policy-relevant trends. The variables can relate to the characteristics of the individual crime event or the characteristics of victim(s) and perpetrator(s). For example, when producing statistics on intentional homicide, data are more valuable if they can be disaggregated by the sex and age of the victim(s) and perpetrator(s), the use of firearms or the motive for the killing. More information about disaggregating variables is provided in chapter 5 of the present manual.

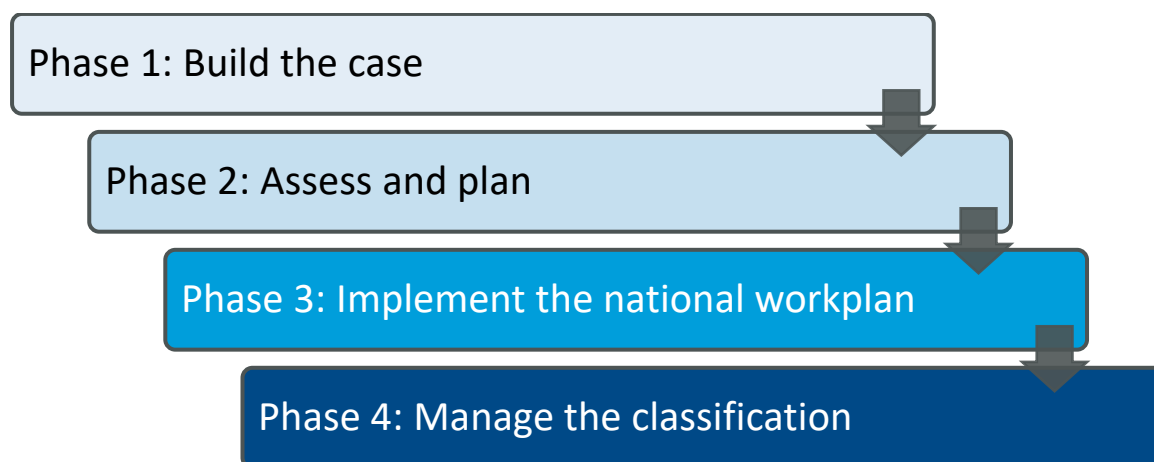
2 Road map to ICCS implementation

The process of implementing ICCS will differ from country to country depending on several factors, such as the current level of statistical capabilities, available resources, existing (IT) infrastructure, national priorities and the nature of a country's statistical needs related to crime and criminal justice. The implementation phases proposed in this chapter extend from institutional awareness-raising on the use and benefits of the classification, to the production of statistics in line with ICCS. The phases are meant as a starting point to guide implementation. Each country can adapt any of the phases to its own context and needs.

Given the heterogeneity of political systems (unitary, federalist or other), legal systems (such as civil, common or religious law) and statistical systems (centralized or decentralized) around the world, the ICCS implementation process can differ significantly between countries. For example, a country with an existing national crime classification may simply update its digital infrastructure to automatically produce ICCS-compliant statistics. In other cases, a country may not have a national crime classification in place and can choose to adopt ICCS as the national classification for statistical purposes. However, these factors do not determine whether ICCS can be implemented. Rather, they dictate how the ICCS implementation process might be structured.

The road map to ICCS implementation presented in the present implementation manual consists of four broad phases (see figure 2), each outlined in this chapter with concrete steps and examples of approaches taken by different countries. The road map can be seen as a guide to planning the ICCS implementation process from start to finish, although it should be noted that there is no predefined finish line as the implementation process will require follow-up to ensure continued alignment across the criminal justice system. Each of the four phases is further divided into a number of activities, which do not need to be implemented sequentially and can, instead, be implemented in a different order to the one proposed here. Similarly, work on different phases can be executed in parallel. In other words, the road map should be seen as a flexible tool that guides implementation rather than a fixed process to be strictly adhered to.

Figure 2 **Phases of the ICCS implementation process**



Before proceeding with a discussion of the four different phases, it is important to clarify what is meant by implementation of the classification in the current guidelines. Until ICCS is fully implemented at country level, a transparent system should be in place to indicate which statistics are ICCS compliant and which ones are not. Furthermore, it is important to clarify whether data are produced according to the standardized disaggregating variables introduced in ICCS. In practical terms, at the conclusion of the full ICCS implementation process, a country should be able to:

1. Produce administrative data according to all categories of ICCS (11 level 1 categories, 63 level 2 categories, 148 level 3 categories and 98 level 4 categories).
2. Produce the above data in relation to criminal offences (police data), persons arrested/suspected (police data), persons prosecuted (prosecution service data), persons brought before criminal courts (court data), persons convicted (court data), persons entering prisons (prison data) and prison population (prison data).
3. Produce data by relevant disaggregating variables on the criminal event, victim(s) and perpetrator(s).

Rather than attempting to implement the classification all at once, countries may choose to implement ICCS gradually over time. This allows for a smoother transition and gives stakeholders time to adjust to the new system. This could be particularly beneficial in an environment with limited resources though it can be challenging to maintain focus on ICCS implementation for an extended period of time. It is therefore important to identify clear milestones and achieve intermediate results, such as producing and publishing selected ICCS-compliant data that clearly showcase the added value of the classification.

In some cases, countries may choose to create a local variant of the ICCS. The local variant would be conceptually similar to ICCS and largely follow its structure but feature modifications to better reflect the specific national context. Modifications could involve adding additional categories, merging categories or adding an additional level to the hierarchy. This approach may help garner support from local stakeholders by giving visibility to specific policy needs and/or to selected crime topics that are relevant at national level. It should be noted, however, that substantial modifications to ICCS may limit comparability of statistical data between countries and hinder cross-national analysis and policy coordination efforts.

The scope of ICCS implementation will vary significantly depending on whether alignment with the classification can be achieved at the point of data collection by making changes to data recording procedures – e.g., the standardized registration of criminal offences by the police – or only at a later stage in the process when aggregated statistical data are produced. The collection of data on criminal offences by the police, for example, will more closely adhere to ICCS if it is possible to adapt the data collection template used by police officers when gathering information on a reported crime, for example in relation to characteristics of victim(s) or perpetrator(s).

It is thus clear that implementing ICCS is a demanding endeavor, requiring the involvement of a large group of stakeholders, and should be carefully planned and well resourced. The phases detailed below offer a road map to planning a sustainable implementation process.

2.1 Phase 1: Build the case

a. Identify all relevant stakeholders

To ensure that the interests of all relevant stakeholders are considered and addressed throughout the implementation process it is essential to identify and engage relevant data owners and producers, main data users and other key partners by creating a stakeholder map (see figure 3). A stakeholder map will foster collaboration by identifying partners who share similar objectives, help identify potential areas of conflict, highlight relationships between different stakeholders and identify stakeholders that hold decision-making power, funding, knowledge or key data.

The specific stakeholders that are most relevant will differ in each national setting. In one group of countries this may be a small group limited to key criminal justice agencies, while in another group of countries there could be a large group of interested stakeholders spanning civil society, academia, other government agencies and other actors to be engaged throughout the implementation process.

Some stakeholders will serve as critical partners in the implementation process, such as those authorizing resources and political support. Others, like the data user community, play a key role by generating interest in criminal justice statistics and applying pressure for ICCS implementation based on their expectations for improved data quality and relevance. Additionally, civil society actors may have specific interests, such as gender equality, protection of the environment, the promotion of human rights or anti-corruption advocacy. Efforts should be made to involve these actors by demonstrating how ICCS implementation aligns with and supports topics of public debate.

It is key to identify the custodian of the classification – typically the national statistical office – in the national context and involve this stakeholder early in the process. If the implementation plan is likely to involve a significant change to the existing structure of local data collection efforts, relevant users of those data should also be engaged in the process in order to manage the change from a user community perspective. Note that it is vital to include technical and IT staff, in addition to practitioners and decision makers, as they are fundamental to a successful implementation outcome in any modern data ecosystem.

Figure 3 Example of stakeholder mapping

Data owners/ producers	Key advisers and experts	Data user community	Governance bodies
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Police• Prosecution service• Courts• Prison system• Ministry of Justice• Ministry of Interior• National statistical office	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Academics• Legal professionals• Regional/international partners• UNODC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policymakers• Researchers• NGOs• Civil society organizations• Media• General public	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elected representatives• Government departments• National auditing agencies

Data owners provide access to relevant data sets, ensure data quality and may impose restrictions on data access or use. In the area of crime and criminal justice statistics this group usually includes:

- Law enforcement agencies such as the various police forces, including specialized agencies dealing with, among other things, organized crime, terrorism, financial crime, crimes that affect the environment and violence against women
- Prosecution services with various levels and topics of responsibility, such as any type of state attorney, prosecutors from various agencies, procurator or investigative judge
- Criminal courts with various levels and topics of responsibility, such as any court or tribunal that has the authority to adjudicate any legal proceedings of a prosecuting agent of the State against a defendant
- Agencies administrating prisons, penal institutions, correctional facilities or community-based non-custodial corrections services

In federal States another layer may have to be considered to ensure the involvement of all relevant data owners both at subnational/state and federal level. For example, if data collection is heavily decentralized, processes and standards for data collection may differ significantly across subnational units.

Data producers consolidate the data and disseminate crime and criminal justice statistics. These could be the same institutions that collect the data or may be other types of organization, such as:

- The national statistical office
- A government department with responsibility for criminal justice policy and administration
- Research institutions

Key advisers and experts can be found in academia or be criminal justice practitioners who can provide vital technical assistance. For example, legal expertise is likely to be required when producing a correspondence table linking offences described in the national penal code to their respective ICCS categories as part of the implementation process. Moreover, criminal justice practitioners involved in the management of data can provide important insights on how data are currently being recorded and how disaggregating variables can best be incorporated into the existing system.

UNODC and other relevant international or regional organizations can also serve as key partners. As a custodian of numerous international standards and norms related to crime and criminal justice and ICCS, UNODC can provide countries with technical expertise and – where feasible - capacity-building in this field. In addition, UNODC manages the primary international data collection on crime trends and the operations of criminal justice systems (UN-CTS) and, as such, can provide important data expertise. Other relevant regional and international partners to consider include the United Nations Regional Commissions, Eurostat or the Organization of American States.

The **data user community** can provide valuable insights on how to maximize accessibility and usability of data. The needs of data users should thus be carefully considered when implementing ICCS. Designing statistical outputs in line with the needs of criminal justice institutions, researchers, non-governmental organizations, national or regional institutions

(such as the Ombudsman or equality bodies), other parts of the Government, international organizations and the general public is key to ensuring broad ownership of statistical data. After all, the value of crime and criminal justice statistics is determined by their potential use for strategic decision-making at different levels of government, their use by society at large and their contribution to achieving fair and equitable justice for all.

Governance bodies form another critical aspect of the stakeholder mapping exercise that involves identifying the stakeholders who will be promoting ICCS implementation from a governance and resourcing perspective. The stakeholder(s) may be one or several decision-makers already considered in the above lists or an elected official. Identifying these key stakeholders at an early stage is important for ensuring political support and the sustainability of the implementation process. Moreover, governance bodies may define an appropriate regulatory framework by requesting all concerned stakeholders to support the technical and organizational work that is needed to implement ICCS.

b. Raise awareness of ICCS

Plans to raise awareness of ICCS and build the case for its implementation should focus both on creating an effective group of collaborators that drives the technical work and securing the requisite support from data owners, data producers, data users and other relevant stakeholders identified in the stakeholder mapping. This is a fundamental step in the implementation process that requires careful consideration and usually starts well before concrete implementation plans are considered. In some countries this may be a complex political and technical process, whereas in other countries it may be a routine exercise facilitated by an existing statistical commission or working group on crime statistics.

ICCS-related communication should be targeted to specific stakeholders, such as statisticians and operational personnel in criminal justice institutions as well as addressed to high-level decision-makers at relevant line ministries. To facilitate this, communication strategies could be developed for both technical and non-technical personnel that provide the basic concepts of ICCS, advocate for the use of ICCS and highlight the benefits for different institutions and for the different levels of responsibility within them. Institutions in the criminal justice system often have a long history and strong identity and genuinely value their uniqueness and independence, which must be recognized and valued when promoting ICCS implementation.

For example, organizations with a local, internal focus may be less interested in comparable data between countries when this requires change on their part. However, they may be interested in producing more comprehensive and more granular data that can assist them in their day-to-day operations, which is facilitated by ICCS implementation. Therefore, tailoring communication strategies according to the needs of the key stakeholders is an important first step to establishing the necessary buy-in from all key stakeholders and proceeding with implementation.

During this phase of the implementation process it can be useful to distribute copies of ICCS among relevant stakeholders. However, ICCS is currently only available in the six official United Nations languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish) and it may be necessary to translate the classification into the national language.⁶ However, note that translating ICCS is a complex exercise that requires significant legal and linguistic expertise in order to avoid discrepancies and can be costly and time-consuming.

Building support and establishing partnerships between stakeholders promotes the sustainability of the ICCS implementation process and ensures the harmonization of activities across agencies. Making the case for implementing ICCS should be a continuous activity that is maintained during the implementation process to ensure ongoing commitment to the full delivery of ICCS and its benefits. For example, to ensure the reliability of data used for policymaking and the efficient operation of the national statistical system, the Government of the Republic of Korea brought in the Statistics Act, which mandates the adoption of internationally recognized statistical classifications. As a result, Statistics Korea was able to promptly develop and implement a plan for introducing and implementing ICCS in the Republic of Korea.⁷

c. Establish a national ICCS working group

The next key element of the first phase is to establish a national working group that can drive the ICCS implementation process. If an existing mechanism for collaboration on crime and criminal justice statistics already exists it may also adopt the role of ICCS working group. If that is not the case, critical partners identified in the stakeholder mapping process should be invited into the new national working group on ICCS implementation. Ideally, the national ICCS working group should be formally established in coordination with the national statistical office, relevant data owners in the area of crime and criminal justice statistics and all necessary levels of government.

It is important to develop terms of reference for the national working group that clearly spell out the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders involved. The terms of reference should, as a minimum, also define the purpose and objective of the group, the scope of work, a timeline with a set of clearly defined deliverables, proposed frequency of meetings and an estimation of the financial and non-financial resources required. The national working group can also consider appointing dedicated task forces to accomplish specific objectives, such as a technical task force to develop the correspondence table (see chapter 4) or an implementation task force to pilot test the new national classification on a limited set of data (see phase 3).

To lead the implementation process, a national focal point should be appointed who would ideally also serve as a focal point for UN-CTS reporting to UNODC in order to maximize the synergy from the two processes. The agency supplying the focal point should have long-standing statistical expertise to lead the technical aspects of the implementation process and emphasize the statistical significance of ICCS, while taking into account operational/practical perspectives. The agency should be recognized as a technical and impartial entity by relevant stakeholders in the criminal justice system and beyond.

Box 1 National experiences with ICCS governance

Although some jurisdictions have experienced challenges in engaging their criminal justice sectors in the implementation process, others had existing statistical coordination mechanisms in place for managing crime and criminal justice statistics. In the latter case, national statistical offices typically take on the leadership role to implement ICCS without requiring additional awareness raising activities for engaging relevant criminal justice institutions. However, for best results – particularly if there is a significant body of work to be undertaken to implement ICCS – whole-of-sector involvement is recommended.

In the Philippines, for example, the Philippines Statistics Authority serves as secretariat to the Interagency Committee on Security, Justice and Peace Statistics, which was utilized to drive the development, adoption and implementation of ICCS. The Committee serves as a venue for the discussion and resolution of statistical issues, the review of methodologies and the development of workable schemes towards the improvement of security, justice and peace statistics. The Committee was chaired by the Department of National Defense, co-Chaired by the Department of Justice and comprised of members from all major criminal justice institutions, including the Department of the Interior and Local Government, the National Police Commissions, the Philippine National Police and the Supreme Court of the Philippines.

A technical working group from the Philippine Statistics Authority operated under the Interagency Committee to advance the workplan for ICCS implementation. The correspondence table process was guided by the inventory of criminal offences under national law generated from the Philippine Crime Index Project of the Department of Justice. The Classification was further endorsed for adoption by the Interagency Committee on Statistical Classification Systems and the Philippine Statistical Authority Board. The 2018 Philippine Standard Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes has since been released.⁸

2.2 Phase 2: Assess and plan

a. Assess current data production and statistical capabilities

As part of the implementation process, a thorough assessment of the existing national crime statistics system is recommended. This requires a review of the methods, processes and tools used for the collection of data from the criminal justice system and how such data are governed. Such a comprehensive assessment provides a detailed understanding of a country's starting position for ICCS implementation. It can help identify gaps, assess the compatibility of ICCS with current statistical outputs, highlight strengths and weaknesses and feed into the decision on the target(s) a country should set for the various stages of the implementation process. Based on the assessment, countries can also determine which aspects of the national workplan for ICCS implementation need to be prioritized.

For such an assessment, data collection procedures, legal codes and relevant prior assessments of crime and criminal justice statistics should be analysed in order to improve understanding of, among other things, criminal justice system coverage, data collection processes, offence mapping, disaggregating variables, statistical dissemination, data quality and data governance.

The following (non-exhaustive) assessment questions can offer a starting point for the effective planning of the ICCS implementation process. Nine areas of assessment are suggested:

- **Justice system data coverage.** This area focuses on assessing whether criminal justice data are collected at the various stages of the criminal justice system (police, prosecution service, criminal courts, prison system) and determining the extent of coverage across offences and institutions.
- **Data collection processes.** Examines how data are collected, stored and shared. This includes methods (electronic, paper-based, or mixed), unit-level data versus aggregated data, formal data-sharing agreements and the use of predefined templates.
- **Offence mapping.** Evaluates the use of standardized offence classifications to compile statistics. It considers alignment with ICCS, consistency across institutions and any gaps or discrepancies.
- **Disaggregating variables.** Focuses on whether criminal justice statistics include detailed breakdowns by relevant variables (e.g., victim/perpetrator characteristics and crime contexts) and assesses consistency in recording these variables across agencies.
- **Statistical production.** Assesses the regularity and comprehensiveness of producing criminal justice statistics, including the frequency and coverage across criminal justice stages.
- **Statistical dissemination.** Covers how criminal justice statistics are published and shared with the public. It examines responsible agencies, consistency in reporting and accessibility of statistics.
- **Data quality and governance.** Focuses on systems for ensuring the accuracy, reliability and quality of criminal justice data. It includes the use of metadata, quality assessments and governance frameworks for data management.

- **IT systems.** Examines the technological infrastructure for recording, storing and managing data. It includes evaluating software compatibility with ICCS, identifying necessary updates or replacements and assessing financial implications.
- **Enabling factors.** Identifies the broader conditions that facilitate successful implementation, such as coordination mechanisms, resource availability, legal mandates, institutional commitment and support from academia or civil society.

Table 4 **Sample assessment questions**

Questions	Assessment area
1. Are crime and criminal justice data currently being collected? If so, do they cover: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Crime recorded by the police? Persons prosecuted? Persons convicted in criminal court? Persons held in prisons and/or under the supervision of corrective services? 	Justice system data coverage
2. At each individual stage of the criminal justice system (the police, the prosecution service, the criminal courts, the prison system), are data collected by a single agency or are multiple agencies involved?	Justice system data coverage
3. At each individual stage of the criminal justice system (the police, the prosecution service, the criminal courts, the prison system), are data collected for all offences or only specific offence(s)?	Justice system data coverage
4. Are data collected in unit records (microdata) or in aggregated form at each relevant stage of the criminal justice system?	Data collection processes
5. How are microdata stored by each relevant data supplier? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Electronically Paper Mixed process (both paper-based data collection and electronic data collection) No microdata are collected or stored 	Data collection processes
6. Are data recorded at the level of each individual criminal offence or using a principal offence rule? <i>Note: When multiple offences are committed simultaneously by the same offender, only the most serious offence is recorded under a principal offence rule.</i>	Data collection processes
7. Are data sharing agreements in place to allow the collation of crime and criminal justice statistics at the national level? Are all relevant agencies covered by formal data sharing	Data collection processes

Questions	Assessment area
agreements? Do the agreements cover aggregated data or microdata? Or, are data shared without formal agreements?	
8. Are data collected in line with a predefined data template and, if so, is entry into this template manual or computer assisted?	Data collection processes
9. Is a standardized list of crimes or an offence classification used to compile existing statistics? If so, is this classification used consistently across criminal justice institutions? Are guidelines or manuals available for staff to ensure consistent use of the classification? <i>Note: A classification, differently from a list, is organized in levels and aims to provide comprehensive and detailed descriptions of the topic at hand.</i>	Offence mapping
10. Does the offence classification (if it exists) capture all offences covered by the 11 main sections of ICCS? Are there any gaps or discrepancies in coverage? Are there significant differences in terminology, definitions or subcategories?	Offence mapping
11. Are data collected on the characteristics of the victim and/or perpetrator, the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, the context of the crime, etc. (i.e., disaggregating variables)?	Disaggregating variables
12. Are the disaggregating variables recorded consistently across all agencies and departments of the criminal justice system?	Disaggregating variables
13. Does the current system of disaggregating variables align with the standard set forth in ICCS? Are there any gaps or discrepancies in coverage?	Disaggregating variables
14. Are any business rules applied to the collection of crime and criminal justice data that restrict the statistics that can be produced? If so, which ones?	Statistical production
15. Are crime and criminal justice statistics regularly produced? If so, at which stages of the criminal justice system? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police/law enforcement? • Prosecution? • Courts? • Prisons? • Community-based corrections? At what frequency (e.g., weekly, monthly, yearly)?	Statistical production

Questions	Assessment area
16. Are statistics regularly (i.e., at least once a year, every year) provided to UNODC and mapped to the requirements of UN-CTS? If so, which agencies are currently covered by this data provision?	Statistical dissemination
17. Are crime and criminal justice statistics publicly disseminated? a. If so, who publishes them? Criminal justice agencies? Government departments? The national statistical office? Other? b. Are multiple sets of statistics published relating to the same stages of the criminal justice system, or is there a single source? If there are multiple sources, do they tell the same story or are there differences? c. Are statistics published separately by the various agencies of the criminal justice system or there are some joint publications?	Statistical dissemination
18. Does well-defined metadata exist (i.e., systems where metadata is documented, archived and disseminated, in line with internationally accepted standards?) ⁹ relating to current crime and criminal justice statistics?	Data quality and governance
19. Has there been a quality assessment of the accuracy of offence data (including of relevant disaggregating variables) in crime and criminal justice statistics? If so, in what year was the most recent assessment conducted? What was the main outcome of the assessment?	Data quality and governance
20. If your country has criminal justice institutions that operate at a subnational level (e.g., in a federal system), are all relevant jurisdictions included in existing national-level statistics? Would additional institutions need to be included to provide a full picture? If so, which ones?	Data quality and governance
21. Are existing databases compatible with the ICCS coding system? How will they have to be restructured or modified to accommodate the ICCS structure and coding system?	IT systems
22. Does the software used for recording and collecting data require an update to allow for accurate data recording in line with ICCS? Will the software have to be replaced or updated? What are the financial implications of this?	IT systems
23. Does a body or mechanism exist that coordinates crime and criminal justice institutions for statistical purposes? Which agency is in the lead, what is the mandate and what are the specific goals? Are all relevant agencies involved in these	Enabling factors

Questions	Assessment area
collaborative arrangements? If any are missing, could they be invited to join the coordination mechanism?	
24. Are the various data producers (police, prosecution, etc.) willing to change the contents of data collection and microdata structures to make them compliant with the ICCS?	Enabling factors
25. What human, technical and financial resources are available within the criminal justice institutions and/or statistical system to support the implementation of ICCS-based crime and criminal justice statistics? Will staff require additional training? What are the main bottlenecks?	Enabling factors
26. National statistical systems committed to implement ICCS at the UN Statistical Commission in 2015. Has an additional mandate been issued at national level by any government authority? Does this mandate provide the required resources to sustainably implement ICCS? Which agency has been tasked with implementation?	Enabling factors
27. Do any laws exist that prescribe the regular production of crime and criminal justice statistics? Are there any legal or jurisdictional limitations that may hinder the complete or accurate implementation of ICCS?	Enabling factors
28. Are there members of the academia, research institutes or individual researchers that are active in the area of quantitative research on crime and criminal justice? Are there NGOs or other members of civil society active in conducting quantitative research or analysis on specific topics relevant to crime and/or criminal justice?	Enabling factors

This list of questions can be expanded further and provide a consolidated assessment of the situation of crime and criminal justice statistics. Depending on the results of such an assessment, countries may choose different routes for ICCS implementation and the adoption of ICCS can trigger a broader process in which critical gaps in the national crime statistics system may be addressed simultaneously.

For instance, some countries may discover a need to completely overhaul the governance of their crime and criminal justice data for statistical purposes. Other countries may opt for bringing criminal justice agencies not currently involved in the collection of data into the statistical process so as to improve coverage and standardize disaggregating variables. Others may need to review the templates and processes used for the collection of relevant information in order to allow data to be produced according to ICCS definitions and its requested disaggregations. In other words, depending on the starting point of a country, ICCS implementation can imply anything from a complete overhaul of the crime and criminal justice statistics system to implementing adjustments in existing procedures.

Note that it is also essential to consider the wider statistical environment, administrative capacity and national strategic priorities. In this way, ICCS implementation efforts can be aligned with other strategic objectives related to crime and criminal justice statistics. For example, implementation can be fitted into existing revision cycles and modernization programmes of data systems in the criminal justice system or the national statistical system, or the implementation of ICCS could form part of a wider national data strategy for the criminal justice system. In other words, the timing of ICCS implementation should be considered in relation to other strategic national data-related objectives.

b. Define the scope of ICCS implementation

An important part of initiating the ICCS implementation process is for the national working group to set the scope and timeline of implementation and determine which type of data (criminal offences, persons arrested, etc), crime topics, ICCS categories, and disaggregating variables will be included in the process. It is advisable to make a realistic estimate of time and budget needs for multiple scenarios, ranging from a specific focus on a single category (e.g., intentional homicide) to full ICCS implementation across all sectors of the criminal justice system. To do so, it is advisable to first become familiar with ICCS in one of the available official languages or to translate ICCS into the corresponding national language. However, as noted in phase 1, translating ICCS into a national language can be a significant project in itself, with the experience of countries to date showing that translation requires significant linguistic, statistical and legal expertise.

The adoption of ICCS requires the mapping of national criminal legislation or existing national crime statistics into the ICCS categories (i.e., constructing a correspondence table). However, some ICCS categories may not be relevant in a country because they are not (or have not yet been) criminalized there. Each ICCS category without corresponding criminalized acts in any punitive legal provisions at any level of governance in a country can normally be excluded from national implementation.¹⁰ Note that determining which crimes are in the scope of implementation at the national level can be more challenging when operating in a federal system of government where some criminal laws are determined and enforced at the federal level while others are determined and enforced at the subnational level.

Criminal offences considered to be in the scope of implementation should include crimes that appear in a country's criminal legislation (not only in the national penal code, but also in any criminal legislation) and also include crimes related to international treaties. Chapter 3 provides further guidance on establishing the boundaries of ICCS and determining the universe of criminal activity relevant for ICCS implementation.

Implementation of ICCS can thus proceed in a number of different ways and it is important to determine which approach best fits the national context before proceeding with implementation.

Box 2 Experience of determining the scope of ICCS implementation in Germany

In Germany, a very comprehensive legal review and translation process was undertaken as part of the process of both determining the scope of implementation and mapping offences, in which academic legal experts and practitioners collaborated. Germany already

possessed a statistical system that produced statistics based upon local legal codes, covering criminal codes, secondary criminal law and some regulatory offences. As ICCS was a new standard classification of criminal offences for standardized data collection, a full review was taken of legislation and ICCS concepts in order to establish an appropriate correspondence table.

While establishing the national approach to the implementation process in Germany, the initial focus was on intentional homicide. This process served both as the commencement of the mapping processes and a feasibility study of the approach to be taken for broad ICCS implementation. An exhaustive conceptual process was undertaken to compare the concepts used respectively by the German criminal law and ICCS. As a result, a nuanced approach was developed for determining degrees of correspondence and finding best matches.¹¹

c. Develop a national workplan

Based on the assessment, the national working group should draft a detailed and time-bound national workplan for ICCS implementation. The aim is to create a plan that is endorsed and approved by the relevant national authorities. This may require approval or endorsement from the relevant authorizing agency or a government stakeholder depending on the institutional environment. The plan should be feasible, define clear milestones, contain clear lines of accountability and be supported and endorsed by all key stakeholders.

The national workplan should further identify all the steps, activities and outputs for the progressive implementation of ICCS. It should consider the capacity of the national crime statistics system and the existing institutional environment. An emphasis should be placed on taking an incremental approach to implementation so as to avoid overwhelming or disrupting the existing system and allow for institutional developments and potential statistical system upgrades.

At a minimum, the following elements should be included in the national workplan:

- A comparison of existing legislation/classifications/data with ICCS categories/definitions/disaggregating variables
- The production of a correspondence table to link the national system to ICCS
- Indicate which types of data (from police, from prosecution, from courts and/or from prison administration) will be made compliant with the ICCS
- Levels, categories or specific offences that will be made compliant with the ICCS
- The review and standardization of disaggregating variables
- The assessment (and adjustment) of data collection and processing systems

Clearly defining the vision (what is intended to be achieved) and how it will be achieved (objectives and expected results) is essential. The findings from the assessment should form the basis for establishing and prioritizing objectives. Objectives and expected results should refer to the specific deliverables, steps and tasks required to achieve ICCS implementation. For example, training law enforcement officials on the concepts and definitions of ICCS or mapping a national classification into ICCS are objectives. These objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound (SMART).

This will inevitably raise the question of the human and financial resources needed for ICCS implementation, particularly if there is a requirement for upgrading data recording systems

at the various stages of the criminal justice system to collect standardized information on criminal offences and disaggregating variables. A financing strategy should specify estimated costs and identify funding sources.

The discussion may also focus on the time institutions have to dedicate to the process. Countries can create a dynamic timetable that clarifies roles, responsibilities and expected outputs (see table 5 for a simplified example). The timetable should clarify to each stakeholder what needs to be done, when and by whom. The timetable should be flexible enough to account for unexpected events, which will allow the implementation strategy to adapt in line with other developments (such as planned system upgrades).

Table 5 Example of basic Gantt chart

Activity	Coordinating entity	Timeframe					
		Y1H 1	Y1H 2	Y2H 1	Y2H 2	Y3H 1	Y3H 2
Phase 1: Build the case							
Identify stakeholders	Lead entity						
Raise awareness	National working group						
Establish national working group	Lead entity						
Phase 2: Assess and plan							
Assess current data production and statistical capabilities	National statistical office						
Define scope of implementation	National working group						
Develop national workplan for implementation	National working group						
Phase 3: Implement the national workplan							
Develop correspondence table	National working group – Technical task force						
Pilot test	National working group – Implementation task force						
Integration into the statistical system	National working group						
Train staff	National working group – Implementation task force						
Data production	National statistical office						

Data dissemination	National working group – Dissemination task force						
Phase 4: Manage the classification							
Formalize adoption	National working group						
Collect feedback from users	National working group – Implementation task force						
Establish maintenance procedure	National working group – Technical task force						

2.3 Phase 3: Implement the national workplan

After the national workplan has been approved, implementation can commence. Implementation is a key part of the execution of the workplan. ICCS is expected to be implemented progressively into statistical systems and the workplan should provide a degree of flexibility to allow for the management of unforeseen obstacles or unexpected opportunities that may arise.

a. Develop correspondence table

The technical implementation of ICCS requires the mapping of national crime categories into ICCS categories. The process involves creating a so-called correspondence table, which is a critical technical activity for the adoption of ICCS. A correspondence table systematically explains where, and to what extent, categories in one classification can be found in other classifications. The technical specificity of the process is described in detail in chapter 4 of the present manual.

ICCS provides a standardized list of categories for various disaggregating variables that capture data on the event and characteristics of the victim and the perpetrator. These variables should also be harmonized as part of the ICCS implementation process and incorporated into the resulting correspondence product. Disaggregating variables are discussed in detail in chapter 5.

Several countries in the process of implementing ICCS have highlighted the importance of involving legal experts, statisticians and researchers in the technical preparatory work as well as the mapping process. In some cases, the official appointment of an independent subject matter expert to lead the mapping process might be beneficial.

b. Pilot test

It may be worthwhile running a pilot study on a limited set of data to identify and address any potential issues before moving to full implementation of the classification. The pilot data set could either attempt to reflect the diversity of offences, jurisdictions and reporting agencies typically involved in the production of crime and criminal justice statistics in the country or focus on specific crime categories (e.g., intentional homicide) as a proof of concept. Challenges that may arise during the pilot include difficulties in classifying specific offences, data entry problems and software glitches. The pilot can also reveal areas where training or additional guidance will be needed for relevant staff. One of the main benefits of a successful pilot is that it will demonstrate the feasibility of implementing ICCS in the data recording system and further cement buy-in from stakeholders by illustrating its added value before moving to wider adoption or adaptation of ICCS.

c. Integration into the statistical system

The next key step in implementing the national workplan is to move towards integration of ICCS into the statistical system and using the newly formalized national classification to produce or convert data (at any point in the data life cycle) in line with the new national standard. Depending on where a country is in terms of its crime and criminal justice data production capabilities, one of the two generalized approaches highlighted below could be applied. The most suitable approach will need to be identified for each country and a clear timeframe for implementation should be set in the national workplan.

Approach 1: Recode or parallel code microdata in line with ICCS

The first approach involves modifying individual data and records systems over time. Institutions can opt to recode past individual records and use the new classification as the basis for coding records from that point onwards. Doing so will provide data that are more accurate and compatible with ICCS. The technical task is to code at the most granular level, which is the individual criminal offence level (microdata). If this is to be done consistently, resources have to be allocated to ensure that time series are properly reviewed and reclassified and collection systems are updated or re-programmed. The use of the new classification and coding does not imply dropping other coding schemes, such as the articles or acts in the criminal legislation, additional disaggregating variables, or other categories that institutions may need to keep in place to, for example, meet national reporting requirements. Multiple coding schemes can be maintained by parallel- or dual-coding categories.

Approach 2: Recode existing statistical outputs in line with ICCS

In cases where it is not possible to modify microdata to make them compatible with ICCS, the conversion is done at the output stage of the statistical process, using the correspondence table to convert the local crime and criminal justice statistics into ICCS categories. The use of the new classification and coding does not imply dropping other parallel codings for statistical outputs, such as the articles or acts in the national criminal legislation, additional disaggregating variables, or other categories that institutions may need to keep in place in order to, for example, meet national reporting requirements.

The first approach offers the greatest potential in terms of flexibility and comprehensiveness of data production, as well as standardization, comparability and return on investment as all data at the individual criminal offence level (microdata) will be recorded for statistical purposes using the categories and disaggregating variables contained in the classification.

Completing the correspondence table is a fundamental step in adapting data and resolving any potential compatibility issues with historical data. The correspondence table can also highlight the need for, or issues with, disaggregating variables. Data should also be tested against the correspondence table to identify any potential mapping errors/anomalies and to reconcile the distribution across the aggregated levels of the classification for existing time series.

d. Train staff

For effective data provision from staff working with data for the police, the prosecution service, the courts and the prison system, adequate training on data collection, classification, analysis and reporting in the criminal justice system should be provided. This could include educating staff on the implementation of the classification, data entry procedures and quality assurance measures. Further items to highlight during training could include the structure, principles, categories, disaggregating variables and coding rules of ICCS, the correspondence between national offence categories and ICCS, and the value of the classification for improved data quality, comparability and evidence-informed decision-making within the criminal justice system. Such training could be delivered in-person, virtually or in the form of eLearning courses. Establishing a relationship with data providers and providing on-going support for them at the centralized point of collection also helps to ensure accurate data are provided and that any data quality issues or issues with timeliness are quickly resolved.

UNODC has developed an eLearning course on ICCS in English, French and Spanish, which is available on the UNODC eLearning platform (<https://elearningunodc.org/>). The platform offers self-paced online modules that are made open to individuals upon registration and are free of charge. The course outlines the basic building blocks of ICCS for assisting practitioners in the implementation of the classification and highlights how the use of standardized data can improve the response to criminal activity.

In addition to training sessions, the national working group may also consider developing clear ICCS implementation guidelines and coding manuals for relevant staff that relate to their day-to-day jobs. Such tools could explain the scope and purpose of ICCS clearly, describe the classification structure, highlight the coding rules with detailed examples and scenarios (real-world or hypothetical) and offer detailed procedures for collecting and recording crime data using ICCS.

e. Data production

Once ICCS has been introduced to data owners and integrated into data recording systems using the correspondence table, the production of statistics in line with the classification becomes possible. Producing relevant statistics that will be in high demand and disseminating them in user-friendly, open and machine-readable formats will ensure that the generated crime and criminal justice statistics inform society and contribute to the prevention of criminal activity.

Countries are encouraged to start small and increase their production of ICCS-compliant data over time. A starting point could be data on intentional homicide and/or other data requested in UN-CTS. Subsequently, production can gradually extend to the production of aggregated data at all ICCS level 1 categories. The scope could then shift to producing data disaggregated at level 2, then at level 3 and, if applicable, at level 4. Countries may also opt for priority-based data production, where they identify the most relevant or prevalent crimes and focus on their systematic recording. As a final step, additional data in line with the ICCS disaggregating variables can be introduced and produced systematically.

The exact sequence to follow or the areas to prioritize will differ by country. To make this determination, it is important to consider the outcomes of the initial assessment on data production and statistical capability and consider the scope of implementation as determined by the national working group during phase 2. In order to offer basic guidance to countries, chapter 6 contains a brief discussion on producing data in line with ICCS.

For additional guidance on the production of statistical data by criminal justice institutions, refer to the UNODC publication series dedicated to this topic. The series includes three specific guidelines for the police, the prosecution service and courts, and the prison system.^{12, 13, 14} A fourth guideline addresses the governance of statistical data in the criminal justice system more broadly.¹⁵

f. Dissemination of statistical data

Disseminating high-quality, granular and comparable data and utilizing that data to analyse crime and criminal justice trends is the most tangible benefit of implementing ICCS for stakeholders. In addition, it is beneficial to disseminate metadata to help users understand the context in which the data were collected and processed, including details of revisions and corrections to the data, an overview of definitions, methods and classification applied to

the data, and the contact details of the responsible data officer. This is useful for improving the usability of data and communicating data quality to data users.

There are many ways to disseminate statistics on crime and criminal justice. This typically involves a press release, the presentation of general results and the release of a set of predefined data tables according to a predetermined release calendar that is communicated to the public well in advance. As a next step, agencies can consider releasing (part of) the underlying data and metadata. Countries with more advanced reporting systems typically allow aggregated data to be downloaded in user-friendly open data formats, which allows the user to further analyse and process the data, fostering its reuse for research and other purposes. Data visualization tools, geographic information systems (GIS) solutions and application programming interfaces (API) are other frequently used options for disseminating data and making results more actionable.

Modern IT solutions allow for the dissemination of administrative data and official statistics through websites and data portals. Data portals are web-based interfaces designed to make finding, exploring and using data easier. Many organizations use web-based data portals to make their data available to the public. Such portals typically incorporate data visualizations such as graphs, maps and dashboards to make complex data and statistics easier to comprehend and explore. When implementing a data portal solution, it is important to seek impartial expert advice when making an informed decision and selecting the appropriate data portal tool for meeting organizational needs. It is also important to be aware of the advantages and shortcomings of each tool, its use of open or proprietary formats, its sustainability and the real cost of maintenance.

Developing a data dissemination plan can further ensure that statistics are used widely and generate the greatest value possible, without compromising the right to privacy or releasing data of a potentially sensitive nature. The method of dissemination and the form the resulting statistics take should address the needs of data users and be appropriate for the quality and nature of the data available. Some users prefer brief, non-technical summary statements while others require graphs, tables and in-depth analysis.

Developing engaging and user-friendly statistical data for dissemination is a costly and time-consuming undertaking, and without dedicated long-term funding the data can quickly become outdated or, at worst, irrelevant. For this reason, the resources available for producing and releasing statistics are a further consideration when designing statistical outputs in line with ICCS that can be sustainably produced on an ongoing basis.

Table 6 Examples of the digital dissemination of crime and criminal justice statistics

Country	Institution	Database	Weblink
Argentina	Ministry of Security	Sistema Nacional de Información Criminal	https://www.argentina.gob.ar/seguridad/estadisticascriminales
Australia	Australian Bureau of Statistics	Crime and Justice	https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/crime-and-justice
Germany	Bundeskriminalamt	Police Crime Statistics	https://www.bka.de/EN/CurrentInformation/Statistics/PoliceCrimeStatistics/policecrimestatistics_node.html
Indonesia	BPS-Statistics Indonesia	Justice and Crime	https://www.bps.go.id/en/statistics-table?subject=526

Jordan	Public Security Directorate	Security	Digital Statistics	https://www.psd.gov.jo/en-us/content/digital-statistics/
Mexico	National Institute of Statistics and Geography	Institute of and	Censo Nacional de Impartición de Justicia Estatal	https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/cnije/2023/
Mongolia	National Office of Mongolia	Statistics	Justice and Crime	https://1212.mn/en/statistic/statcate/573071/table/573071
Republic of Korea	Statistics Korea		Crime and Safety	https://kosis.kr/eng
	Korean Institute of Criminology	Institute of	Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics	https://www.kicj.re.kr/crimestats/portal/main/indexEngPage.do
Rwanda	National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda	Institute of	Rwanda for SDGs Data Portal – Goal 16	https://sustainabledevelopment-rwanda.github.io/16/
United States of America	Bureau of Statistics	of Justice	Justice Expenditure and Employment Tool	https://bjs.ojp.gov/jeet
-	UNODC		UNODC Data Portal	https://dataunodc.un.org/

2.4 Phase 4: Manage the classification

a. Formalize ICCS adoption and disseminate the classification

Once the national working plan has been finalized and the correspondence table has been tested and validated, countries may formalize the process by publishing the mapping as a new national crime classification or as an update to their pre-existing classification. The resulting document should provide the specific coding, definitions and linkages to ICCS, including guidance on standardizing disaggregating variables. This promulgation is often the prerogative of the head of the national crime statistics system. Note that the approval process may be more complex if there are specific requirements to be met under national legislation. For example, it may be necessary to conduct a public consultation on the classification in order to collect input and give the public an opportunity to provide feedback in a transparent manner.

It is important to ensure that the newly adopted classification is closely observed by all national crime and criminal justice institutions. National data standardization can be achieved by means of the promulgation of normative obligations that bound institutions to use the resulting national classification within their own records systems or at least to disseminate and share their information through data sets or statistical products fully aligned with it.

Adopting the classification as a normative instrument also justifies future investment in its gradual adoption and provides a degree of sustainability to the improvement process of crime and criminal justice statistics as a whole.

Disseminating the classification can be done in any number of ways. The main objective is to have a central repository that all users of the classification can access. This can include publishing the classification, developing comprehensive documentation that explains the purpose, structure and use of the classification in a clear and accessible manner, and developing an online portal dedicated to the classification that users can consult for coding queries or updates on the development/maintenance of the classification.

b. Collect feedback from users

The national working group should collect valuable feedback from users involved in implementing ICCS. This could take the form of a user satisfaction survey that can help identify challenges in implementing and applying ICCS, technical difficulties, data user needs or suggestions for improvement. Findings can be summarized in a report along with recommendations for addressing any of the issues identified. This will provide key information for an iterative approach to progressive ICCS implementation that addresses user concerns, challenges and needs quickly. Based on the feedback, training materials may be revised, implementation guidance updated or technical issues identified and addressed.

c. Evaluation and maintenance work

It is important to consider conducting an evaluation after completion of the first national workplan in order to understand what worked well and what could be improved on for future projects and identify any remaining issues that may require resolution. This involves the design of a monitoring, evaluation and learning framework before the implementation work commences in order to measure progress and determine bottlenecks and issues in the

delivery of results. Considerations for an evaluation exercise should be made when the national workplan and budget are drawn up. If the scope of ICCS implementation was limited in the first workplan – for example because the focus was on data produced by the police – successive workplan(s) should be developed in order to achieve a more comprehensive implementation of the ICCS.

As a country's criminal law invariably changes with the adoption of new laws and/or the repeal over time of existing laws, maintenance work will also be required as the national classification and its correspondence to ICCS need to be kept up to date. The ICCS working group should make long-term arrangements for regular maintenance of the correspondence table to ensure it is periodically updated and share such updates with all stakeholders. If maintenance is not addressed in the national workplan, agencies may independently introduce updates in their local version of the classification without coordinating with the wider group of stakeholders, allowing for data discrepancies to creep into the resulting statistical products.

Part II: Technical guidelines to ICCS implementation

This part of the present manual focuses on technical elements of the ICCS implementation process. This includes determining the scope of ICCS applicability, constructing a correspondence table, implementing disaggregating variables, producing data in line with ICCS and utilizing counting rules.

3 Boundaries of ICCS

This chapter highlights the difference between criminal offences and other infractions of the law in the context of different legal systems. The chapter also discusses how ICCS approaches different national definitions of crime and how to determine which acts to consider for the purpose of producing data on criminal offences.

3.1 Criminalized versus non-criminalized acts

All legal systems establish limits on certain behaviours. Prohibited or non-conformant behaviours can be sanctioned by different legal jurisdictions (e.g., civil law, commercial law or criminal law) but not all of them are within the scope of ICCS. Differentiating between criminalized and non-criminalized acts is key to the implementation of ICCS, as the classification is not aimed at classifying events that generally constitute purely administrative or civil offences (such as minor traffic violations). Yet this distinction is one of the principal challenges faced by countries during ICCS implementation.

The differentiation is particularly difficult in countries where criminalization can arise from multiple sources, including in the form of federal and state statutes, secondary legislation, as sanctions for a breach of regulatory provisions, and – in common law systems – from judicial decisions.¹⁶ For instance, national legal and institutional arrangements may allow for some acts to be simultaneously addressed by criminal and civil authorities (e.g., a public officer may be under investigation by law enforcement authorities and other public administration officials for the same conduct). Similarly, some institutions may be tasked with areas of work that cover both criminal and administrative offences (e.g., police forces both investigate crimes and administer fines for minor violations).

Thus, the main question for defining the boundaries of the subject matter of ICCS is which violations from different national legal systems should be considered as criminal offences for statistical purposes.

3.2 How ICCS approaches different national definitions of crime

ICCS recognizes that while certain common elements, such as harm and wrongfulness, can be associated with crime, they cannot wholly and operationally define it. Moreover, the vast disparity in approaches and sources used in the establishment of criminal laws by different countries makes it impossible to create a consistent and comprehensive definition of crime. Therefore, the approach used by ICCS is to consider criminal acts in national and international laws as the universe of acts that are subject to classification. However, the specific classification of such acts (i.e., their allocation to ICCS categories) is based on behavioural descriptions rather than strictly legal specifications derived from criminal law. This behaviour-based approach avoids issues created by legal complexities, resulting in a simplified and globally applicable classification with fewer ambiguities.

In short, it is easier to classify offences that are defined by behaviour and actions than by legal definitions and intent. In this way, ICCS aims to place each criminal act in a specific category, which improves the accuracy and the comparability of data, both within and between countries.

Behaviours and acts deemed criminal can also be found in legislation other than criminal codes. Offences defined as criminal are established by each country's legal system, both in criminal laws and through other types of legislation. Civil or commercial laws can devote

specific articles or sections to the punishment of acts that are to be tried before a criminal justice authority. Furthermore, special legislation to combat organized crime, gender-based violence or illicit drug trafficking often includes criminal sanctions as well. These special sections or articles can also be considered crimes if they are sanctioned criminally, even if the parent or overarching law is not a criminal law as such.

3.3 National ICCS applicability

What constitutes a crime in one country may be considered a minor infraction in another, or not a crime at all. Therefore, behaviours included in ICCS may not be criminalized in some countries. This means that data on criminal offences have to be interpreted in light of the national legislative context. While some behaviours are universally considered as criminal offences, such as the intentional killing of a person by another person (intentional homicide) or the unlawful taking of property from another person (theft), other behaviours can be treated differently by national criminal legislation.

For example, national data on ICCS section 06 *Acts involving controlled drugs or other psychoactive substances* have to be analyzed with consideration of the varying approaches countries take towards behaviours within this broad category. Depending on the country, certain acts – such as the personal use of controlled drugs or alcohol products – may be classified as a criminal offence, an administrative infraction or permitted by law. These differences need to be considered carefully when interpreting data at the national, regional or global levels by ICCS category.

It is important to reiterate that ICCS is not an instrument for shaping or changing legislation in countries. The ICCS is designed to include all existing legal provisions that regulate what is considered criminal behaviour at country level and to translate this into comprehensive and comparable statistical data. Its implementation is not conditional on the criminalization of all crime categories contained in the classification. In other words, implementing ICCS does not imply in any way that existing criminal laws have to be changed for them to align with the classification.

The applicability of ICCS is thus shaped by the national legal context and should be limited to offences that are criminalized nationally. Hence, it may occur that not all ICCS categories can be mapped to the national penal code while every criminal offence of any country should be mapped into ICCS. In cases where there is no direct match between criminal offences in national law and ICCS categories, residual categories of the classification should be used in order to comprehensively classify all acts that are considered criminal in a national legal context.

Deciding which offences to include and exclude from ICCS implementation can only be done through a thorough analysis of the national legislation and the processes by which these prohibited conducts are registered, investigated, tried and sanctioned. Chapter 4 offers more guidance and concrete steps for mapping national offences into ICCS. The table below illustrates the breakdown of the different elements to be considered in terms of determining ICCS applicability.

Table 7 **National ICCS applicability**

		Behaviours as defined by ICCS	
		Behaviour included as specific ICCS category	Behaviour NOT included as specific ICCS category
Behaviours as defined by national law	Criminal offence	Include	Use residual or broad ICCS category
	Administrative infraction	Exclude	Exclude
	Behaviour permitted by law	Exclude	Exclude

As shown in table 7, an offence included in ICCS may not be considered a criminal offence under national law but instead be considered prohibited by administrative regulation. Such infractions fall outside the boundaries of ICCS and should be excluded. Where appropriate, separate statistics on administrative infractions can be produced and presented alongside data on criminal offences.

3.4 Boundaries of ICCS in the context of different legal systems

Concrete examples that contrast criminal offences with other infractions offer useful guidance when implementing ICCS. When assessing national legal settings for this purpose, the following questions offer a valuable starting point.

- Which typologies of offences are used and how are they defined (e.g., felony, misdemeanour, contravention, summary offence, regulatory offence or administrative offence)?
- Which ICCS areas are covered by non-criminal regulation or special criminal acts (e.g., tax-related crimes, drug-related crimes or crimes that affect the environment)?
- Do types of offence differ in procedural terms (e.g., the agency establishing the violation, the agency charging the violation, the agency imposing sanctions or the means of appeal)?
- Do types of offence differ by the type or nature of sanctions?

Table 8 provides examples of how the boundaries of criminal offences are drawn in different national legal systems, based on the specific context of the justice system and on different types of criminal offences that have evolved over time.

Table 8 Examples of ICCS boundaries in the context of different legal systems

Legal system	Country example	Legal classification	Description	Examples	ICCS boundary
Civil law	France ¹⁷	Crime	Most serious offence punished with 15 years to life imprisonment	Murder, rape	Crimes and délits would be categorized into ICCS, while contraventions may or may not be categorized in ICCS and should be assigned accordingly
		Délit	Offence of moderate seriousness punished with 2 months to 10 years' imprisonment	Manslaughter, theft, sexual assault	
		Contravention Class 1 (least serious) to Class 5 (most serious)	Least serious offence punished with a fine	Threat, minor assault, non-compliance with parking regulations	
Common law	United States of America ¹⁸	Felony Class A (most serious) to Class E (least serious)	Most serious offence punishable with 1 year of imprisonment or more	Arson, embezzlement, kidnapping, murder	Felonies and misdemeanours would be categorized into ICCS, while infractions are generally excluded
		Misdemeanour Class A (most serious) to Class C (least serious)	Punishable with 5 days to 1 year of imprisonment	Minor assault	
		Infraction	Technically punishable with 5 days or fewer of imprisonment but mostly punished by fine and often considered a civil offence	Littering, jaywalking, campsite violations	
Religious law	Saudi Arabia ¹⁹	Hudud	Specific crimes (<i>hudud</i>) that face fixed Qur'anic punishment	Theft, robbery, blasphemy, apostasy	All offence types may in principle be categorized into ICCS

		Qisas	Crimes against an individual or family for which punishment is equal retaliation in the Qur'an	Murder, manslaughter, serious assault	
		Ta'zir	Crimes for which no punishment is specified in the Qur'an and which are punished at the discretion of the judge – nowadays many <i>ta'zir</i> offences are defined by national regulations (nizams)	Bribery, drug abuse, trafficking	
Mixed	Kenya ²⁰ (Common law system that recognizes customary law)	Felony	Crimes punishable with 3 years' imprisonment or more	Treason, attempted murder, forgery	Felonies and misdemeanours would be categorized into ICCS, customary law generally falls out of the boundaries of ICCS
		Misdemeanour	Any crime that is not a felony	Personation, counterfeiting trademarks, neglect of official duty	
		Customary law	Focus on restorative justice and generally only applicable to civil cases ²¹	-	

4 Building a correspondence table

Implementing ICCS into national crime data collections requires the completion of a correspondence table that identifies the relationship between national crime categories and ICCS categories. The process described in this chapter can serve as a template for mapping national definitions into ICCS.

The chapter starts by providing technical advice and then lays out concrete steps for mapping into ICCS. It also presents the correspondence table template for mapping any national system of crime and criminal justice statistics into ICCS.

4.1 Technical advice

A correspondence table identifies all linkages between the various types of national crime categories and ICCS. This can include either national penal legislation or an existing national crime classification or list. The table systematically explains where, and to what extent, national categories can be found in the ICCS framework. Hence, a correspondence table provides a way to report national crime data as closely as possible to the common standards defined in ICCS. In short, the correspondence table acts as a translation key between national categorizations of crime and ICCS.

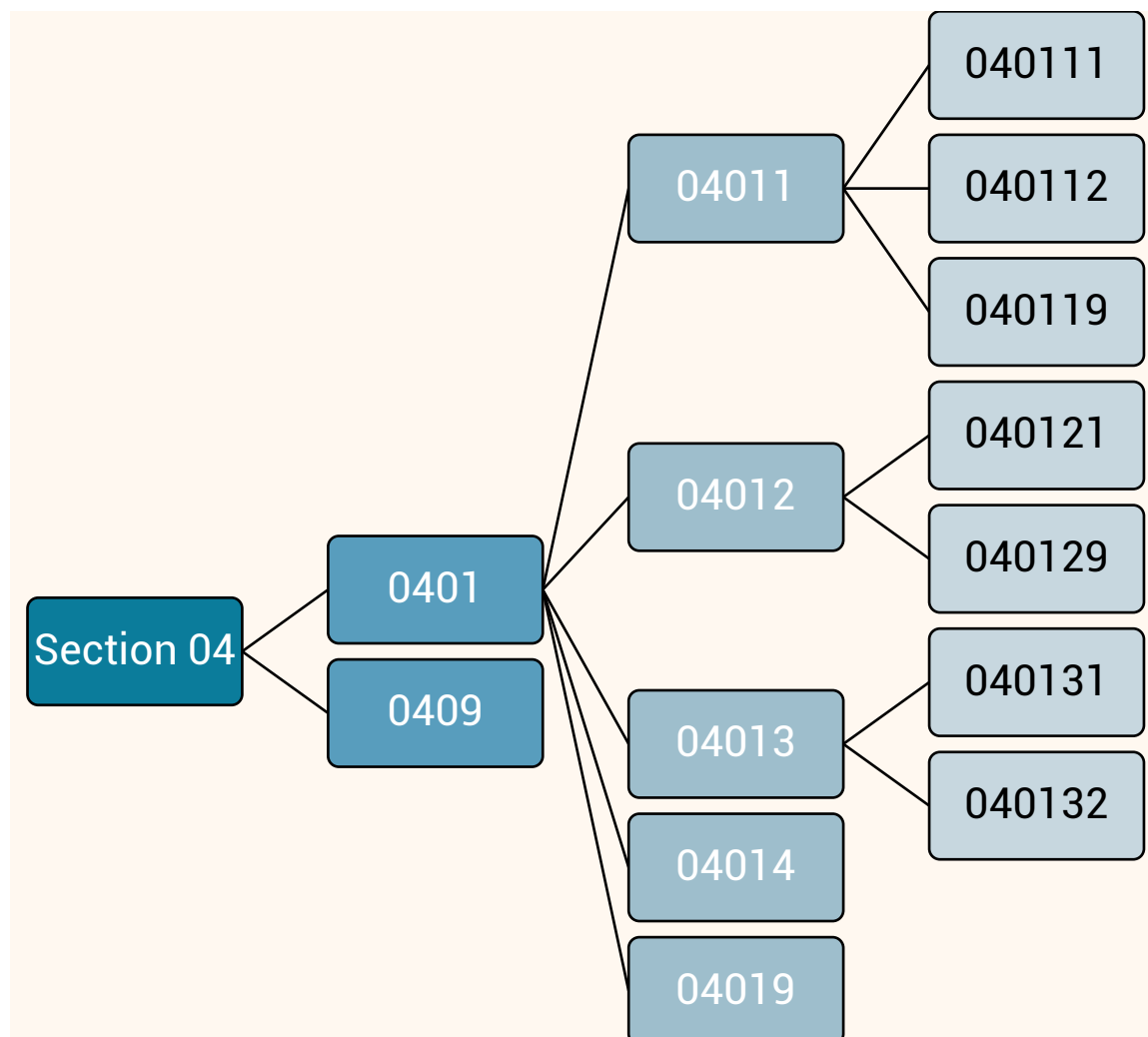
The process of creating a correspondence table is referred to as mapping and entails linking each national offence category to a corresponding offence category in ICCS. Any given penal code article or national crime classification category determined to be in the scope of implementation should be allocated to a corresponding ICCS category. National crime classification categories that are disaggregated by offence characteristics should not be mapped separately but should be included by utilizing disaggregating variables (see chapter 5). For example, if national crime classification categories distinguish between attempting, preparing for or instigating a serious assault, these categories would all be mapped to ICCS category 020111 *Serious assault*.

When implementing ICCS, the aim should always be to map a given penal code article or national classification category at the lowest hierarchical level possible. Requiring in-depth knowledge of both ICCS and the national categorization of crime, this is done by finding the most appropriate and detailed ICCS category to match with the national penal code article or national classification category. If an item cannot be linked at the lowest hierarchical level, a match should be identified at a more aggregate ICCS level. However, it is worth keeping in mind that mapping the most detailed national penal code articles or classification categories into the most detailed corresponding categories of ICCS will produce more accurate results than mapping at a higher, more aggregated level of the ICCS hierarchy.

4.1.1 ICCS hierarchy

As noted in chapter 1, one of the design principles of ICCS is its hierarchical structure. This implies that more detailed, lower-level categories can be aggregated into broader, higher-level categories. Figure 4 shows this principle graphically for section 04 of ICCS.

Figure 4 Hierarchical structure of ICCS section 04



Section 04 is composed of two divisions, namely ICCS categories 0401 *Robbery* and 0409 *Other acts against property involving violence or threat against a person*. The total number of offences under section 04 can thus be obtained by adding the offence counts of categories 0401 and 0409 together. The same principle applies to lower-level categories. Note that offences should only be counted once. For example, if a national category is matched with ICCS category 040111 *Robbery from the person in a public location*, to avoid double counting it should only be counted under this ICCS category despite the fact that it also matches with higher-level ICCS categories.

In principle, the sum of subcategories will always be equal to the statistical offence count of their respective higher-level parent category, although this may not always hold in practice. During the mapping process, as it may not always be possible to match all national categories with a respective ICCS category at the lowest level, higher-level ICCS categories may contain national categories that are not present at the lower level.

Limiting the mapping of any national category to a single ICCS level and always respecting the hierarchical structure of the classification are recommended. Moreover, the aim should always be to map a given national category at the lowest ICCS hierarchical level possible (not higher than level 2). Prior familiarization with ICCS, its structure and rationale are thus a prerequisite for successfully completing the mapping process. Every effort should be made to ensure that the team in charge of the mapping process has in-depth knowledge both of ICCS and the national categories considered in scope for implementation.

4.1.2 Match types

The mapping process entails linking the national categories in question to categories in ICCS. Broadly speaking there are three types of matches that can occur,²² namely i) one-to-one, ii) many-to-one and iii) one-to-many. All three are briefly noted below to illustrate the matching process.²³ It should be noted that with the exception of one-to-one matches, a certain degree of approximation is likely to be introduced in the matching process and this should be documented in the metadata.

One-to-one matches

One-to-one matches involve a direct relationship between the national category and ICCS. For example, the national category under consideration may be an offence labelled serious assault that exactly follows the ICCS definition of category 020111 *Serious assault*. In this case the national category can be directly mapped into the corresponding ICCS category.

Figure 5 Example of one-to-one matching



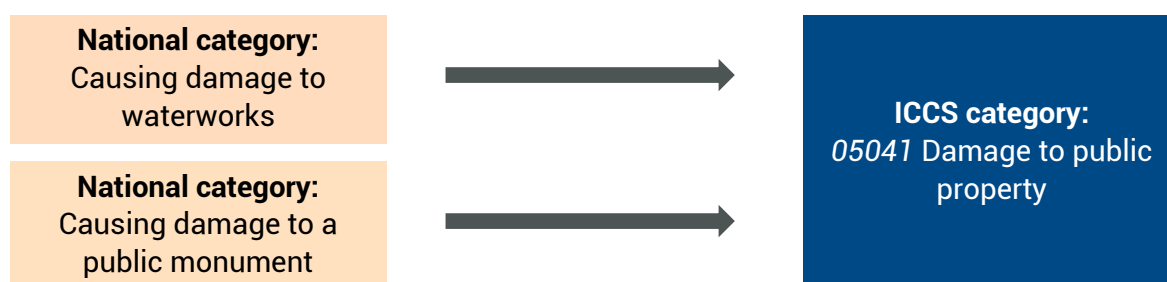
As noted above, however, it can also be the case that multiple national categories correspond to a single ICCS category (many-to-one) or, conversely, a national category may correspond with multiple ICCS categories (one-to-many). These two match types will be discussed next.

Many-to-one matches

Many-to-one relationships can occur when national categories contain a higher level of detail than the corresponding offence category identified by ICCS. For example, if the national law distinguishes between different kinds of damage to public property, such as causing damage to waterworks or causing damage to a public monument, these items should all be categorized under 05041 *Damage to public property* in ICCS.

These types of matches are generally straightforward to address, as this simply involves mapping multiple national categories into the corresponding ICCS category. As with one-to-one matches, it is key that each national crime category is mapped only once in the correspondence table and has a unique correspondence with ICCS. In other words, every national crime category should only be linked to a single ICCS category.

Figure 6 Example of many-to-one matching (combination)



One-to-many matches

One-to-many relationships are more challenging to address. This type of match links a single national category with multiple ICCS categories, meaning that there is no unique link to ICCS. From a statistical point of view this is problematic, as it may inadvertently lead to problems such as double counting or the inconsistent classification of offences. The creation of one-to-many matches should be avoided. Various options exist to address such cases:

1. Check if additional information exists, for example at the microdata level to determine whether it is possible to establish correspondence with a single ICCS category.
2. If such additional information is not available, the national category should be assigned to the ICCS category that is the closest reasonable approximation and users should be comprehensively informed about the possible limitations of the matching.
3. It may be possible to find a one-to-one match with a broader, higher-level ICCS category by recognizing the hierarchical structure of ICCS, with broader categories encompassing more specific subcategories. However, this requires careful consideration as the total offence count of the higher-level category would not correspond to the sum of the data on the lower-level categories.
4. It may also be possible to design a statistical procedure to distribute the offence count of a national category between multiple ICCS categories. However, this should be extensively documented and appropriate guidance for data producers and users should be developed to ensure that the established procedure is followed closely and the statistics produced are consistent. In general, countries are strongly encouraged to find unique matches with ICCS instead.
5. In other cases, the national offence category could be matched to the residual item of the corresponding ICCS category. While this approach is correct from a statistical point of view, the correct interpretation of data derived from this category would be challenging for users.

Figure 7 Example of one-to-many matching (decomposition)



Establishing a unique match with ICCS can be particularly challenging when a national penal code article is quite broad in nature or contains very specific subsections. In such instances a single article may cover multiple acts/behaviours that may each relate to a different ICCS category. Whenever feasible, establishing a unique match with ICCS by identifying the most relevant behaviour within the penal code article is recommended. For this reason, the team working on the correspondence table should be comprised of statisticians, practitioners, legal experts and data analysts from the national statistical office and relevant criminal justice institutions. The team's combined knowledge and experience could help identify the best match for the most relevant behaviour, taking into account the spirit or intent of the legislation or the traditional interpretation of such a crime in common legal practice.

In addition, establishing a unique match requires the development of a methodology for analysing legislation in order to decompose penal code articles and identify which criminal behaviours are contained within the article and exclude aspects that do not correspond to criminal offences. Moreover, penal code articles often contain aggravating factors that should be considered. For example, the penal codes of some countries do not readily distinguish between ICCS categories 0401 *Robbery* and 0502 *Theft*. Theft can be specified nationally as taking control of another's property without specifying the use or threat of force, which is one of the key differentiators between theft and robbery in ICCS. In such cases, the use of force may be listed as an aggravating factor in the penal code article, but such aggravating factors are not always qualified in administrative records and the involvement of violence in a case of theft may not always be clear. Hence, the quality and detail of data that are recorded at the operational level strongly influence the ability to produce highly detailed and accurate statistics. It is thus important to map these kinds of potential issues, develop a clear methodology and work closely with implementing partners to ensure that data collection tools are aligned with statistical information requirements.

Once a suitable match has been established, countries are encouraged to clearly identify and describe any inconsistencies, discrepancies or possible overlaps as methodological notes in the correspondence table template (see section 4.3), which should also include a description of the other behaviours that are included in the match. Moreover, these details should be carefully documented in the metadata so that data users can better understand the applied solution and limitations of the data (see box 3 for more information on metadata).

If administrative record systems are sufficiently detailed and statistical capacity sufficiently developed for it to be possible to distinguish between different subsections of the same penal code article, it again becomes possible to establish unique one-to-one matches for each individual subsection with specific ICCS categories. Should countries opt for such a detailed matching, it is important to consider adding further guidance and methodological notes to the correspondence of national crime classifications and national crime statistics that are

the product of those detailed penal code articles, as national crime classifications and indicators may not have such detailed disaggregations.

4.1.3 ICCS mapping guidance

Terminology

As ICCS uses behavioural descriptions of criminal acts and events rather than legal provisions, common terminology and offence names that are widely recognized and defined in criminal legislation, such as 'rape', 'harassment' or 'burglary', are given specific definitions intended for statistical purposes in the classification. Although these definitions may differ from the common legal uses of the terms, the event-based approach avoids the complexities of legal definitions and provides globally applicable terminology.

Therefore, when mapping national categories into ICCS, the national use and definition of terms and names need to be checked for consistency and comparability with their use in ICCS. Comparing shorthand names alone is insufficient for mapping a national offence, as the meaning and definition of shorthand terms in ICCS may be different from those used in national legal systems. The full act/event descriptions and all explanatory notes included in ICCS need to be taken into careful consideration. Annex 2 of ICCS provides an alphabetical index that lists all offences captured in ICCS so that the most appropriate ICCS code can be identified quickly and accurately.

Mapping national categories entails the use and analysis of their complete definitions. For criminal legislation and national penal code articles, use of the full wording of each article is recommended. For existing national crime classifications, the full definition of each category should be considered.

Inclusions and exclusions

As noted in chapter 1, ICCS provides guidance for identifying the best possible match. Each category of ICCS features a non-exhaustive list of inclusions that are examples of offences or acts/events to be mapped into the respective category. These examples are not subcategories but important or common offences belonging to the respective category that are aimed at providing practical guidance for the allocation of national offences or offence categories when building a correspondence table. It should be kept in mind that the terms used in the inclusions may differ from how concepts are used in the national legal system (especially when using a non-English, translated version of ICCS).

Most categories also have a list of exclusions, which are examples of offences or acts that are classified elsewhere, despite similarities to the category. Each example offers a code referring to the category in which the excluded offence should be allocated instead. Together, exclusions and inclusions reinforce mutual exclusivity – i.e., they clarify the borders between categories to ensure that offences are assigned to one category only.

For example, ICCS category 0703 *Corruption* states that both active and passive bribery of national public officials are included within its hierarchy. However, a course of action demanded from a person by another person through the use of force, a threat, intimidation, a threat to reveal compromising information, or a threat of defamation should be excluded from this category. Instead, such acts should be classified under ICCS category 0205 *Coercion*.

Figure 8 Example of ICCS inclusions and exclusions

<p>0703 Corruption</p> <p>Unlawful acts as defined in the United Nations Convention against Corruption and other national and international legal instruments against corruption.</p>	<p>+</p> <p>-</p>	<p>Inclusions: Active and passive bribery of national public officials; active and passive bribery of foreign public officials and officials of public international organizations; active and passive bribery in the private sector; apply all inclusions listed in 07031–07039</p> <p>Exclusions: Asking or enticing another to commit bribery by the use of force, threat, intimidation, threat to reveal compromising information, or the threat of defamation (0205)</p>
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Residual categories

Although ICCS is an exhaustive classification to the extent that this is feasible, it is unlikely to have the same level of detail as national categorizations of crime. Nonetheless, ICCS provides all necessary categories to accommodate the various manifestations of all basic underlying criminal behaviours. Residual categories play a prominent role in achieving this.

Differences between similar national categories often refer to details or circumstances that do not alter the core underlying conduct or behaviour that is being criminalized. For instance, countries may have several similar national categories describing similar acts or behaviours where the only real difference is the use of a firearm, the sex of the victim or the age of the perpetrator. In such cases, the corresponding ICCS category remains the same and those differences can be captured through disaggregating variables.

Sometimes the underlying behaviour is decidedly different from the categories offered by ICCS, however. Such cases should be mapped into residual categories within their family whenever possible. Most parent categories of ICCS contain residual subcategories represented by the word “other” in the category name (e.g., ICCS category 07019 *Other acts of fraud*) for cases where a national category cannot be mapped into an established category. National categories should be mapped into these residual categories as sparingly as possible and only upon a thorough review of the full classification to ensure that a category is not overlooked.

Adding additional categories

Depending on the needs of the criminal justice system and the level of detail found in the definitions of national categories, countries may consider expanding the ICCS hierarchy and add categories that are of particular national interest (creating a local variant of the classification). When doing so, however, it is highly recommended that countries adhere strictly to the principles governing ICCS. This implies respecting the hierarchical structure of ICCS, ensuring mutual exclusivity between categories, and following the coding scheme set by ICCS. Should countries venture down this road, it is suggested that they create new subcategories only for existing ICCS categories at either level 3 or 4 without “children” (i.e., no further subcategories exist). No new categories should be created within already populated hierarchical levels as this could potentially affect international comparability and compatibility with future revisions of ICCS.

Figure 11 provides an example of the creation of new subcategories for the parent category 07032 *Embezzlement*, which is divided into two new categories that distinguish the sector in

which the act is committed. The parent category specifies embezzlement for both the public and private sectors. By adding the additional subcategories, it is possible to differentiate between the two. This addition is possible because it respects the hierarchical structure of ICCS, ensures mutual exclusivity and follows the ICCS coding scheme. Moreover, category 07032 *Embezzlement* does not have subcategories in the current iteration of ICCS.

Figure 9 Example of additional categories in section 07

Section 07 Acts involving fraud, deception or corruption	
	<p>0703 Corruption</p>
	<p>07032 Embezzlement Embezzlement, misappropriation or diversion by a public official or a person who directs or works in a private sector entity of any property, public or private funds or securities or any other thing of value entrusted to the public official or person by virtue of his or her position.</p>
	<p>070321 Embezzlement in the public sector (newly added subcategory) Embezzlement, misappropriation or diversion by a public official of any property, public or private funds or securities or any other thing of value entrusted to the public official or person by virtue of his or her position.</p>
	<p>070322 Embezzlement in the private sector (newly added subcategory) Embezzlement, misappropriation or diversion by a person who directs or works in a private sector entity of any property, public or private funds or securities or any other thing of value entrusted to the public official or person by virtue of his or her position.</p>

4.2 Step-by-step process

The steps detailed below offer a guide for the mapping of national criminal offences and crime indicators into ICCS. To facilitate the process, use of the correspondence table template described below is recommended, which will make it easier to compare national mappings with those of other countries. In this way, other countries can understand comparability of key offences when conducting cross-country analysis.

The steps also illustrate the process of identifying the “best match” for a particular code. While this can seem like an opaque process, it is best thought of as a logical process of elimination that involves working from the lowest to the highest level of detail to find the best conceptual fit, or looking at the descriptions and inclusions and exclusions to find the category where the core behaviour of the offence has the strongest overlap. Another way of checking the logic of the mapping process is to consider how countries that have already completed their mapping allocated certain offences.

Note that the process outlined in this section refers only to the development of the correspondence table and is meant to be undertaken within the framework of the overall national implementation process of ICCS. For further information on the activities leading to the development of a correspondence table, see chapter 2.

Table 9 **Building a correspondence table step-by-step**

Step	Instructions
1.	Before proceeding, ensure that a national working group has been formed and a workplan has been drafted that clearly determines the scope of implementation as detailed in phases 1 and 2 of the implementation process. As an initial step, it is also beneficial to translate ICCS into the national language.
2.	The creation of a technical task force under the national working group dedicated to developing the correspondence table is recommended. Involve personnel from criminal justice institutions, statisticians, legal experts and data analysts in the process to ensure that all perspectives are considered.
3.	Review the existing national classification, national penal code and other relevant legislation (henceforth “the national categories”) determined to be in the scope of the implementation process (see chapter 3). The national categories also include relevant articles that may be included in other laws or data sets provided by national authorities other than the police, the prosecution service, the courts and the prison system. Understand the structure, categories and definitions of the national categories before proceeding. In addition, it may be useful to acquire and review any existing official documentation and coding manuals for the national classification.
4.	Identify and understand the definitions, structure and categories of ICCS. Critical to this step is familiarization with the lists of inclusions and exclusions for every category.
5.	Adopt a template for the correspondence table. Using the template provided on the UNODC website is recommended. Should a country want to modify it or develop a template of its own, it must ensure that, at a minimum, there are dedicated columns for accommodating reference data (law, article, section),

the description (definition) of every national crime category, the coding and description of the corresponding ICCS categories, and methodological notes.

To facilitate the use and interpretability of the correspondence table, every national category should be recorded individually in a separate row in the correspondence table. Avoid lumping several categories into a single row, even if they all have the exact same correspondence.

The mapping process may involve one-to-one, one-to-many and many-to-one relationships between national categories and the ICCS categories. Refer to the guidance provided in section 4.1.2. to determine how to address each match type. As stated above, cases of one-to-many matches between a single national category and multiple ICCS categories need to be reviewed carefully. In the end, a unique match between a national and a single ICCS category needs to be found, even if the result is a complex or partial match.

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6. Initiate the mapping process to establish relationships between the national categories and ICCS using the correspondence table template. Countries are advised to consult with subject matter experts as early as possible when reviewing complex or difficult matches. Expert input may define ad-hoc mapping criteria, which must be consistently applied to the whole correspondence table. Setting these criteria as early as possible may avoid difficulties further along the process.

Start with the most detailed categories of the national system and find the most relevant ICCS category by looking for its shorthand name in ICCS, the correspondence table template or the alphabetical index in annex 2 of ICCS. Find the most appropriate level 1 ICCS category and continue with more detailed level 2 and level 3 ICCS categories. If possible, go down to the lowest level 4 ICCS category to find a match for the national article, category or indicator.

As a rule, correspondence should be established at the lowest possible hierarchical level of ICCS. Consult the definition of the ICCS category and compare it to the definition or description provided in the national system. Always check the list of inclusions provided in ICCS to confirm a match or find a better match in the list of exclusions.

If a country has signed and ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption (A/RES/58/4), the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (A/RES/55/25) or other relevant United Nations Conventions, some mapping may be simplified.²⁴ Check if your country is party to these conventions, whether the offences criminalized in the conventions are criminalized in national law according to the text of the conventions and whether statistical data on the criminalized offences are produced (see annex 1 for a brief overview of United Nations conventions and ICCS mapping).

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7. Attribute all residual items not mapped to an ICCS category into the ICCS category "other crime" at the appropriate level (for example, 07019 *Other acts of fraud*). National categories should be mapped into these residual categories as sparingly as possible, and only upon a thorough review of the full classification to ensure that an existing ICCS category is not overlooked.

In the event that no correspondence between a national category and ICCS can be achieved, consider creating new national statistical categories or revising existing ones to facilitate alignment with ICCS for statistical purposes.

Any remaining unmapped articles, categories or indicators should be mapped into ICCS category 1109 *Other criminal acts not elsewhere classified* and be reported to UNODC for potential inclusion in a future revision of ICCS.

8. Document the mapping decisions made for each category in the correspondence table template as accurately as possible, including the rationale behind the chosen mapping and notes where necessary for transparency and future reference. The correspondence table should become a stand-alone document that anyone can easily interpret, in particular those who were not part of its development.
9. Upon finalization of the correspondence table, verify that all relevant national categories have been successfully included in the table, and that each of them has been mapped into an ICCS category.
10. Validate the mapping exercise through a consultation with external subject matter experts and representatives from relevant criminal justice agencies. Solicit feedback on the proposed mapping and revise as necessary based on expert input and consensus. Countries may also wish to share the correspondence table with other sectors such as civil society organizations, academia and other institutions that work with crime and criminal justice data.
11. It is important to acknowledge that the mapping process is often an iterative process that may require multiple rounds of review, refinement and validation. In addition, be prepared to periodically revisit and revise the correspondence table based on feedback, new information or changes either to the national categories or ICCS. It may be worthwhile establishing procedures for maintaining and revising the correspondence table on a regular basis or as needed.

In some cases, countries may have adopted a coding system to facilitate the processing and harmonization of data. In such cases, the correspondence table might refer to the coding system adopted by the country. To illustrate, table 10 highlights how the matching of different articles of the German penal code with ICCS category 0101 *Intentional homicide* can be facilitated through the use of codes developed by the national Police (Bundeskriminalamt, BKA).

Table 10 **Matching German criminal code articles and statistical offence categories with ICCS**

Code	Definition	German criminal code ²⁵	BKA* catalogue of criminal offences ²⁶
0101	Unlawful death inflicted upon a person with the intent to cause death or serious injury	Section 211 (1) Murder under specific aggravating circumstances	010000
		Section 212 (1) or (2) Murder	020010
		Section 213 Less serious case of murder	020020
		Section 216 (1) Killing upon request	020030
		Section 227 (1) Bodily harm resulting in death	221010
		Section 231 (1) Taking part in a brawl leading to death	221020

* Bundeskriminalamt (BKA).

4.3 Correspondence table template

The correspondence table template features all 11 level 1 sections of ICCS, with each of them having a dedicated table. Each table has three main columns and several sub-columns that identify the respective national and ICCS categories that are being linked. The correspondence table template includes all ICCS offence categories.

Avoid creating a country-specific correspondence table. The correspondence table template contains everything required to complete the ICCS mapping. Crucially, it also facilitates the comparison of correspondence tables developed by different countries. The correspondence table template can be downloaded directly from the UNODC website.

As stated previously, each criminal offence defined by national legislation needs to be mapped into an ICCS category. As such, it can happen that more than one criminal offence will be matched with a single ICCS category. Therefore, during the mapping, additional rows might be needed in order to accommodate all relevant national offence categories into each ICCS category. The present manual also provides a correspondence table of selected international conventions. If the conventions listed in annex 1 have been implemented in national criminal law, the annex provides additional assistance for mapping national criminal code articles or offence categories to ICCS.

Table 11 **Structure of correspondence table template**

Columns and subcolumns	Details
ICCS Offence Category	
Code	Pre-filled
Level	Pre-filled
Description	Pre-filled
Definition	Pre-filled
Inclusions	Pre-filled
Exclusions	Pre-filled
National Category	
Law	Fill with the name of the legislation
Article	Fill with the article of the offence in the national legislation.
Section	Fill with the section of the offence in the national criminal code or other legislation
Description	Fill with the name of the offence
Notes	Fill with notes describing the rationale of the correspondence decision, discrepancies in definitions and any possible overlap with other categories. It is highly recommended that countries strive to fill this column in as detailed a fashion as possible. Ideally, every

correspondence should have explanatory and methodological notes.

Complex matches

As noted in sections 4.1 and 4.2, it is critical to identify complex or difficult matches. ICCS is built to cover most criminal offences, but due to the wide variation in how criminal offences are designated between countries, it is likely that every country will encounter some compatibility issues between categories in their national classification and ICCS during the mapping process. To allow ICCS-based statistics to be as consistent and comparable as possible, capturing and illustrating these complex matches is crucial. Documenting the details of such matches in the correspondence table template is highly recommended. When disseminating a national crime indicator or category that has a complex match as an ICCS-compliant statistic, it is important to include information on the mapping as metadata in order to effectively communicate the definitions applied, offences included, method used to compute the offence count and any potential limitations for international comparability.

Consider, for example, the fictive national category *Theft of motor vehicle parts or contents*. This category could technically be mapped into two separate ICCS categories:

- 050213 *Theft of parts of a motorized land vehicle*, which includes theft of car tires, motors, transmission, windows and other parts.
- 050222 *Theft of personal property from a vehicle*, which includes siphoning gas or oil, theft of a purse from a vehicle, theft of an electronic device from a vehicle, theft of a GPS device, or theft of any other item in the vehicle.

In this example the national classification does not distinguish between parts and contents of a motor vehicle and no additional information (such as microdata or disaggregating variables) exist to enable the attribution to a single ICCS category. Therefore, the national crime category is technically a match for both ICCS categories. An expert determination will have to be made to assign the national category to the ICCS category that forms a reasonably close approximation. The match should be noted in the correspondence table and the details behind the decision should be provided.

Rather than choosing between the two possible ICCS categories that match the national category, another possible approach to addressing the partial match is to map the national category to a single ICCS category at a higher, more aggregated level. In the case of the above example, this would imply mapping the national category to ICCS category 0502 *Theft*. As this may lead to inconsistencies when combining lower-level categories into higher-level categories, the additional offences to be included at the higher level of aggregation should be noted in the comments field.

Box 3 Essentials of metadata

In general terms, metadata are data that define and describe other data. More specifically, they are documentation that describe statistical data and statistical processes in a standardized way by providing information on data sources, methods, definitions, classifications and data quality. The use and management of metadata are essential for ensuring data quality and promoting efficient data exchange, a shared understanding of the data and data comparability. This is further underlined by principle 3 of the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (A/RES/68/261), which states that, if they are to facilitate a correct interpretation of the data, statistical agencies need to present information in line with scientific standards on the sources and methods used to produce statistics.

A distinction can be made between structural and reference metadata. Structural metadata consist of identifiers and descriptors, such as titles, variable names, descriptions and more, which are essential for organizing and processing a statistical data set. Reference metadata, on the other hand, describe the statistical concepts and methodologies (e.g., sampling, collecting methods, cleaning process) used for the collection and production of data and provide information on data quality (e.g., timeliness and accuracy).

Both reference and structural metadata are required to correctly interpret any data set. An example of structural metadata is the use of the term "intentional homicide" under an offence count variable. If different agencies – such as the police and the prosecution service – use this term but assign different meanings to it, there will be confusion when comparing correspondent statistical data. If the individual data producers utilize different concepts, the data will not be directly comparable despite utilizing the same data structure, since the reference metadata differ. For example, the police may include both honour killings and dowry-related deaths in their intentional homicide statistics while the prosecution service may explicitly exclude these two criminal offences from their intentional homicide data.

The production of comprehensive metadata is the first step to develop a national consensus on the statistical classifications and concepts that – in line with ICCS definitions – can gradually harmonize all definitions and procedures for the purpose of collecting, producing and disseminating data. Always documenting and publishing this information as the official reference metadata are recommended; only then can data comparability between different data providers and criminal justice institutions be guaranteed.

Several international organizations have drawn up guidelines and standards for documenting and exchanging metadata. Examples include:

- **Data Documentation Initiative (DDI)** is a standard for documenting statistical data sets to facilitate re-use. DDI is primarily used for surveys and operational documentation. For more information, see <https://ddialliance.org/>.
- **ISO/IEC 11179** documents the standardization and registration of metadata to make data understandable and shareable.
- **Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange (SDMX)** is a set of technical standards for facilitating the exchange of data and metadata between organizations and computer systems. SDMX is the primary standard of use in the context of correspondences and data sharing. For more information, see <https://sdmx.org/>.
- **ISO 19115** defines the schema required for describing geographic information and services by means of metadata.

Matching ICCS with existing national statistical classification of crime

While most countries produce data on crime and criminal justice on the basis of legal definitions and concepts, there are countries that have developed a national crime classification for statistical purposes.²⁷ In such cases correspondence may be established between the national classification and ICCS. However, when needed and relevant, efforts should be made to bring the national statistical classification of crime in line with ICCS in order to improve the quality and comparability of crime and criminal justice statistics. This implies that a comprehensive comparison should be made between ICCS categories and those associated with the national statistical classification of crime. As a result of this comparative exercise, the latter should be amended where relevant.

5 Disaggregating variables in ICCS

Criminal justice systems typically collect a range of contextual information on each criminal offence, such as the sex and age of the victim and offender, the location of the crime and whether a firearm was involved. This information can be collected in order to improve understanding of the complexities of each offence and develop more effective evidence-informed policies. In the world of data and statistics such information is known as disaggregating variables and refers to the crime characteristics that are important for improving understanding of the drivers of crime, such as descriptions of the individual crime event and the characteristics of the victims and perpetrators. A minimum set of standardized disaggregating variables is recommended in ICCS for the recording of each crime event in order to derive disaggregated data that allow for a meaningful analysis of victims, perpetrators and other offence characteristics.

5.1 Overview of ICCS disaggregating variables

Table 12 provides an overview of the minimum set of disaggregating variables proposed in ICCS for describing each crime incident more fully or describing perpetrator and victim characteristics in more detail. The acronyms in front of each category title provide a shorthand description for naming these variables in crime records. Note that each of the variables may only be relevant for selected offence categories. Detailed definitions and categories of each of the ICCS disaggregating variables are provided in the classification document.

Table 12 Disaggregating variables in ICCS

Event disaggregations	Victim disaggregations	Perpetrator disaggregations
At – Attempted/Completed	SV – Sex of victim	SP – Sex of perpetrator
We – Type of weapon used	AV – Age of victim	AP – Age of perpetrator
SiC – Situational context	STV – Age status victim	STP – Age status of perpetrator
Geo – Geographic location	ViP – Victim-perpetrator relationship	ViP – Victim-perpetrator relationship
DaT – Date and time	Cit – Citizenship	Cit – Citizenship
Lo – Type of location	LS – Legal status of victim	LS – Legal status of perpetrator
Mot – Motive	Int – Intoxication status of victim	Int – Intoxication status of perpetrator
Cy – Cybercrime related	ES – Economic sector of business victim	EASt – Economic activity status of perpetrator
Rep – Reported by		Rec – Recidivist status of perpetrator

To illustrate, consider the definitions and categorization provided in ICCS for the situational context variable under event disaggregations. The variable includes nine categories that allow for the recording of additional information on offences committed in the context of other criminal activities or other social interactions, ranging from organized-crime related offences to offences related to civil unrest. Detailed definitions are provided for each of the categories specified in the classification document. For example, civil unrest is defined as a

situation of collective violent hostilities between two or more parties within a country that do not amount to an internal armed conflict. The reader is referred to ICCS for a full review of all disaggregating variables and their associated definitions and categories. In order to operationalize and integrate disaggregations into crime and criminal justice data recording systems at national level, it is critically important to understand how and when to apply disaggregating variables while classifying offences.

While most disaggregating variables are relatively self-explanatory (e.g., the sex and age of the victim and perpetrator), those related to situational context, motive and cybercrime may require further guidance and are elaborated on here.

Situational context (SiC)

This variable is used for recording additional information on offences committed in the context of other criminal activities or other social interactions.

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|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1. Organized-crime related</p> | <p>This category refers specifically to the situational context of a crime and not the crime itself. Participation in an organized criminal group was an integral part of the modus operandi of the crime. This could involve the use violence or other means of intimidation typical of organized criminal groups, or the fact that the perpetrator or victim are known by the police as affiliated with an organized criminal group.</p> <p>An organized criminal group is a structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offences in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit (A/RES/55/25).</p> <p>A structured group is not randomly formed for the immediate commission of an offence and that does not need to have formally defined roles for its members, continuity of its membership or a developed structure.</p> <p>A serious crime implies conduct constituting an offence punishable by a maximum deprivation of liberty of at least four years or a more serious penalty.</p> |
| <p>2. Gang-related</p> | <p>Participation in a gang was an integral part of the modus operandi of the crime. A gang is a group of persons that is defined by a set of characteristics including durability over time, street-oriented lifestyle, youthfulness of members, involvement in illegal activities and group identity. Definitions used by national law enforcement bodies may include additional elements and may in some cases deviate from this generic definition. While an organized criminal group has a clear definition, a gang is a less rigidly defined concept that is open for definition by law enforcement and intelligence agencies on one hand but also for self-proclamation by gang members.</p> |
| <p>3. Corporate-crime related</p> | <p>Participation in a corporate or business entity was an integral party of the modus operandi of the crime. This implies that the perpetrator is or acted on behalf of a corporate or business entity</p> |

4. Intimate partner/ family-related	Intimate partner/family-related crimes are distinguished by the nature of the relationship between perpetrator and victim. An intimate partner is a person with whom one has a close personal relationship that can be characterized by emotional connectedness, regular contact, ongoing physical contact and/or sexual behaviour, identity as a couple, familiarity and knowledge about each other's lives. The relationship need not involve all of these dimensions. Examples of intimate partners include current or former spouses, boyfriends or girlfriends, or dating partners and does not require sexual intimacy. Family members includes blood relatives, like parents and children, and other blood relatives that can be cohabitating or non-cohabitating, as well as other household members or relatives by marriage or adoption.
5. Terrorism-related	Participation in a terrorist group was an integral part of the modus operandi of the crime. A terrorist group is a group that engages in terrorist offences. A terrorist offence means any act established in accordance with the universal legal instruments against terrorism, or otherwise intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or to any other person not taking an active part in the hostilities of a situation of armed conflict, when the purpose of such act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act (A/RES/54/109).
6. Civil unrest	Civil unrest refers to a situation of collective violent hostilities between two or more parties within a country that do not amount to an internal armed conflict.
7. Other crime	This variable should be used if an offence is committed in the context of another known offence being perpetrated.
8. Not applicable	-
9. Not known	-

Motive (MoT)

This variable captures several policy-relevant motives for committing a crime, notably hate crimes where victims are targeted based on their characteristics, attributes, beliefs or values. It is distinct from the situational context variable, which describes the type of criminal or social interaction in which an offence occurred. In contrast, the motive variable identifies the reason a specific victim was targeted or why an offence was committed.

Illicit gain	Includes any economic gain or material benefit obtained through the commission of an offence
Hate crime	A crime in which the victim is specifically targeted because of their characteristics and ascribed attributes or beliefs and values.

	<p>Characteristics and ascribed attributes, at minimum, include sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, language, ethnic origin, disability status and/or race.</p> <p>Beliefs or values, at minimum, include religious beliefs, political views and/or economic and social views.</p> <p>Gender-based crimes and crimes with an explicit or implicit political agenda should be excluded.</p>
Gender-based	<p>Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women.</p> <p>See also the <i>Statistical framework for measuring the gender-related killing of women and girls</i>.²⁸</p>
Interpersonal conflict	<p>Refers to the dissonances that occur when human/social relationships come under strain (including from friction due to social and cultural norms). This category typically applies to situations when conflict between persons with an established relationship (friends, colleagues, acquaintances) result in violent crimes or other criminal offences.</p>
Political agenda	<p>Political agenda, at minimum, is the set of issues laid out by ideological or political groups that tries to influence current and near-future political news and debate.</p>
Other motive	-
Not applicable	-
Not known	-

Cybercrime-related

This variable applies only to traditional offences facilitated by the use of a computer, such as internet fraud or cyber-stalking. These cyber-enabled crimes are distinct from cyber-dependent crimes, which are offences that target a computer or a computer system itself and can only be committed through ICT infrastructure. ICCS defines various cyber-dependent crimes under category 0903 *Acts against computer systems*. Examples include hacking, denial of service attacks, the creation, dissemination and deployment of malware or ransomware and attacks on critical national infrastructure.

Cybercrime-related	<p>Applied if the use of computer data or computer systems was an integral part of the modus operandi of the crime (cyber-enabled crimes).</p> <p>Computer data, at a minimum, are any representation of facts/information/ concepts in a machine-readable form suitable for processing by a computer programme or system.</p>
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	<p>A computer programme is a series of instructions in machine readable form that enable a computer system to process computer data.</p> <p>A computer system, at a minimum, is a device (or interconnected devices) which, pursuant to a computer programme, is capable of processing computer data.</p>
Non-cybercrime related	-
Not applicable	-
Not known	-

Along with disaggregating variables for the event, the victim and the perpetrator, ICCS introduces so-called data descriptors that provide more detail on the status of certain offences and/or an individual's involvement in an offence. The data descriptors refer to:

- threats to commit the crime
- aiding/abetting/accessory to the crime
- accomplice to the crime
- conspiracy/planning the crime
- incitement to commit the crime

In some cases, these elements can identify distinct criminal offences – such as planning an intentional homicide or incitement to terrorism. In the other cases, it is important to distinguish cases where the criminal offence was committed from cases where it was planned or incited. Implementing countries should consider these data descriptors as additional disaggregating variables at the microdata level (e.g., a variable “offender type” that distinguishes between the primary offender, accomplices, accessories and instigators). Alternatively, the information under the data descriptors can be stored as metadata (e.g., “the number of serious assault perpetrators also includes accomplices to the crime”).

5.2 Benefits of disaggregating variables

The collection of disaggregating variables allows data to be broken down by complementary information. This provides additional perspective to crime data and allows researchers and analysts to examine specific factors that may influence crime patterns or trends. Disaggregating variables also allow for the identification of differences or patterns within and between different subgroups of the population. In this manner, the data can help identify more complex relationships and facilitate the development of more targeted interventions.

Most disaggregating variables will provide useful breakdowns only in relation to certain criminal offences. For example, disaggregations on victim characteristics are relevant when a specific victim of the criminal offence can be identified, while they do not apply for criminal offences where the victim is the general public, the environment or intangible objects such as public security or public order.

As the information related to disaggregating variables is to be captured while recording the criminal offence in question, the application of those variables is facilitated (or impeded) by the design of the recording instrument. In a comprehensive reporting system maintained by

the police, for example, all relevant disaggregating variables should be available for recording purposes.

Ideally, statistics produced from crime and criminal justice data should draw from an events-based data system, which is effectively a "unit records" database that allows the recording and storing of individual crime events, victims and offenders. In more developed criminal justice statistical systems, the databases held by the various entities are linked through a common identification key which allows for the tracking of the full criminal justice process – from the commission of the criminal offence until the decision of the court and beyond. (for more information on unit record data and the difference with aggregate data, see chapter 6). The disaggregating variables can be combined and aggregated at every desired level of detail in an events-based system. For example, this will allow a law enforcement officer to request a summary count of all burglary cases occurring in the previous 6 months in a specific location disaggregated by the sex and age group of the victim.

Box 4 Example of the availability of disaggregated data in Germany

The German Federal Criminal Police Office (Bundeskriminalamt) reports on police investigations in the annual Police Crime Statistics (Polizeiliche Kriminalstatistik (PKS)),²⁹ which is based on a dedicated offence catalogue and on microdata received from counterparts in all federal units. PKS includes information on type and count of criminal offences, location and time of occurrence, clearance rate, age, sex, nationality and other sociodemographic characteristics of suspects.

Among the statistical tabulations of published offences, information is included on:

- Counts of all offences with breakdowns of attempts, locations grouped by size, presence or use of a firearm, clearance rate and suspect
- Time of occurrence, breakdowns by month of occurrence, breakdowns by criminal offences committed online, and further details on cleared cases involving suspects by age and sex, suspects acting alone, their recidivist status, whether they were under the influence of illicit drugs, under the influence of alcohol, and whether they used a firearm

In systems where the collection, transmission and aggregation of data are automated through electronic capture, storage, transfer and compilation, data can be easily reorganized to allow for the capture and retrieval of every possible detail. For example, all relevant details of a criminal offence, such as the characteristics of the offender and the victim, can be captured and stored electronically in an individual record. When capturing microdata with such granularity, data can be aggregated and collated in many ways to produce tabulations of various desired combinations. Multiple types of statistical output can be obtained, for example, by disaggregating individual offences (e.g., corruption offences by economic sector or trafficking in persons by citizenship of the victims) or by using disaggregating variables in combination with several crime categories (e.g., by considering the sex and age of victims of all "violent offences" or the location of all "property crimes").

In each national crime recording system, the number, structure and application of disaggregating variables differs and is often determined by factors such as:

- The degree of automation and digitalization of data collection.

- The comprehensiveness of data collection in terms of information collected on the event, victim(s) and perpetrator(s).
- The degree of automatization and completeness of data transmission from the local to the central level, including from the state to the federal level, where applicable.
- The level of sophistication of the software used to produce statistical data from the crime recording system.

It is highly recommended to ensure that the national crime statistics system is recording data at the individual record level to support a comprehensive structure of disaggregating variables with the involvement of all relevant criminal justice institutions. For more information on developing and governing a system of criminal justice statistics, refer to the UNODC *Guidelines for the Governance of Statistical Data in the Criminal Justice System*.³⁰

Box 5 Disaggregated crime data in the United States of America

In the United States, criminal offence data are collected through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) programme in order to generate reliable statistics for use in law enforcement and provide information for researchers, the media and the public. Managed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the programme has been providing crime statistics since the 1930s. The data are accessible through the crime data explorer hosted by the FBI.³¹

Since 1 January 2021, the way data are reported to the programme has changed significantly. Data are no longer reported through the Summary Reporting System (SRS) – an aggregate monthly tally of crimes – but through the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), which was developed in the 1980s. The most significant difference between NIBRS and SRS is the degree of detail in reporting. Through SRS, law enforcement agencies tallied the monthly counts of the number of crimes known to law enforcement for 10 offence categories based on the most serious offence reported for each crime incident. Through NIBRS, law enforcement agencies report data on each offence (up to 10 per incident) and arrest within 28 offence categories made up of 71 specific crimes called Group A offences. For each of the Group A offences that comes to its attention, law enforcement collects administrative, offence, property, victim, offender and arrestee information.³²

To ensure that these data are uniformly reported, the FBI provides contributing law enforcement agencies with a handbook explaining how to classify and score offences and provides uniform crime offence definitions. Acknowledging that offence definitions may vary from state to state, the FBI cautions agencies not to report offences according to local or state statutes but to the federal guidelines provided in the handbook. The accuracy of the statistics depends primarily on the adherence of each contributor to the established standards of reporting.

Participation in the FBI UCR programme is voluntary for state and local agencies. The FBI does not have the authority to mandate state and local agencies to report data to the UCR programme. Federal agencies, by contrast, have a statutory mandate to report data to the UCR programme.

In the case of robbery offences recorded for UCR, for example, data are available on a range of disaggregating variables, including the type of weapon involved, location type, the victim's relationship to the offender, and victim and offender demographics. These

disaggregations allow for additional insight into the modus operandi of the offence. In addition, data on persons arrested are available by sex, age and race, but while sex and age are important disaggregations both in the case of offenders and victims, in the context of ICCS, race (which may be highly meaningful to collect at the national level) is less relevant at the international level and difficult to standardize.

5.3 Additional disaggregating variables in other statistical frameworks

Although the standard disaggregating variables included in ICCS offer a solid starting point for analysis, due to their general nature, these variables will not be able to provide sufficient detail for analytical purposes when focusing on very specific crimes. To begin addressing this, additional guidance has been developed for the specific crimes of trafficking in persons and femicide.

Developed by the International Organization for Migration and UNODC, the *International Classification Standard for Administrative Data on Trafficking in Persons* offers a more detailed classification for trafficking in persons and a number of additional disaggregating variables for facilitating the production and dissemination of high-quality administrative data relating to various aspects of the crime of trafficking in persons.³³ Countries that are impacted by this crime are strongly encouraged to adopt the working version of the classification and expand upon ICCS.

The *Statistical framework for measuring the gender-related killing of women and girls* was jointly developed by UN Women and UNODC to provide a comprehensive statistical framework for measuring such killings and was approved by the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2022.³⁴ Besides providing a statistical definition for femicide, the framework identifies a typology of gender-related killings and the list of variables that can be used to identify and count the various types of such killings. The proposed definition and typology are aligned with the structure and framework of ICCS, which can therefore be applied independently from the specific national legislation on such crimes.

The femicide framework identifies additional disaggregating variables that should be collected for providing information on victims, perpetrators and the State response to the gender-related killings of women and girls. These additional variables capture information on:

- Whether there was a previous history of violence by the perpetrator against the victim.
- Whether the perpetrator was the subject of a restraining order.
- Whether the victim was working in the sex industry.
- Whether sexual violence was committed against the victim before and/or during the killing.
- Whether the killing was accompanied by mutilation of the body of the victim.
- Whether the body of the victim was disposed of in a public space.
- Whether the killing was motivated by hate or bias against women.

5.4 Implementing disaggregating variables

Typically, a wide variety of disaggregating variables are used in the production of national crime and criminal justice statistics, which can be used to construct criminal offence counts that disaggregate offences by the sex of the offender, offences by the time of occurrence, victims of specific offences by age, etc. As argued in section 5.2, such data disaggregations can provide critical information to criminal justice institutions and policymakers in the fight against crime. To make disaggregations practically useful, it is important to ensure the standardization of categories and alignment between agencies. If one agency captures the sex of the offender but another does not, or if agencies publish data on the age of offenders using different and overlapping age categories, the data will not be directly comparable and of limited use. To alleviate this problem, ICCS therefore introduces the basic set of disaggregating variables and their associated categories highlighted in this chapter.

Note that the ability to utilize disaggregating variables is strongly influenced by the quality and detail of administrative records. Moreover, recording such additional characteristics of criminal offences can be challenging if they are not a fundamental part of the investigation of the crime or they are not considered mandatory fields in information systems or databases.

Basic considerations when implementing disaggregating variables

Incorporating the ICCS-recommended set of disaggregating variables may require countries to make small changes to existing data recording systems, fundamentally alter data recording systems or design new systems from the ground up while implementing ICCS. If a national system of disaggregating variables is already in place, a recommended first step is to assess whether all disaggregating variables suggested by ICCS are covered by the current system. After this assessment, the recording system should be adapted accordingly and ICCS disaggregating variables should be added if they are missing. Furthermore, the classification categories used in the various disaggregating variables should be brought in line with those suggested by ICCS. For example, the classification used for the victim-perpetrator relationship should be able to replicate – at a minimum – the ones suggested by the ICCS. The table in annex 2 illustrates this process by presenting the correspondence between location type as used in NIBRS in the United States and in ICCS.³⁵

Existing database and coding systems/manuals may need to be updated to reflect the changes. Databases may need restructuring or modifying to accommodate the new disaggregating variables and the classification categories defined by ICCS. This may involve adding columns to existing tables or creating entirely new tables to capture more detailed information. In addition, any software used for recording and collecting data may require an update to ensure that data suppliers can provide these data in line with ICCS and the disaggregating variables are integrated into existing IT systems.

Standardized data collection forms used by criminal justice agencies may also need to be developed or updated to ensure the integration of disaggregating variables in data collection efforts. If a data collection form has already been developed, the variables already being captured should be identified and their compatibility with the disaggregating variables specified in ICCS assessed.

In addition, user manuals or coding guidelines will have to be brought up to date so as to reflect the integration of disaggregating variables. Standardized coding procedures will ensure the consistent interpretation and application of disaggregating variables across different criminal justice agencies. Validation protocols may also need to be put in place to

detect errors or inconsistencies in data entry; for example, by ensuring that the sum of thefts committed by male, female and unknown offenders is equal to the total number of thefts. Moreover, updating or implementing a system of disaggregating variables will likely require additional training for relevant personnel as they should be familiarized with the new disaggregations and learn how to code correctly in data entry systems in order to ensure data quality.

Once the ICCS disaggregating variables have been successfully implemented, data analysts will be able to provide more tailored analyses that can meet very specific (inter)national demands.

Table 13 provides a basic illustration of a selected set of disaggregating variables for two separate criminal offences. The first row features a serious assault (020111) in which the victim was a 27-year-old man who was a friend of the 31-year-old female perpetrator. The second row highlights the burglary of a permanent private residence (050121) where the victim was a 42-year-old woman and the perpetrator was unknown.

Table 13 Example of data recording system utilizing selected ICCS disaggregating variables

Offence		Victim			Perpetrator		
National	ICCS	Sex of victim	Age of victim	Victim-perpetrator relationship	Sex of perpetrator	Age of perpetrator	Victim-perpetrator relationship
COVA01	020111	1. Male	2. 15-29	5. Friend	2. Female	3. 30-44	5. Friend
COLP05	050121	2. Female	3. 30-44	11. Not known	4. Not known	6. Not known	11. Not known

The example in table 13 showcases how to record a limited set of individual data points. However, the power of ICCS lies in the generation of policy-relevant crime and criminal justice statistics. If all criminal offences and the associated disaggregating variables are recorded in a similar manner, it is possible to quickly produce statistics on, for example, the number of burglaries occurring during the past year in a specific location or the percentage of adult female victims of serious assault during the past month. In other words, disaggregating variables allow for a granular look at criminal offences through event, victim and perpetrator characteristics and, in this way, provide policy-relevant insights.

For disaggregating variables to provide the highest added value to a data recording system, it is vital to not only guarantee data quality but also ensure that all relevant stakeholders both within and across institutions are aware of and agree with the classification and coding system for disaggregating variables. Only if all stakeholders are recording disaggregating variables in line with agreed standards will it be possible to generate truly valuable insights that can feed into policymaking discussions.

Homicide as a special case

The gradual implementation of ICCS can result in greater accuracy and comparability of crime and criminal justice data, including on intentional homicide and other unlawful killings. In ICCS, intentional homicide is defined as “Unlawful death inflicted upon a person with the intent to cause death or serious injury”. This definition implies that, for statistical purposes, all criminal offences complying with the above definition should be considered as intentional homicide, irrespective of terms and definitions provided by national legislation or practices.

Once a particular killing is classified and counted as an intentional homicide, more detailed quantitative information on the context and offence mechanisms is needed to help design better evidence-based policies for preventing and responding to this offence type. The standard disaggregating variables for events, victims and perpetrators provide a solid starting point. In addition, ICCS identifies three classification criteria as being particularly relevant for characterizing and defining intentional homicide in more detail for comparative and analytical purposes: 1) the situational context; 2) the relationship between victim and perpetrator; and 3) the mechanism of killing. These three criteria have been applied to the construction of specific disaggregations that are only applicable to intentional homicide (for more detail, see tables III, IV and V of ICCS) and are considered particularly relevant to understanding the drivers of lethal violence and helping the development of crime prevention strategies.

In cases of the intentional homicide of women and girls, further disaggregating variables are required in order to be able to statistically identify femicides as indicated in section 5.3.

6 Producing data in line with ICCS

A key benefit of the implementation of ICCS is the production of policy-relevant and (inter)nationally comparable statistical outputs. The goal of the implementation process is for each country to produce crime and criminal justice statistics that comply with ICCS, while gradually broadening the scope and detail of the data. Depending on the chosen implementation strategy in a particular country and its existing crime and criminal justice statistics system, it may be advisable to integrate ICCS into the statistical production process in incremental steps and build capacity over time. Possible discrepancies between existing data series and the ones produced on the basis of ICCS definitions and concepts will need to be properly described and explained to data users. The United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of the Criminal Justice System (UN-CTS) can serve as an important benchmark for the achievement of this goal, as it provides an ICCS-compliant list of offences for which data should be provided on an annual basis.

6.1 Generating statistical outputs from aggregate or unit record data

Unit record data (or event/incident-based data) and aggregate data represent two different approaches to collecting, storing and analysing information. Unit record data provide data for each individual offence while aggregate data combine multiple individual data records into a more summarized representation, such as the total number of offences of a specific type during the past year. Unit record data are so-called microdata and allow for the greatest flexibility in the production, dissemination and use of crime and criminal justice statistics. In addition, unit record data greatly enhance opportunities to verify data quality through validation rules and procedures. With access to all relevant information for each individual record, it is possible to identify and correct a wide range of potential data quality problems that can be obscured in aggregate data.

In an aggregate data collection system, by contrast, offence counts are only available based on fixed and predetermined categories. For example, if three time periods are defined for the length of court proceedings in the production of aggregate data – less than six months, six months to one year and greater than one year – it is then possible to determine the distribution of the length of proceedings for cases featuring specific offences across these three categories. In such a case, a count of the total number of cases that took less than six months to complete would be readily available. However, it would not be possible to identify how many cases had a length of proceedings of less than one month or more than two years as these time periods are not part of the predetermined categories for aggregation.

In a unit record data collection system, on the other hand, data are available at the individual record level. Using the previous example of the length of court proceedings, a unit record data-collection approach would provide information on the date of the first court appearance and the date of case disposition for each case featuring specific offences. If these two court dates are available for all cases heard in court, it is possible to calculate the length of proceedings for each individual case. It is then simply a matter of defining which time periods are of interest for the production of statistics and querying the database to find out how many cases fall into each specific category. Using unit record data, it would also be possible, for example, to determine the average case duration and calculate this statistic for any specific subgroup of defendants, for offence categories or for any other indicator of interest.

In short, unit record data and aggregate data serve different purposes and are chosen based on the specific needs of the analysis and the decision-making requirements. Unit record data offer detailed insights at the cost of increased complexity and storage requirements, while aggregate data provide summarized insights that are easier to manage but lack the granularity required for detailed evidence-informed policymaking.

6.2 Explaining the impact of ICCS implementation on existing statistics

For countries with existing crime and criminal justice statistics, the introduction of ICCS may require an explanation of changes to reported statistics. It is likely that there will be some differences in the presentation and distribution of offences that will need to be illustrated and explained to data users. This is especially relevant when publishing crime statistics that are both in line with the existing local classification and ICCS. Users will require guidance to understand the differences between the two data series and their advantages and disadvantages in supporting their analysis.

Replacing an existing statistical crime classification with ICCS may constitute a break in the series if it is not possible to recode data from previous years. In such a case, it may be desirable to temporarily allow for parallel coding both to ICCS and the previous classification for several years, which would illustrate the differences between the two classifications to data users. For some countries, the adoption of ICCS has made a significant difference in the reported statistics for key categories of crime, as highlighted in box 6 below.

Steps to consider when releasing updated statistics in line with ICCS:

- Identify key differences between the old statistics and the new statistics in line with ICCS and provide a side-by-side comparison for data users.
- Provide context and highlight the benefits to help stakeholders understand the rationale behind the transition to ICCS. Arguments could include the need to harmonize statistics between agencies, enhance the accuracy and reliability of statistics, and improve comparability with international data.
- Engage data users in the transition process by actively soliciting their feedback and addressing their concerns. This will foster buy-in and collaboration among stakeholders and provide reassurance about the validity and reliability of the data.
- Organize a workshop, seminar or training to help stakeholders understand the changes in the statistics and how to interpret the data effectively.
- Communicate the changes clearly by providing detailed documentation on changes in definitions, coding rules and data collection methods. It is also crucial to provide a summary of changes in accessible language that avoids technical jargon and can easily be understood by policymakers, researchers and the general public.

To ensure the support of stakeholders throughout the process, particularly if ICCS is being implemented incrementally, a country could label the resulting crime and criminal justice statistics as "experimental" while they are under development. Ideally, these statistics would still be publicly released, but the label provides a clear signal to the users of the data that they are subject to change as the statistics mature. This can help reassure partner agencies that may be unsure about releasing figures that are still under development into the public domain. An experimental label may be removed at a later stage by, for example, the judgement call of the national statistical office and the agreement of partner agencies.

Box 6 Impact of ICCS adoption on international reporting

As ICCS provides a framework for the systematic production and comparison of statistical data across different jurisdictions, data reported in line with ICCS definitions should improve international comparability compared with data reported according to national definitions. In the 2017 UN-CTS data collection, countries were asked to report data in line with the definitions and categories of ICCS, but the data collection highlighted that more work was needed in order to collect consistent data on non-conventional crimes included in ICCS and UN-CTS.

An example of how changes in the definition can affect the numbers reported to UNODC was the 2016 UN-CTS submission by the Russian Federation, where the Ministry of Internal Affairs revised the numbers reported for 0101 *Intentional homicide* and 020111 *Serious assault* for the years 2010 to 2014.

Table 14 Change in intentional homicide data in the Russian Federation after ICCS implementation

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Old value	13 555	12 641	11 835	10 935	10 425
New value	22 897	21 506	19 881	18 464	17 414
Difference	+9 342	+8 865	+8 046	+7 529	+6 989

Source: UN-CTS.

As highlighted in table 14, the number of intentional homicide offences increased due to the inclusion of all offences according to article 111 (4) of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (deliberate infliction of serious harm to health, which resulted in the death of the victim through negligence). Accordingly, the number of serious assault offences decreased by the identical number of offences, as all the offences under article 111 (4) were classified as intentional homicide.

Table 15 Change in serious assault data in the Russian Federation after ICCS implementation

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Old value	39 745	38 512	37 091	34 786	32 899
New value	30 403	29 647	29 045	27 257	25 910
Difference	-9 342	-8 865	-8 046	-7 529	-6 989

Source: UN-CTS.

A similar change in the numbers was observed in the 2015 UN-CTS submission by Germany, as the German Bundeskriminalamt revised the numbers reported for 0101 *Intentional homicide* offences and 020111 *Serious assault* offences for the years 2009 to 2013.

In the German correspondence table, intentional homicide includes completed acts of murder under specific aggravating circumstances (sect. 211 PC), murder (sect. 212), murder under mitigating circumstances (sect. 213), killing a person at the person's own request (sect. 216) and bodily injury resulting in death (sects. 227, 231), but among other

things excludes homicide by negligence (sect. 222), rape/sexual coercion attended by death (sect. 178) and robbery resulting in death (sect. 251). Because the previously reported number of offences (2009 to 2013) excluded bodily injury resulting in death, a revised figure was provided for every year from 2009.

Table 16 Change in intentional homicide data in Germany after ICCS implementation

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Old value	628	601	614	538	531
New value	721	699	689	619	623
Difference	+93	+98	+75	+81	+92

Source: UN-CTS.

As highlighted in table 16, the number of intentional homicide offences increased due to the inclusion of bodily injury resulting in death in the definition of intentional homicide, as a result of which the number of serious assault offences decreased. However, the decrease was not only due to the inclusion of bodily injury resulting in death in the intentional homicide category, but also to other changes in the definition of serious assault.

The data included dangerous and serious bodily injury (sects. 224, 226, 231 PC) as well as female genital mutilation (sect. 226a PC) but excluded bodily injury resulting in death (sects. 227, 231 PC), mistreatment of persons under offender's care (sect. 225 PC), slight bodily injury with intent (sect. 223 PC) and negligent/unintentionally bodily injury (sect. 229 PC). Because the previously reported number of cases (2009 to 2013) was based on the offences "dangerous and serious bodily injury" as well as "slight bodily injury with intent", a revised figure was provided for every year since 2009.

Table 17 Change in serious assault data in Germany after ICCS implementation

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Old value	519 010	515 853	513 458	520 005	506 616
New value	149 301	142 903	139 091	136 077	127 869
Difference	-369 709	-372 950	-374 367	-383 928	-378 747

Source: UN-CTS.

An even more significant relative decrease in the number of serious assault offences was found in the 2016 UN-CTS submission by Sweden. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) revised the numbers reported for 020111 *Serious assault* offences for the years 2010 to 2014. Previously reported values referred to reported assault, including serious and minor assault.

Table 18 Change in serious assault data in Sweden after ICCS implementation

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Old value	87 854	89 457	87 052	80 374	83 324
New value	5 594	5 684	5 338	4 659	4 570
Difference	-82 260	-83 773	-81 714	-75 715	-78 754

Source: UN-CTS.

The adoption of the ICCS definition of serious assault decreased the respective serious assault offences reported by the Russian Federation by 22 per cent, the numbers reported by Germany by 73 per cent and the number of serious assaults reported by Sweden by 94 per cent.

Note: The numbers used in this box may have been subject to further revision in later UN-CTS waves and are used for illustrative purposes only.

6.3 Designing new statistical outputs and releasing statistics

If the implementation of ICCS results in the production of national crime statistics for the first time, new statistical products will also need to be designed, developed and disseminated. When designing outputs, it may be worth:

- Using UN-CTS as a starting point, as the data requested in the survey will need to be produced on an annual basis to meet international reporting requirements
- Consulting widely with criminal justice system stakeholders and other government partners to identify data gaps and data needs that can be met through the new statistical data collection
- Consulting with researchers and criminal justice practitioners about their information needs
- Taking inspiration from crime and criminal justice statistics that are being produced by other countries

These inputs will provide an indication of the kind of statistics that can provide the highest added value to their users. It is important to emphasize that the statistics are meant to have strategic value for decision makers and data users alike. By consulting widely with stakeholders, it is possible to break data silos and ensure that the statistics produced are meeting the needs of users and are in high demand. The collected input will likely include a range of specific applied counting units, contextual and offence information, preferences around the frequency of statistical releases and even the data format.

Although all countries will approach this differently based on their needs and requirements, a minimum statistical product could include:

- A set of headline measures that provide an indication of what is occurring and give guidance to those not wishing to delve into the data
- A summary in plain language to assist a layperson in understanding the main trends
- A set of data tables on prioritized criminal offences
- Infographics or visual representations of the data
- Metadata that provide details on definitions, counting units, comparability issues where appropriate and any other information a data user would require to be able to sensibly interpret the statistics

Further aspects to consider are ensuring that statistical data releases are announced in advance and providing equal and simultaneous access to all users. One way of operationalizing this is to create a publicly available and easily accessible release calendar that contains information on the releases planned in the upcoming 12 months. Any changes to this release calendar could then be announced in advance with a justification. To further promote uptake and use, the data could be released in open and machine-readable formats to allow for their use, reuse and redistribution by anyone, anytime, anywhere, as noted in the

Open Data Charter Principles.³⁶ Moreover, data visualization tools, GIS solutions and APIs are other frequently used options for disseminating data and making results more actionable.

Once ICCS-complaint crime and criminal justice statistics have been developed and approved, they can be made public and submitted to the international community through UN-CTS reporting. Such statistics can often generate interest not just from data users and researchers but also from the general public and the media. A media release will assist in ensuring that the key messages are identified by journalists and quotes from a spokesperson, key facts and figures will both assist them in highlighting the story and reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation of statistics. Ensuring that key spokespersons from the agencies reflected in crime and justice statistics are briefed on the data prior to release will ensure that they are supportive of the data release process and are not caught unaware if queried by the media about the statistics and their meaning. This will ensure key partners have confidence in the statistical production process and are more likely to continue to supply key data and support the public release of crime and criminal justice statistics.

6.4 Prioritizing key offences in national crime statistics

During the implementation of ICCS, countries may choose to limit the production of statistics to specific prioritized criminal offences in order to ensure the efficient utilization of resources and meet immediate policy needs (such as achieving the goals set in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development). This prioritization involves identifying key areas of concern or particular types of crime that are of high priority for data collection and analysis during the development of the implementation scope. Countries may determine which offences are prioritized based on factors such as the prevalence or severity of certain offences, emerging (inter)national trends in criminal activity or policy priorities aimed at addressing specific social or public safety issues.

By initially focusing on a subset of criminal offences, countries can streamline the implementation process and allocate resources effectively, ensuring that data collection efforts are targeted and meaningful. Once the prioritized offences are adequately addressed and statistics are consistently and accurately produced, countries can consider expanding statistical coverage to include additional criminal offences in an incremental manner. In this way, the coverage and granularity of national crime statistics are gradually expanded over time. This phased approach allows countries to adapt to evolving needs and priorities while maximizing the utility and relevance of crime statistics for informed decision-making and policy development.

When adopting a phased approach to ICCS implementation, it may be worthwhile prioritizing the crimes included in UN-CTS, where statistics on a group of core offences are requested annually, while a second group of rotating offences alternate in a two-year cycle, as highlighted in table 19. Countries may also strive to produce statistics for each of these criminal offences during the different stages of the criminal justice system and produce counts on:

- The number of (reported) criminal offences
- The number of persons brought into formal contact with the police
- The number of persons prosecuted
- The number of persons convicted
- The number of persons entering prisons
- The number of persons held in prisons

Table 19 UN-CTS annual and rotating offence categories

ICCS Section	Annual offences	Rotating offences
01	Intentional homicide (0101) Attempted intentional homicide (0102)	
02	Serious assault (020111) Kidnapping (020221)	Acts intended to induce fear or emotional distress (0208)
03	Sexual violence (0301) Rape (03011) Sexual assault (03012) Other acts of sexual violence (03019) Sexual exploitation (0302)	Child pornography (030221)
04	Robbery (0401)	
05		Burglary (0501) Theft (0502) Theft of a motorized vehicle or parts thereof (05021)
06	Unlawful acts involving controlled drugs or precursors (0601) Unlawful possession, purchase, use, cultivation or production of controlled drugs for personal consumption (06011) Unlawful trafficking, cultivation or production of controlled drugs or precursors not for personal consumption (06012)	
07	Corruption (0703) Bribery (07031) Other acts of corruption (07032-07039)	Fraud (0701) Money-laundering (07041)
08	Smuggling of migrants offences (08051)	
09	Trafficking of weapons and explosives (09012) Participation in an organized criminal group (09051) Participation in a terrorist group (09061) Financing of terrorism (09062)	Unlawful access to a computer system (09031) Unlawful interference with a computer system or computer data (09032) Unlawful interception or access of computer data (09033)

ICCS Section	Annual offences	Rotating offences
10	-	<p>Acts that cause environmental pollution or degradation (1001)</p> <p>Acts involving the movement or dumping of waste (1002)</p> <p>Trade or possession of protected or prohibited species of fauna and flora (1003)</p> <p>Acts that result in the depletion or degradation of natural resources (1004)</p>
11	-	-

Although data for all crime types can be highly valuable, the above categories reflect the areas where there is demand for both nationally and internationally comparable data. Therefore, countries could consider prioritizing the implementation of these offences for analytical and policy development purposes.

The highlighted offence types offer a starting point to improve the quality, consistency and comparability of crime data. In addition, ICCS can also be a tool to collect data for a better understanding of the drivers and enablers of crime. This is particularly true when data are accompanied by the set of disaggregating variables proposed in ICCS. For example, the use of disaggregating variables in crime statistics allows for the identification and analysis of criminal offences by context (e.g., related to organized crime, gangs or terrorism), by motive (e.g., hate crimes, gender-based or economic motive) or by sex and age of the victim. Similarly, the other disaggregating variables presented in detail in chapter 5 can be utilized to produce highly granular statistics on any desired level of detail. Including disaggregations in published statistics can thus give significant added value to the users of the statistical outputs.

The availability and quality of data on additional context-specific characteristics of criminal offences are still limited in many countries, even for a crime as commonly recorded as intentional homicide, and there is also a great deal of variation across countries in their coverage of disaggregating variables. The inclusion of context-specific disaggregating variables consistent with ICCS will therefore enhance the analytical value of data for preventing and countering crime.

7 Counting rules for compiling statistics

Counting rules used for recording crime and criminal justice processes affect the interpretation and comparability of administrative data on crime. No consolidated international standard on counting rules for crime and criminal justice data exists, making cross-national comparison challenging as a wide range of different counting rules are applied in the recording of crime and criminal justice data both between and within jurisdictions. These differences reflect the different functions and priorities of various institutions and are often deeply ingrained in national recording systems.

Counting rules are not directly related to the definition and classification of crime and are consequently outside the direct scope of ICCS implementation, but the use of standard counting rules would enable more accurate and consistent counts across institutions and jurisdictions and, in a broader sense, it is an important component of ICCS implementation.

This chapter provides an overview of differences in counting rules across the various stages of the criminal justice system and discusses the preferred counting rules recommended in UN-CTS.

7.1 Diverse counting rules

The following are the three main factors affecting the overall crime count throughout the criminal justice system and complicating data comparability between and within countries:

- **Counting unit** – Different counting units exist between and within institutions, such as offences, suspects, charges, cases and convictions. For data to be directly comparable across institutions, the same counting unit must be used (such as persons suspected and persons convicted).
- **Counting multiple offences and/or offenders** – If a person commits multiple offences of the same category, they can be recorded as one or multiple offences. If a person commits multiple offences of different categories, some countries record all crimes separately while others apply a principal offence rule.³⁷ If multiple persons commit a single offence, this may involve a single case with multiple suspects. On the contrary, if one person commits multiple offences of the same category, such a person may be counted as one or multiple suspects.
- **Moment of collection** – Institutions can count at different stages of their respective processes. The police, for example, may count every reported offence (input) or only those that are substantiated through an investigation (output).

These factors all affect the way the four main criminal justice institutions count data. Many different counting rules can thus be used for the production of statistics on crime and criminal justice. As a criminal case progresses through the criminal justice system, there are different points at which statistical information can be collected. As noted above, the police may count every reported offence or only those that are substantiated through an investigation. Similarly, the prosecution service may count all incoming cases or only those cases where charges are brought and the case is presented before a court. In a court, as the final determination of any criminal case can either mean acquittal or conviction both outcomes should be registered, but note that not all cases brought before a court will receive a final determination during the same calendar year.

While different counting units can be applied by the police, the prosecution service and the courts (e.g., offences, cases or persons), the only viable counting unit for the prison system is the person. Data provided by the police, the prosecution service and the courts reflect flow records of all criminal cases recorded in a given reference period. Prison data, on the other hand, usually reflect the number of persons held at a specified reporting date, such as the last day of the year, or those entering/exiting prison during a specified period of time (usually one year).

In short, counting rules can vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction and between institutions in the same jurisdiction. These differences in counting rules imply that even if the definition of a criminal event is standardized, different institutions may produce different statistical counts for the same number of recorded incidents and/or for persons involved in such processes.

7.2 Preferred counting rules in UN-CTS

The recommendations provided in UN-CTS are specific to the event, victim and perpetrator disaggregations requested in the survey and are not intended to be guidelines for the general production of national data. Importantly, whichever counting rules are applied nationally, they should ideally be consistent across all institutions of the criminal justice system and be well documented so as to facilitate both national and international comparability.

Counting offences

For UN-CTS sections requesting data on the number of offences at the national level, the preferred counting unit is the individual offence, which implies that each incident with a specific location at a specific point in time should be counted separately. While other counting units may be used in some countries (for example, a series or a number of offences may form a case, or a series of cases may form an investigation), the preferred counting unit in UN-CTS is the individual offence.

Not applying a principal offence rule for counting the number of individual offences in UN-CTS is recommended. This recommendation is in line with ICCS and its logic that each criminal act or behaviour constitutes a separate criminal offence, which implies that if more than one criminal act occurs in the same event, the criminal acts should be counted as separate offences. Following a case of a simultaneous robbery and homicide, for example, the robbery and the homicide would thus both be counted as separate offences for UN-CTS reporting.

For a series of offences of the same type, counting the total number of acts rather than aggregating them into a single offence is also recommended, while for a singular offence that is committed by more than one person, counting only one offence is recommended. Currently, recording practices can differ greatly by country, however, and when a robbery is committed by three people acting in concert, some jurisdictions count one offence, while others count one offence for each offender. The UN-CTS recommendations are aimed at providing consistent guidance to overcome such disparities in counting offences and improve international comparability.

Counting persons

After counts of offences, the person is the most important unit of analysis used in UN-CTS reporting. Counting rules should specify when to use persons as the counting unit, what is included in counts of persons and how to count persons. In police data, the person-based

counting unit is used for the number of suspected offenders brought into formal contact with the police as well as for the number of victims. At later stages in the criminal justice system, the person-based counting unit is applied for the number of persons prosecuted, brought before a criminal court, convicted and held in prisons, penal institutions or correctional institutions.

Distinct counting rules are recommended in UN-CTS when the focus is on a) the total number of victims in reference to a specific offence, b) the flow of persons through the criminal justice system in reference to a specific offence, and c) the total number of persons at a given stage of the criminal justice system.

The UN-CTS preferred counting unit for victims is the individual victim, which applies specifically to the number of victims of intentional homicide, serious assault, sexual violence and sexual exploitation. Irrespective of the number of victimizations, counting each victim once is recommended. If a person has been victimized in a series of such offences over time, counting one victim is recommended. If a person has been victimized with more than one offence in the same event, counting one victim utilizing a principal offence rule is recommended.

Example of counting victims: If a person has been a victim of sexual exploitation three times in a year, they should be counted as one victim; if a person has been a victim of sexual violence and intentional homicide, the victim should be counted as one victim of intentional homicide.

For UN-CTS indicators that request data on the flow of persons through the criminal justice system in reference to an offence, not using a principal offence rule and counting each person separately in reference to each offence and crime occurrence are recommended. If a person is brought into formal contact for multiple offences, counting the person in relation to each offence type is recommended. Similarly, if a person is convicted multiple times in a single year irrespective of the offence type, counting the person separately for each conviction is recommended. This applies specifically to the number of persons brought into formal contact, prosecuted, convicted and held for specific ICCS offences requested in UN-CTS.

Example of counting flows: If a person is brought into formal contact with the police for intentional homicide and rape, they should be counted as one person brought into formal contact for intentional homicide and one person brought into formal contact for rape.

For UN-CTS sections that request data on the total number of persons at any given stage of the criminal justice system regardless of offence category, the counting rules change to avoid double counting. For calculating totals, a principal offence rule should be applied, that is, persons counted for multiple (series of) offences of the same type should be counted as one person and persons counted more than once (on separate occasions) in one year should be counted as one person. This applies specifically to the total number of persons brought into formal contact, prosecuted, brought before the criminal courts, convicted, and held in prison, as requested in UN-CTS. For these indicators, counting each person once, regardless of the number of offences committed is recommended.

Example of counting totals: If a person has been convicted of serious assault several times in the same year, they should be counted as one person in the total number of persons convicted. If a person has been prosecuted for burglary and for bribery in the same year, they should be counted as one person in the total number of persons prosecuted.

Table 20 Summary of UN-CTS-preferred counting rules

Counting unit	Counting rules
Offence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Do not apply principal offence rule b) Count multiple (series of) offences of the same type as more than one offence c) Count offences committed by more than one person as one offence
Victim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Apply principal offence rule b) Count multiple (series of) victimizations of the same type as one victim c) Count victimization of several offences at the same time as one victim
Offender (flow)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Do not apply principal offence rule b) Count persons brought into formal contact/prosecuted/convicted/held for multiple (series of) offences of the same type as more than one person c) Count persons brought into formal contact/prosecuted/convicted/held more than once (on separate occasions) in one year as more than one person
Offender (total)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Apply principal offence rule b) Count persons brought into formal contact/prosecuted/convicted/held for multiple (series of) offences of the same type as one person c) Count persons brought into formal contact/prosecuted/convicted/held more than once (on separate occasions) in one year as one person

It emerges from this review that there is no 'perfect' counting rule and different rules can be applied depending on the specific goal of each statistical output. It is important that the decision to apply one counting rule or another is carefully considered against the specific use of data. As explained above, the decision may depend on whether the focus is on determining the crime level, the performance of the criminal justice system or on the people that are affected by crime and the ensuing criminal justice process.

7.3 Towards the standardization of counting rules

Despite the existence of differences in counting rules, as highlighted in the above discussion:

- Statistical counts of offences in jurisdictions counting every offence will be higher than in jurisdictions applying a principal offence rule.
- Statistical counts of offences in jurisdictions counting multiple (series of) offences of the same type separately will be higher than in jurisdictions counting multiple serial offences as one offence.

- Statistical counts of offences in jurisdictions counting offences committed by more than one person separately for every offender will be higher than in jurisdictions counting offences committed by multiple offenders as one offence.

While UN-CTS offers preferred counting rules for specific sections, the actual counting rules applied by Member States may deviate from those recommendations. The implementation of common counting rules for crimes defined in ICCS provides the opportunity to standardize the counting rules used in the production of data on criminal offences and to achieve a higher level of comparability than by simply applying the same offence definitions and offence categories.

Annex 1: Mapping selected United Nations Conventions into ICCS offence categories

Table 21 Mapping United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) articles into ICCS categories

<i>ICCS category</i>	<i>UNCAC Article</i>
070311 Active bribery	Article 15(a) Article 16(1) Article 21(a)
070312 Passive bribery	Article 15(b) Article 16(2) Article 21(b)
07032 Embezzlement	Article 17 Article 22
07033 Abuse of functions	Article 19
07034 Trading in influence	Article 18
07035 Illicit enrichment	Article 20
07041 Money laundering	Article 23
08061 Obstruction of justice	Article 25

Table 22 Mapping United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) articles into ICCS categories

<i>ICCS category</i>	<i>UNTOC Article</i>
070311 Active bribery	Article 8(1)(a)
070312 Passive bribery	Article 8(1)(b)
07041 Money-laundering	Article 6
08061 Obstruction of justice	Article 23
09051 Participation in an organized criminal group	Article 5

Table 23 Mapping the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children into ICCS categories

<i>ICCS category</i>	<i>Article</i>
0204 Trafficking in persons	Article 5

Table 24 Mapping the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air into ICCS categories

<i>ICCS category</i>	<i>Article</i>
08051 Smuggling of migrants offences	Article 6

Table 25 Mapping the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition into ICCS categories

<i>ICCS categories</i>	<i>Article</i>
090119 Other acts related to possession or use of weapons and explosives	Article 5(1)(c)
090121 Trafficking of firearms	Article 5(1)(a) Article 5(1)(b)

Table 26 Mapping other United Nations Conventions into ICCS categories

<i>ICCS categories</i>	<i>Convention and article</i>
020222 Illegal restraint	International Convention against the Taking of Hostages article 1 and article 2
020223 Hijacking	Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft article 1 and article 2
09061 Participation in a terrorist group	International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism article 2 and article 4
09062 Financing of terrorism	International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism article 2 and article 4
11011 Torture	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment article 1 and article 4

Annex 2: Example of a correspondence table

Table 27 Example of correspondence between NIBRS and ICCS classification systems for location type

NIBRS	ICCS
01 Air/Bus/Train Terminal	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
02 Bank/Savings and Loan	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
03 Bar/Nightclub	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
04 Church/Synagogue/Temple/Mosque	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
05 Commercial/Office Building	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
06 Construction Site	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
07 Convenience Store	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
08 Department/Discount Store	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
09 Drug Store/Doctor's Office/Hospital	5 Institutional care setting
10 Field/Woods	2 Open area, street or public transport
11 Government/Public Building	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
12 Grocery/Supermarket	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
13 Highway/Road/Alley/Street/Sidewalk	2 Open area, street or public transport
14 Hotel/Motel/Etc.	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
15 Jail/Prison/Penitentiary/Corrections Facility	4 Prisons, penal institutions or correctional institutions
16 Lake/Waterway/Beach	2 Open area, street or public transport
17 Liquor Store	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
18 Parking/Drop Lot/Garage	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
19 Rental Storage Facility	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
20 Residence/Home	1 Private residential premises
21 Restaurant	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
23 Service/Gas Station	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
24 Specialty Store	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
25 Other/Unknown	7 Other; 8 Not known
37 Abandoned/Condemned Structure	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
38 Amusement Park	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
39 Arena/Stadium/Fairgrounds/Coliseum	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
40 ATM Separate from Bank	2 Open area, street or public transport
41 Auto Dealership New/Used	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
42 Camp/Campground	2 Open area, street or public transport
44 Daycare Facility	5 Institutional care setting
45 Dock/Wharf/Freight/Modal Terminal	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
46 Farm Facility	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
47 Gambling Facility/Casino/Race Track	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises

48 Industrial Site	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
49 Military Installation	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
50 Park/Playground	2 Open area, street or public transport
51 Rest Area	2 Open area, street or public transport
52 School – College/University	3 Schools or other educational institutions
53 School – Elementary/Secondary	3 Schools or other educational institutions
54 Shelter – Mission/Homeless	5 Institutional care setting
55 Shopping Mall	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
56 Tribal Lands	7 Other
57 Community Center	6 Other commercial or public non-residential premises
58 Cyberspace	7 Other

Annex 3: Case Studies

Colombia: Process of adapting ICCS

Provided by the National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia

The National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE), which is both the statistical authority in Colombia and the governing and coordinating body of the national statistical system, led the process of adopting ICCS to the Colombian context in cooperation with justice, security and defence sector entities and the support of UNODC Colombia and the UNODC-INEGI Center of Excellence. In 2018, to improve the statistical production process of the criminal justice sector through the development of a common conceptual framework based on Law 599 of 2000 (Colombian criminal code), the decision was made to adapt ICCS.

A team consisting of professionals in statistical standards and classifications within the Directorate of Regulation, Planning, Standardization and Normalization (DIRPEN) of DANE was created for the adoption of ICCS. The team was tasked with making a preliminary proposal for the adaption of the concepts and structure of ICCS to the Colombian context. This included the mapping of the classification categories against the articles of the Colombian penal code. DANE carried out the adaption following the recommendations of UNODC.

Based on this preliminary proposal, the Center of Excellence and UNODC Colombia were requested to conduct an ICCS awareness-raising workshop among sector entities in Bogotá in July 2019, where the participating justice, security and defence sector entities were trained in the principles, concepts, structure and uses of ICCS. The aim was to improve the quality and availability of crime statistics in Colombia in three main ways: i) improving the comparability of statistics at national and international level; ii) stressing the importance of the harmonization of concepts on crime in the sector; and iii) clarifying the role of DANE and other relevant entities in the process of ICCS implementation in Colombia through joint work agreements and the establishment of an implementation road map.

The participating entities were also asked to designate two suitable focal points (subject matter experts) to participate in subsequent round-table sessions for the adaptation of ICCS. The proposed work schedule was July 2019 to July 2020, during which the round tables were to be held. Before the round tables, DANE mapped the most relevant entities for each ICCS section according to their mission and relevance in the production of official crime statistics. The most relevant entities in the production of official crime statistics, such as the Police, the Prosecutor's Office and the Ministry of Defence, participated in all the scheduled meetings.

During the round tables, the entities supported the verification of the correspondence between ICCS and the Colombian Criminal Code, participated in the elaboration of the conceptual framework and contributed to the revision and drafting of the explanatory notes as well as the inclusions and exclusions. As the round-table discussions progressed, the working documents were adjusted to serve as input for the preparation of the final document for the national classification.

Upon completion of the round tables, the DANE-ICCS team consolidated the adapted classification document, which was sent for approval to the DANE statistical classifications committee. With the committee's endorsement, a public consultation was carried out on the

DANE website, where the detailed structure of the classification and the draft resolution were uploaded in order to receive comments from all interested citizens. At the end of the consultation, the DANE-ICCS team reviewed and responded to the comments by accepting or rejecting the proposed adjustments. Once the adjustments were made, the final document and the resolution were uploaded to the DANE website. The classification adapted by Colombia in December 2020 was named the International Classification of Crimes for Statistical Purposes adapted for Colombia (ICCS A.C.).

To facilitate the implementation of the adapted ICCS by the criminal justice sector entities, the DANE ICCS team uploaded ICCS A.C. supporting documents to the DANE website, including the following two Excel files:

- A table showing the correspondence between ICCS and ICCS A.C.
- A table showing the correspondence between ICCS A.C. and the Colombian Penal Code

The need to update the adapted classification became evident. In 2021 after a consultation with the criminal justice sector entities and taking into account a resolution that proposed the annual maintenance of the classification. For this purpose, virtual round tables were convened with the focal points of the justice, security and defence sector entities. During the round tables, proposals were discussed and adjusted jointly with the participants from the entities with the objective of reaching consensus on the following topics subject to adjustments: i) adding disaggregating variables; ii) removing categories that generated duplicity in the recording of information; iii) transferring categories and updating inclusions and exclusions in line with changes in the law; and iv) improving the description of categories and adjusting explanatory notes in the correspondence tables.

For each round table, minutes were taken to record the agreements reached. Likewise, for the maintenance process, the DANE-ICCS team built an Excel log to keep track of the process, in which the changes in the form and substance of the structure, explanatory notes and correspondence tables of each section were recorded, as well as the justification for them. The updated classification is called the International Classification of Crimes for Statistical Purposes Adapted for Colombia 2022 (ICCS A.C. 2022) and the same process was followed for the consolidation of the final document and its officialization as for the adaptation of the classification in 2020.

Germany: Key role of correspondence tables

Provided by the Federal Statistical Office of Germany

Background

ICCS is aimed at improving the international comparability of statistical data on crime and the criminal justice process and its implementation at the national level takes into account the specific national context. As a federal State, Germany has a uniform National Criminal Law at the federal level and various law enforcement institutions. The police force is under the authority of the interior ministries, whereas the work of the public prosecutor's offices, the courts and the prison administration are within the authority of the justice ministries. The Federal Criminal Police Office (Bundeskriminalamt, BKA) reports on police investigations in Germany in its annual Police Crime Statistics (Polizeiliche Kriminalstatistik) based on its dedicated offence catalogue. The Federal Statistical Office (Statistisches Bundesamt) publishes annual statistics on judicial prosecutions (e.g., convictions) and the execution of convictions (prison statistics) in accordance with the categories of the statistical registry of offences. These national statistics and criminal classifications are based on legal descriptions of criminal offences in the German Criminal Code (Strafgesetzbuch, StGB) and in the so-called Nebenstrafrecht, or secondary criminal law. The latter consists of many individual administrative laws with their respective criminal provisions, such as the Residence law, the Narcotics law and the Road Traffic law.

Germany already has an established statistical infrastructure based on national criminal law. The approach chosen for ICCS implementation therefore consists of embedding ICCS into the existing national statistical infrastructure in Germany. Data produced in line with the national classifications can then be matched to the categories of the international classification and, although there are different offence catalogues for police statistics and conviction/prison statistics in Germany, correspondence tables make possible the provision of data through international data collections at different stages of the criminal justice process that match the ICCS categories as closely as possible. This can be achieved without any legal or organizational changes in relation to the production of national statistics.

Activities

The core element of ICCS implementation is the development of a correspondence table with the aim of transferring national classifications into the new international standard classification. This requires an analysis of existing national classifications, the underlying legal situation in German criminal law and the behavioural concepts of ICCS. The Federal Statistical Office, in cooperation with the Federal Criminal Police Office and Prof. Dr. Hans-Jürgen Kerner of the Institute for Criminology of the University of Tübingen, has created correspondence tables for the entire first chapter of ICCS ("Acts leading to death or intending to cause death"), not just category 0101 Intentional homicide. The methodology and initial experiences during the implementation process were presented at several conferences and published in 2016. This general approach was then used to create correspondence tables for other types of offence.

The codes of the national statistical classifications, which are established in the German language and in accordance with the provisions of German criminal law, are assigned to the corresponding codes in ICCS, which are defined on the basis of their behavioural descriptions. Some of the inclusions and exclusions mentioned in ICCS are only partly or not at all

applicable in German criminal law. The degree of correspondence therefore varies in the individual lines of the correspondence tables.

Challenges

The next step after completing a correspondence table is updating and adapting it, especially any changes made to national criminal law. First, any changes that have occurred in national criminal law need to be examined annually. As in the past, the national classifications and statistical keys of the police crime statistics and the statistics on the criminal justice system produced by the Federal Statistical Office (conviction and prison statistics) are adapted annually in line with changes in national criminal law. Subsequently, the effects of this on the ICCS correspondence tables need to be assessed.

As minor alterations, such as slight changes in the wording of a section or paragraph, do not generally require an adaption of the correspondence table, the evaluation of whether the definition of the ICCS-classification still matches is all that is required.

Major changes in national criminal law often require adjustments to the ICCS correspondence table, an example being the major revision of the sections on the sexual abuse of children (sections 176 ff. of the German Criminal Code (GCC)) in 2021. The structure, order and numeration of sections 176 ff. of the German Criminal Code were changed and new sections and paragraphs were added, which led to changes to the correspondence table in the ICCS categories of sexual violence (ICCS 0301), rape (ICCS 03011), sexual assault (ICCS 03012) and sexual exploitation (ICCS 0302).

In table 28, the necessary changes are shown in the example of rape (ICCS 03011). Sexual intercourse with a child was shifted from section 176a (2 No. 1) to section 176c (1 No. 2a and b) of the German Criminal Code. Hence, the section of the German Criminal Code needed to be changed in the correspondence table (see blue highlight in table 28). As a consequence of the legal changes, the statistical keys for sexual intercourse with a child were also changed in the Criminal Justice Statistics (conviction statistics (SVS) and prison statistics (PCS)) because they are based on the numbering of the sections and paragraphs. The ICCS correspondence table had to be adjusted accordingly (see red highlight in table 27). The PCS key for this offence (131500) was retained and only the PCS Code-description corresponding to the new German Criminal Code was adjusted. Hence, no systematic changes were required for police statistics in the correspondence table.

Table 28 Example from the German correspondence table

ICCS		2020 (old)				2021 (new)		
		GCC	PCS	SVS		GCC	PCS	SVS
03011	rape	177 (6 No. 1)	111700	1770610	→	177 (6 No. 1)	111700	1770610
		177 (6 No. 2, 7-8 partly)		1770620		1770620		
				1770700		1770700		
				1770800		1770800		
	176a (2 No. 1)	131500	1763121		176c (1 No. 2a and b)	131500	1763121	
			1763122				1763122	

Occasionally, rather than legal changes, revisions of the statistical classification system require an adjustment of the ICCS correspondence table. For example, in the reference year 2018, the PCS keys for sexual offences were revised, leading to major adjustments of the

correspondence table for injurious acts of a sexual nature (e.g., the PCS key 111600 and 112000 for sexual assault (sect. 177 excl. rape) were changed to 111800 and 112100).

Future plans

As ICCS is implemented in the annual UN-CTS-data collection, the focus of the ongoing implementation process is on those ICCS categories that are covered in UN-CTS. Apart from ICCS, the UN-CTS questionnaire also collects some data required by regulations. Regarding the European Union regulation on Cybercrime, a correspondence table has also been developed to enable data provision.

During the national coordination process of the 2024 data provision, the Federal Statistical Office and the co-operating authorities are going to analyse and discuss the requests in the CTS-questionnaire with regard to definitions in ICCS and in European Union articles, the necessary annual adaptations of the ICCS correspondence tables and available data in Germany.

Conclusion

Implementing ICCS via correspondence tables is not a one-off task but an ongoing process as the national law changes over time. As a consequence, in Germany, both the national classification and the ICCS correspondence table are updated annually in line with changes in national law.

Italy: Experience of ICCS implementation

Provided by the Italian National Institute of Statistics

ICCS implementation process

In 2015, the Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat) began the implementation of ICCS with the creation of an interministerial working group formed by the Ministry of Justice (including representatives of the general directorate of statistics, department of prison administration and department of juvenile justice), the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, military judges and Transcrime (University of Milan). Although all of these organizations deal with criminal statistics, they do so in line with their own unshared classification criteria. The decision was made to harmonize the definitions and classification criteria and to produce a correspondence table to link Italian criminal legislation to ICCS. Istat acted as focal point and coordinator for the project.

The working group agreed to implement ICCS using the “thesaurus of crimes” previously developed by Istat for its own analytical purposes. This thesaurus is a list of all the felonies and misdemeanours described in Italian legislation and was already being utilized by Istat to link and analyse microdata from Prosecutor’s Offices and the Convictions Register.

Each crime in the thesaurus is identified by the source of the law (penal code, special law), the year it was criminalized, the number of the law, the specific article within the law and the version of the article (bis, ter, quarter etc.). The thesaurus also describes chronological changes in the law: all relevant dates (day/month/year) are reported, including those of new laws, of abrogation and any change in the validity of a law. The thesaurus contains some 2,000 articles that describe felonies and misdemeanours, which are mainly derived from the penal code, civil code, penal military code, road traffic laws and navigation code. Each felony and misdemeanor has a sanction, such as an arrest and/or a fine or a punishment of imprisonment and/or a fine. In line with the scope of ICCS, administrative sanctions are not considered.

The thesaurus contains around 4,500 items when considering the detailed paragraphs contained within the same article. All these articles are grouped into the Italian classification of crime built by Istat, which is a hierarchical classification (with a four-digit coding scheme) that comes in two versions: a long version composed of more than 600 crimes and a short version containing around 110 crimes.

In line with phase 2 of the ICCS implementation road map, an evaluation of current data production was conducted that assessed, for example, the ability to answer questions related to:

- Justice system coverage: from the initial recording of a crime by police to persons held in prisons or serving non-custodial sentences.
- Data collection: in terms of collection and storage of microdata at the level of each offence (criminal laws or codes violated and additional information).
- Statistical production of data and dissemination.
- The mapping of crimes.

The challenges related to the mapping of crimes were highlighted when the correspondence table was constructed between the detailed crime elements of the thesaurus and ICCS. One of the issues encountered was the detail contained in national criminal law (article, comma, letter, number), where sub-elements occasionally referred to more than one category of ICCS.

Construction of the correspondence table

A bottom-up approach

The first challenge for the Interministerial working group was to find the elements of the thesaurus to be assigned to each ICCS section. Meetings were held to discuss the correspondence between the individual elements of the thesaurus (over 4,500 items) and the ICCS groups. The crime descriptions were matched to the ICCS description label and subsequently verified, as was whether the content of the law fitted the corresponding ICCS category, both through the inclusions and exclusions provided and using real legal cases.

The correspondence between national law and ICCS was attempted at the most detailed level possible (ICCS level 4), but when this was not possible a higher level of the classification was considered in order to establish correspondence. On occasion, ICCS categories were more specific than the corresponding Italian thesaurus item. In such cases, correspondence was sought at a higher level of ICCS, which can occur when a detailed event description is unavailable and only the legal code is recorded by the judicial offices.

For example, Italy utilizes the same article of the penal code (art. 624bis) for theft from an apartment (which falls under *0501 burglary* in ICCS) as for bag-snatching (which falls under *0502 theft* in ICCS). The difference between these two categories is contained in the paragraphs – paragraph 1 for theft from an apartment and paragraph 2 for bag-snatching – and these are very often not recorded. In this case, for prosecution, conviction and prisoner statistics, the ICCS code can only be recorded at the level of section *05 Acts against property only*.

Nevertheless, in recent years it has become possible to derive more detailed information from police statistics. Data for burglary (theft from an apartment) merge the judicial information (art. 624bis) with the location where the crime happened, which allows the crime to be recorded as ICCS category *05012 burglary of private residential premises*. Data for bag snatching merge the same judicial information (art. 624bis) with the modus operandi of the offender, which allows this crime to be recorded as ICCS code *050221 theft of personal property from a person*.

The correspondence table was developed by connecting every single item in the thesaurus to an ICCS category. The two classifications (Istat and ICCS classifications) are independent.

Examples of other difficulties encountered with respect to definitions:

- The definition of infanticide in ICCS (the killing of a child under one year old) differs from the Italian definition (the killing of a newborn).
- In ICCS, rape has a different definition from the more generic term sexual assault.
- The difference between active and passive corruption in ICCS is difficult to identify in the Italian legislation.

Other challenges related to logical difficulties regarding crimes in ICCS

In ICCS, crimes that cause environmental pollution or degradation are distinguished by whether they affect air, soil or water, but this distinction does not exist in Italy, where these crimes are distinguished instead by the severity of the associated punishment. Furthermore, even if additional information on the crimes were available, crimes that cause environmental pollution or degradation would not be clearly attributable to a single ICCS category because pollution generally affects more than one part of the biosphere.

Another challenge to take into account is that the details of a violation are important for the correct classification of a crime, but the description of the violation may be generic. Moreover, while a crime is specified at trial it can sometimes be changed or dropped. This often happens, for example, in the case of various types of bribery.

UNODC assistance in ICCS implementation

During the creation of the correspondence table, some doubts arose about the most appropriate correspondence between specific national crime categories and ICCS codes. In such cases, UNODC experts were consulted to ensure that the correspondence followed international best practice. For example, the difference between categories *060222 unlawful production, trafficking or distribution of tobacco products* and *0804 acts contrary to public revenue or regulatory provisions* was not fully clear. In the case of Italy, it was not obvious where to classify the law regarding the smuggling of tobacco (law 907 of 1942, art.99 – Legge sul monopolio dei Sali e dei tabacchi), as it is not clear whether this concerns a violation of custom restrictions, tax evasion or the smuggling of tobacco. The selected approach was to consider the purpose of the different ICCS categories. A distinction was made for this specific case as the spirit of the categories under section 06 of ICCS refers to acts involving controlled drugs or other psychoactive substances. Hence, the laws that refer to the trafficking of tobacco products would fall under ICCS section 06, while general provisions against tax evasion and the smuggling of goods would fall under ICCS category 0804.

Maintenance

Each year the thesaurus is updated with new laws, changes to existing laws and the repeal of some laws. Istat is responsible for updating the thesaurus, whereas the Interministerial working group is responsible for updating the correspondence table with ICCS.

Disaggregating variables

The identification and recording of disaggregating variables can be problematic at times because they require additional information on the crime beyond the law violated. For instance, registering a crime as cybercrime-related can be straightforward when this is explicitly mentioned in a paragraph of a crime article, as in the case of cyberstalking, but in other cases it is not easily identified. In addition, some sources of data are more suitable than others for registering disaggregating variables. For example, cyber harassment is easily detected in population survey data but less so in administrative sources of data.

An example of disaggregating variables recorded for homicide

The Ministry of the Interior collects detailed information on homicide. For example, information is collected on the mechanism, the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim, and the motivation for the crime. However, the description of the crime, although always collected and stored, is not currently available for the production of statistics.

Crime groups

Istat has also created "crime groups" using the logic of the disaggregating variables that cut across classifications. Crime groups cut across the groupings constructed for the classifications used by Istat and represent an attribute that links several crimes.

These groups aggregate, in a very flexible way, the elements of the catalogue of crimes. For each element of the crimes in the thesaurus, whether or not an offence belongs to a specific group of crimes of interest to criminal scholars or meets particular requests from international organizations is indicated. An offence can therefore be associated with several groups, freeing itself from a purely legal categorization.

To date, the following groups have been identified:

- Cybercrime: the group of cybercrimes distinguishes crimes that target computer systems from those that use computers as a means of committing the crime.
- EXP-MIG: the EXP-MIG group distinguishes the EXPloitation of a migrant in the territory from the smuggling of MIGrants.
- Sexual crimes: the group distinguishes crimes of a "sexual nature" from crimes involving "sexual violence". However, the latter do not correspond to the ICCS definition of rape.
- Bribery: the group distinguishes between a corrupt person and a person who corrupts (those who request a bribe cannot be distinguished from those who offer a bribe, as required for active and passive bribery). Who gives and who takes money or other benefits can be distinguished, however. Both giving and taking a bribe are punished by Italian law under different articles of the penal code.

Publication phase

Dissemination

Italy recently completed the construction of the correspondence table and the implementation of disaggregating variables and a web page has been created to carry out updates with the involvement of representatives of all institutions. Moreover, a convergence process has been established to ensure that crimes are classified in the same manner across all the institutions involved.

The final step in the implementation process was the publication of a public web portal linking the Italian criminal code, the Italian classification (short and long) and ICCS. Launched in October 2022, the portal is dedicated to ICCS and the Italian classification of crime and includes a comprehensive search system.

In this way, users can input an ICCS code and find the corresponding article(s) of the Italian legislation or, vice versa, can type an article of a specific law and find the corresponding code of the Italian classification and the associated ICCS codes.

The portal includes all relevant metadata and in future will also allow for the distribution of data and geographical maps. Please refer to the Istat website for additional information at <https://www.istat.it/en/archivio/273823>.

Producing data in line with ICCS

As noted, meetings are held periodically to check for updates of laws and assess the consequences with respect to correspondence with ICCS. New, repealed and amended criminal law provisions are considered.

As a result of these efforts, the production of data in line with ICCS at the first level of the classification is now possible. International requests for particular categories and various levels are responded to by combining the relevant items of the thesaurus associated with

that level in the correspondence table plus all those associated with more detailed levels. In 2023, for the first time, Italy provided a full response to the level 1 classification data requested in the joint EUROSTAT-UNODC Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems data collection.

Table 29 Italy: 2023 data complication

		Acts leading to death or intending to cause death	Acts leading to harm or intending to cause harm to the person	Injurious acts of a sexual nature	Acts against property involving violence	Acts against property only	Acts involving controlled psychoactive substances	Acts involving fraud, deception or corruption	Acts against public order	Acts against public safety and state security	Acts against the natural environment	Other criminal acts not elsewhere classified	
POLICE	Total number of offences	2020	3 006	313 951	8 406	20 479	989 089	35 266	428 880	246 136	59 670	14 153	414
	Persons in formal contact	2021	3 191	339 158	9 727	22 537	1 115 337	31 251	482 388	176 728	62 787	15 486	530
	Persons entering prison	2020	4 107	226 414	8 723	17 570	143 434	66 791	153 387	151 575	19 441	2 747	140
	Persons held	2021	4 447	230 294	9 757	18 426	143 112	61 090	163 806	149 125	20 201	3 056	346
PRISON	Persons held	2020	1 130	7 906	1 512	7 052	6 237	11 176	4 327	5 554	3 494	0	1 383
	Persons held	2021	1 316	8 759	1 704	7 436	6 410	10 824	4 587	5 977	3 539	0	1 421
	Persons held	2020	8 964	17 010	4 240	20 012	13 896	18 824	13 895	15 602	15 175	0	5 793
		2021	9 000	17 736	4 329	20 097	14 130	18 999	13 950	15 925	15 012	0	5 803

Source: Istat.

Republic of Korea: In-depth research aimed at improving matching

Provided by Statistics Korea

Background

Developed by UNODC, ICCS was officially adopted as the standard for preparing crime statistics in March 2015 by the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC), which recommended its implementation to all Member States.

The Government of the Republic of Korea relies heavily on statistics for policymaking. The Statistics Act ensures the reliability of statistics and the efficient operation of the national statistical system. Following its obligation to adopt internationally recognized classifications under the Statistics Act, Statistics Korea swiftly developed a plan to introduce ICCS in the country.

The relevant laws are article 22 of the Statistics Act and article 36 of the Enforcement Decree of the Statistics Act, as highlighted below.

Article 22 of the STATISTICS ACT (standard classification)

- (1) The Commissioner of Statistics Korea shall prepare and publicly announce a standard classification concerning industries, occupations, diseases, causes of death, etc. on the basis of international standard classifications so that statistics service agencies may produce statistics according to the same standard. In such cases, the Commissioner of Statistics Korea shall consult with the head of the relevant agencies in advance.
- (2) When the heads of statistics service agencies produce statistics, they shall follow the standard classification prepared and publicly announced by the Commissioner of Statistics Korea under paragraph (1): Provided, that when they intend to apply a standard different from any of the standard classification due to an unavoidable purpose of producing statistics, they shall obtain prior consent from the Commissioner of Statistics Korea.

Article 36 of the ENFORCEMENT DECREE OF THE STATISTICS ACT (reasons for production and correction of standard classification and contents thereof)

- (1) In any of the following cases, the Commissioner of Statistics Korea may produce or correct standard classification pursuant to Article 22 (1) of the Act:
 - I. Where an international standard classification is produced or corrected.
 - II. Where it is necessary to reflect changes in the economic and social structures within the country.

Details of ICCS implementation

To prepare for ICCS implementation, Statistics Korea conducted a thorough review of relevant factors. This included analysis both of the international crime classification itself and the existing domestic crime classification system, and the applicability of ICCS to Korean data.

The review revealed that a direct application of ICCS was not feasible due to fundamental differences in the underlying definitions of concepts of crime classification between the international standard and the legal framework-based system of the Republic of Korea. This necessitated the development of a systematic research plan.

Statistics Korea aims ultimately to apply ICCS to crime statistics produced by the National Prosecution Service and Korean National Police Agency, which are key players in the criminal justice system.

Recognizing the importance of a unified crime classification system and fostering cooperation among relevant organizations, Statistics Korea initiated efforts to raise awareness of the need for the implementation of ICCS. This involved discussions with key stakeholders such as the Ministry of Justice, the Supreme Prosecutor's Office, and the National Police Agency. The goal was to accomplish joint recognition of the benefits and establish a collaborative implementation framework.

To broaden public understanding and support, Statistics Korea also organized public events such as public hearings and academic conferences. These events both targeted academic institutions and the National Assembly, highlighting the effectiveness and advantages of adopting the international crime classification system.

In addition to national efforts, Statistics Korea has participated in international efforts to promote the adoption of crime classifications by identifying successful implementation cases of ICCS in other countries. This participation took place through relevant international events hosted by organizations such as UNODC, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the UNODC-KOSTAT Centre of Excellence.

Research and development

To facilitate a smooth transition to ICCS, Statistics Korea developed a comprehensive research plan that is focused on three key areas:

- I. Analysing the core concepts of crime classification systems, including the classification of criminal acts, relevant classification attributes and the application of crime statistics within the system
- II. Developing a domestic crime classification system based on general laws (excluding military laws) that correspond with the international standard
- III. Exploring how the existing domestic crime classification system's codes (i.e., criminal statistical code; CS code) can be linked to and integrated with ICCS for a seamless transition

To date, the research has been executed in two distinct phases. Phase 1 focused on conducting preliminary research (2017–2020). This initial phase focused on assessing the applicability of ICCS to Korean crime data. This research was aimed at assessing the validity of the international classification system in the Korean context and explored potential linkages between domestic and international crime classification structures.

The second phase involved in-depth research and policy development (2021–2023). Based on the findings of the preliminary research, this phase delved deeper into developing a Korean crime classification system optimized for domestic use. This included conducting policy studies to identify the most effective approach for integrating ICCS to the specific needs and legal framework of the Republic of Korea.

Research overview

Preliminary research on the analysis of ICCS (2015) by the Korean Institute of Criminology involved the translation of ICCS and generating a list of potential issues in implementing ICCS in the Republic of Korea (e.g., different unit of classification (acts versus violations of the law), specific criminal acts)

Phase 1 (2017–2020)

Statistics Korea 1st Year study (2017)

Crime Statistical Codes (CSC)–ICCS Codes matching principles were suggested
Examined possibility of implementing ICCS into Korean crime statistics

Statistics Korea 2nd Year study (2018)

Matched CSC–ICCS codes regarding Level 1 01, 07, & 08 and calculated 5-year crime statistics

Statistics Korea 3rd Year study (2019)

Proposed a draft of the Korean Crime Classification System (KCCS)

Statistics Korea 4th Year study (2020)

Revised the matching principles and reconfirmed the translation of ICCS
Revised the draft of KCCS and developed a manual for stakeholders

Phase 1 result: Crime Statistical Code of Korea criminal law–ICCS matching rate about 53 per cent (67.7 per cent without the Military Criminal Act) using Machine Learning approach

Phase 2 (2021–2023)

Statistics Korea – funded research (2021)

Developed policy and practical implications to apply KCCS–ICCS

Statistics Korea – funded research (2022)

Developed policy and practical implications to apply KCCS–ICCS

Statistics Korea – funded research (2023)

Developed proposal for General KCCS

Phase 2 result: CSC–ICCS matching rate about 96.1 per cent without the Military Criminal Act using Machine Learning approach

Statistics Korea funded research (3rd phase, 2024–2026)

Establish a general classification for the criminal statistics system

Primary findings and practical challenges

After two phases of research (2017–2023), Statistics Korea produced the following rigorous research outcomes:

- Correspondence table for CSC–ICCS codes was developed with a matching rate of approximately 96 per cent
- First draft of implementing manual for stakeholders was produced
- KCCS (Level 5, using 8-digit codes) was suggested based on ICCS in order to prevent potential overestimations of crime statistics

- Checked four years of historical crime statistics in order to evaluate validity of the correspondence table for CSC–ICCS codes

Several practical challenges remain for the successful implementation of ICCS in the Korean crime classification system.

- A single code must be assigned for all violations of the specific criminal act
- No Korean criminal laws exist for certain type of crimes in ICCS (e.g., euthanasia (0105))
- Korean Information System of Criminal Justice Services (KICS) has to be updated to incorporate ICCS

Future plans

Statistics Korea will develop and publish a non-binding general classification for the criminal statistics system by June 2024. Implementation and support for the new classification within the domestic crime statistics system will commence in July 2024. The resources include developing a comprehensive user manual outlining the proper application.

Establishing the general classification will involve the following steps:

- (Public disclosure) Information and procedures related to the classification system will be made available to the public
- (Stakeholder engagement) Opinions will be solicited from relevant agencies and experts through a minimum of two consultation sessions held within a six-month period

Kyrgyzstan: Promoting interoperability through ICCS adoption

Kyrgyzstan is working to further modernize its crime statistics systems, with the ultimate goal of bringing the system in line with ICCS.

Since 2019, UNODC has been working with national counterparts to improve the e-crime system and integrate relevant statistical systems under the established Unified Crime Register in Kyrgyzstan. The Unified Crime Register (formerly known as the Unified Register of Crimes and Misdemeanours) is embedded in the law under article 5(31) of the 2021 Code of Criminal Procedure, where it is defined as “an electronic database into which data shall be entered with respect to the beginning of pre-trial proceedings, procedural actions and decisions, movement of the case, applicants and participants of criminal court proceedings”. The law requires the police, prosecutors, judges and other officials whose conduct is governed by it to record or transmit the necessary information to the system in a timely manner.

To ensure the system is aligned with ICCS, an expert group mapped the national crime classification (based on the revised Criminal Code of 2019) into ICCS, resulting in the draft national crime classification of 2019. Although the crime classification is used by the National Statistics Committee (NSC) for data consolidation and reporting purposes, it needs to be further updated and aligned with ICCS, taking into consideration the 2021 revision of the Criminal Code and additional disaggregation variables (e.g., age, gender) that need to be introduced.

In 2020, as part of this process, a group of experts, including representatives of NSC, the Supreme Court and several independent experts, facilitated the consolidation of the national administrative data statistics systems, including data integration with the Supreme Court system and the elimination of inconsistencies in the Unified Crime Register.

Since 2021, UNODC has been actively working with the national partners in Kyrgyzstan to improve the collection and analysis of crime data and assist them in building the capacity of national statistical staff. As a result, Kyrgyzstan has become one of the pioneers in Central Asia in revising its approaches to data on gender-based violence and trafficking in persons. Crime and justice statistics are based on administrative data sources collected by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Justice Department, the General Prosecutor’s Office and the State Penitentiary Service. In addition, data on the activities of crisis centres, shelters, *aksakal* courts, and centres providing social and psychological assistance to the population are collected by the territorial state statistical bodies.

Maldives: Identifying stakeholders and organizing a national working group

Provided by the Maldives Bureau of Statistics

Background

Criminal justice system statistics are mainly used to assess quality of life and the human rights situation in society and to assess the effectiveness, efficiency and fairness of the related institutions. Maldives, through its National Statistical System, has made progress in the compilation and dissemination of statistics on crime. However, there remain challenges regarding the standardization, quality, consistency and comparability of data.

The Maldives Statistical System (MSS) has evolved in a decentralized manner and consists of all the producers of official statistics within the country. As defined by the 2021 Maldives Statistics Act, MSS is comprised of:

- Maldives Bureau of Statistics (MBS), the leading authority of MSS.
- Other producers of official statistics (OPOS), consisting of statistical units or departments of government agencies (parent bodies) that collect, compile and disseminate official statistics as per the statistical principles outlined in the Act. OPOS shall be professionally independent entities within their respective organizations with exclusive or primary activities related to the development, production and dissemination of official statistics.

MBS is mandated to establish guidelines regarding adherence to internationally accepted statistical standards and the main principles of official statistics of the United Nations fundamental principles of official statistics applicable in the collection, processing, analysis, dissemination and use of official statistics in Maldives.

Crime statistics in the country are mainly generated by the agencies mandated with responsibility for Law and Order. Currently, official statistics are being produced mainly by the Maldives Police Services, Department of Judicial Administration, Maldives Correctional Service, Human Rights Commission, Prosecutor General's Office, Judicial Service Commission and the Family Protection Authority. All of these agencies collect and maintain data related to law and order that can be generated through their different administrative data sources. A large amount of these data are published in the Maldives Statistical Yearbook on an annual basis.

During a review of MSS, it was noted that there are challenges in data production concerning data standardization in all sectors.

In 2020, MBS participated in a pilot activity for measuring illicit financial flows for Sustainable Development Goal indicator 16.4.1. During the exercise, MBS identified data management challenges and coordination issues between the different related agencies. Consequently, UNODC recommended the implementation of ICCS and, during 2020, the Prosecutor General's Office initiated an activity to strengthen criminal justice statistics across the related agencies.

Under the Maldives Statistics Act (Act no: 16/2021), MBS is mandated to establish statistical guidelines to be implemented in Maldives, in accordance with international standards, in order to facilitate the application of uniform standards in collecting, maintaining and using statistics in Maldives. As such, MBS believes that the implementation of ICCS will provide a

framework for the systematic production and comparison of statistical data across different criminal justice institutions and jurisdictions and at different stages of the criminal justice process (police, prosecution, courts, prisons) at which data are collected.

Activities

MBS officially presented the status of the crime and criminal justice statistics available and introduced ICCS to the key agencies involved in the compilation of crime and criminal justice statistics during the Criminal Justice Sector High Level Conference organized by the Prosecutor General's Office on 17 May 2023. All key agencies across the criminal justice system agreed to implement ICCS.

MBS, with the assistance of UNODC and support from the UNICEF country office, conducted training on the implementation of ICCS in Maldives on 7–8 November 2023.

The workshop was organized to introduce participants from national institutions with relevance to crime and criminal justice statistics to ICCS, detailing its application, benefits, strengths and potential challenges that can be encountered during implementation. Participants included technical experts from relevant national agencies together with MBS, the Department of Judicial Administration, National Integrity Commission, Anti-Corruption Commission, Maldives Police Service, Children's Ombudsperson's Office, Maldives Correctional Service, Human Rights Commission, Attorney General's Office, Prosecutor General's Office, Judicial Service Commission and Family Protection Authority.

As part of the training workshop, participants developed the Maldives road map to ICCS implementation (2023–2024) and are currently working on implementing the road map. In addition, MBS formed a working group on ICCS implementation consisting of the key agencies across criminal justice agencies with a key focal point from the Prosecutor General's Office.

Challenges

The involved agencies lack the relevant technical know-how for the collection and compilation of data on crime and justice statistics. A proposed solution is to obtain expert guidance from a local crime and justice expert, but this is subject to the availability of funding.

To counter a lack of clear coordination between the enforcement agencies, a working group has been formed with all the relevant agencies in order to execute the work as defined in the road map.

There is limited staff capacity to cater to the data needs of crime and justice statistics. However, the working group and road map serve to coordinate and expedite the work by generating a sustainable level of commitment from the involved agencies.

Future plans

Future plans related to ICCS include an assessment of the scope of its implementation. This will entail a consultative session with the relevant agencies, an assessment of current data production and a review of definitions and metadata. Once the scope of implementation has been determined, the working group will shift its attention to compiling the initial draft of the correspondence table.

Conclusion

The initiative to implement ICCS has increased the involvement and interest of the related agencies in crime and criminal justice statistics, fostering awareness of the need for a standardized national crime classification. ICCS will serve as an essential tool for harmonizing the collection and dissemination of data across the different criminal justice institutions (police, prosecution, courts and prisons) and be a common classification scheme of crime data across the related agencies, which will improve the consistency of national data in Maldives.

Mexico: Aligning a national classification of crime with ICCS

Provided by the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico

Given that Mexico is a federal State,³⁸ laws from different levels of government and multiple state authorities coexist that establish what is and what is not considered a crime. These laws can come from the state or federal criminal codes, or general, national or federal laws that, among other things, typify crimes. This implies that similar conduct may or may not be criminalized across states or different orders of government. For example, "discharging a firearm" could be a crime in one state, while in another it may be classified as an administrative offence.

Considering the evolving nature of criminal law, the autonomy of the authorities to modify their criminal legislation and the need to have information on new criminal conducts, or to obtain more data on existing ones, there is a constant demand for review and continuous improvement. In other words, crime classifications are dynamic and flexible at both the federal and state levels.

In this context, the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI), as the agency responsible for coordinating and regulating the National System of Statistical and Geographical Information (SNIEG), has sought to standardize the generation of crime information through standardized catalogues. With the creation of the National Subsystem of Information on Government, Public Safety and Law Enforcement (SNIGSPIJ)³⁹ on 8 December 2008 and the subsequent implementation of the National Government Censuses,⁴⁰ the need for a regulatory instrument that would establish the specifications for providing structured, standardized, consistent, compatible and comparable information on crime became apparent.

In 2011, INEGI developed the Technical Standard for the National Classification of Common Crimes for Statistical Purposes (NTCNDFC) and published it in the Official Gazette of the Federation (DOF) on 21 December of the same year. Six years later, it was decided to update the document by taking into consideration the international methodological discussion to standardize the measurement of crime with the approval of ICCS in March 2015. The update also considered the need for information on new criminal behaviours, the entry into operation of the New Accusatory Criminal System and the specific information demands and requirements of SNIGSPIJ stakeholders and users. The automatic classification of crimes included various crime types in the National Census questionnaire to ensure that the information was homogeneous, consistent and comparable from data collection to publication.

In October 2016, NTCNDFC was updated to align its contents with the structure of ICCS. INEGI expanded the list of crimes, both under common and federal jurisdiction, to create a single classification that would serve in both areas, incorporating specific crime types and standardizing the descriptions of crime as established in general legislation. INEGI also reformulated the approach for obtaining statistical information on crime. Unlike in NTCNDFC, in addition to obtaining data on the conduct classified as a crime, variables associated with the characteristics of the persons involved in the criminal act, both the victim and the perpetrator, were incorporated. Hence, the update adopted some of the labels included in ICCS.

INEGI approved the Technical Standard for the National Classification of Crimes for Statistical Purposes (NTCNDFE) and published the new standard on 22 October 2018 in the

Official Journal of the Federation (DOF).⁴¹ This document establishes the technical specifications for the state units to classify administrative records related to crime in the areas of public security, alternative justice, criminal law enforcement and the penitentiary system in a structured, standardized, consistent, compatible and comparable manner for statistical purposes. INEGI aims for the standard to facilitate the linking of administrative records in each of the processes in the aforementioned areas and, in turn, contribute to the strengthening of SNIEG.

Notably, the NTCNDFE update was carried out with input from subject matter experts through the collegiate bodies of SNIEG, called Specialized Technical Committees on Information, in the areas of public security, law enforcement, administration of justice and the penitentiary system.

The implementation of ICCS was thus carried out simultaneously with the NTCNDFE update. To determine which ICCS contents should or should not be incorporated into the structure of NTCNDFE, the first step was to identify which of the ICCS crime categories corresponded to crimes under Mexican criminal law. Civic infractions and traffic violations were excluded as Mexico already has a specific national classification for them.

The second step was to design criteria for incorporating or adjusting the descriptions of criminal behaviours of international statistical significance.⁴² To this end, it was decided to include those criminal conducts highlighted in UN-CTS, as well as those ICCS offences linked to key criminal justice policy approaches in the country, such as narcotics-related offences, corruption, gender violence and trafficking in persons.

Following the update, the third step was to build a single correspondence table to match each of the crimes in ICCS with the categories and variables established in NTCNDFE. The aim was to obtain a single national standard for reporting statistical data from all authorities involved in the Mexican criminal justice system. The alignment of NTCNDFE with ICCS, the 33 criminal codes and the more than 54 general, national or federal criminal laws, by means of the correspondence table, has enabled the generation of comparable and standardized information not only for national statistical purposes, but also to meet international reporting requirements, such as the aforementioned UN-CTS. Without the adoption of the Technical Standard aligned with ICCS, providing compatible information would have been challenging.

Lastly, as part of the ICCS implementation and the dissemination of NTCNDFE, a comprehensive training scheme was developed that included a specific section for ICCS. This training was aimed at introducing Mexican authorities to the contents of ICCS, structure and showcase examples of how the national classification is aligned with the international classification.

Collecting data on the elements of crimes proposed by ICCS, in particular the disaggregation of crimes according to the sex of the victims and perpetrators, the contexts in which they were committed (e.g., hate crime or organized crime), the weapon used (e.g., knife, firearm, other) and the relationship between victim and perpetrator, poses a challenge for INEGI. This requires multiple data suppliers to carry out a partial redesign of their administrative records with a statistical orientation that allows for ordering and systematizing such information.

Endnotes

¹ Andrew Hancock, "Best Practice Guidelines for Developing International Statistical Classifications," Expert Group on International Statistical Classifications, November 2013.

² Ibid.

³ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime & United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, *Statistical Framework for Measuring the Gender-Related Killing of Women and Girls (Also Referred to as 'Femicide/Feminicide')* (United Nations publication, 2022).

⁴ *International Classification Standard for Administrative Data on Trafficking in Persons* (International Organization for Migration & United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2023).

⁵ United Nations Children's Fund, *International Classification of Violence Against Children* (New York, United States of America, UNICEF, 2023).

⁶ A number of countries have already translated the ICCS into their official language. For example, before proceeding with the implementation process, the national statistical office of Mongolia ensured that a translated version of ICCS was available for all stakeholders. Moreover, the main structure of ICCS has been translated into all the European Union languages by Eurostat: European Commission, Statistical Office of the European Union, *EU Guidelines for the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes: 2017 Edition*. (LU: Publications Office, 2017), <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2785/82709>.

⁷ Statistics Korea, "Statistics Act | Statistical Policy | About KOSTAT," Statistics Korea, accessed May 7, 2024, <http://127.0.0.1/menu.es?mid=a20605010000>.

⁸ Philippines, Philippine Statistics Authority, *2018 Philippine Standard Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes* (Quezon City, 2020).

⁹ *United Nations National Quality Assurance Frameworks Manual for Official Statistics* (United Nations publication, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.18356/1695ffd8-en>.

¹⁰ This should be clearly flagged in the ICCS Correspondence Table, which is a document that should be made publicly available and regularly updated to facilitate interpretation of data by all users.

¹¹ Thomas Baumann et al., "National Implementation of the New International Classification of Crimes for Statistical Purposes (ICCS)," *WISTA – Wirtschaft Und Statistik* 5 (2016).

¹² United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Guidelines for the Production of Statistical Data by the Police* (United Nations publication, 2022).

¹³ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Guidelines for the Production of Statistical Data by the Prosecution Service and the Courts* (United Nations publication, 2023).

¹⁴ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Guidelines for the Production of Statistical Data by the Prison System* (United Nations publication, 2024).

¹⁵ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Guidelines for the Governance of Statistical Data in the Criminal Justice System* (United Nations publication, 2024).

¹⁶ Enrico Bisogno, Jenna Dawson-Faber, and Michael Jandl, "The International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes: A New Instrument to Improve Comparative Criminological Research," *European Journal of Criminology* 12, no. 5 (September 1, 2015): 535–50, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477370815600609>.

¹⁷ Service Public, "Quelles sont les différences entre une contravention, un délit et un crime?," 8 December 2021, available at <https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F1157>.

¹⁸ United States, The United States Code, Title 18, Chapter 227.

¹⁹ Esther van Eijk, "Sharia and national law in Saudi Arabia", in *Sharia Incorporated: A Comparative Overview of the Legal Systems of Twelve Muslim Countries in Past and Present*, Jan Michiel Otto, ed. (Leiden University Press, 2010).

²⁰ Republic of Kenya, Penal Code, Chapter 63.

²¹ Buluma Bwire, "Integration of African Customary Legal Concepts into Modern Law: Restorative Justice: A Kenyan Example", *Societies*, vol. 9, No. 1 (March 2019).

²² Note that a fourth type, many-to-many matches, may theoretically also occur where multiple national categories correspond to multiple categories in ICCS, and vice versa.

²³ For a more formal discussion on a typology of relationships in a correspondence table, please refer to the Neuchâtel Terminology Model. Available at

https://statswiki.unecce.org/download/attachments/14319930/Part%20I%20Neuchatel_version%201.pdf

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- ²⁴ "United Nations Treaty Collection," accessed May 7, 2024, <https://treaties.un.org/>.
- ²⁵ Germany, Federal Ministry of Justice, "German Criminal Code (Strafgesetzbuch – StGB)," accessed March 27, 2024, https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch_stgb/englisch_stgb.html.
- ²⁶ Germany, Bundeskriminalamt, "Polizeiliche Kriminalstatistik," accessed January 19, 2024, https://www.bka.de/DE/AktuelleInformationen/StatistikenLagebilder/PolizeilicheKriminalstatistik/pks_node.html.
- ²⁷ See for example *Australian and New Zealand Standard Offence Classification (ANZSOC)*, which has been developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and Statistics New Zealand for use in the compilation and analysis of crime and justice statistics within Australian jurisdictions and in New Zealand.
- ²⁸ *Statistical Framework for Measuring the Gender-Related Killing of Women and Girls (Also Referred to as 'Femicide/Feminicide')*.
- ²⁹ Germany, Bundeskriminalamt, "Polizeiliche Kriminalstatistik," accessed January 19, 2024, https://www.bka.de/DE/AktuelleInformationen/StatistikenLagebilder/PolizeilicheKriminalstatistik/pks_node.html.
- ³⁰ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Guidelines for the Governance of Statistical Data in the Criminal Justice System*.
- ³¹ United States Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Crime Data Explorer," accessed March 25, 2024, <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov>.
- ³² United States Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, "National Incident-Based Reporting System User Manual," 2023.
- ³³ *International Classification Standard for Administrative Data on Trafficking in Persons* (International Organization for Migration & United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2023).
- ³⁴ *Statistical Framework for Measuring the Gender-Related Killing of Women and Girls (Also Referred to as 'Femicide/Feminicide')*.
- ³⁵ United States Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, "National Incident-Based Reporting System User Manual."
- ³⁶ Open Data Charter, "ODC Principles," accessed March 4, 2024, <https://opendatacharter.org/principles/>.
- ³⁷ Under a principal offence rule, when more than one offence is committed simultaneously, only the most serious offence is recorded. For example, when a homicide and robbery have been committed simultaneously, under the principal offence rule, only the most serious offence (homicide) would be recorded. The rule can be a useful way to simplify complex criminal incidents for output purposes.
- ³⁸ Mexico is a federal, representative and democratic republic, composed of free states united by a federal pact. The republic is organized into 32 federal entities according to its territorial division, each of which has specific areas of authority in which they can legislate autonomously. Consequently, both the federal Government and the state Governments have their own Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches.
- ³⁹ The SNIEG has three other subsystems: the National Subsystem of Demographic and Social Information, the National Subsystem of Economic Information, and the National Subsystem of Geographic Information, Environment, Land and Urban Planning.
- ⁴⁰ The National Government Censuses are statistical information programmes developed within the framework of the SNIGSPIJ. Their main objective is to generate statistical and geographic information on the management and performance of the institutions that make up the Mexican State in its different orders of government to support the process of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of public policies in the areas of government, human rights, accountability, corruption, crime, public security, violence, justice, penitentiary system and drugs. For further reference, see <https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/>.
- ⁴¹ See https://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5541706&fecha=22/10/2018.
- ⁴² The criteria for the elaboration of the NTCNDFE are available in the Manual for the Implementation of the Technical Standard for the National Classification of Crimes for Statistical Purposes. For further reference, see https://www.snieg.mx/Documentos/Normatividad/Vigente/manual_implemen_nt_vf_250719.pdf.