

Chapter II. Statistical Organization

1. The Central Government

Traditionally, Japan has had in place a decentralized statistical organization. As a general rule, individual ministries have a central statistics bureau that prepares statistics that are needed for the administration of the ministries' responsibilities. The decentralized form of organization offers the following advantages:

- (i) Statistics that meet the needs of users can be planned and compiled because of the close contact that the officer in charge of statistical compilation maintains with the policy planning officer; and
- (ii) The form is appropriate for the reality of government administration, and the use of statistics that take into consideration their link to administrative records is possible.

In a country with an administration of a substantial size, it is more effective to have individual administrative divisions execute statistical surveys in conjunction with their regular operations than to have one central organization conduct both large-scale statistical surveys, such as a census, and smaller statistical surveys.

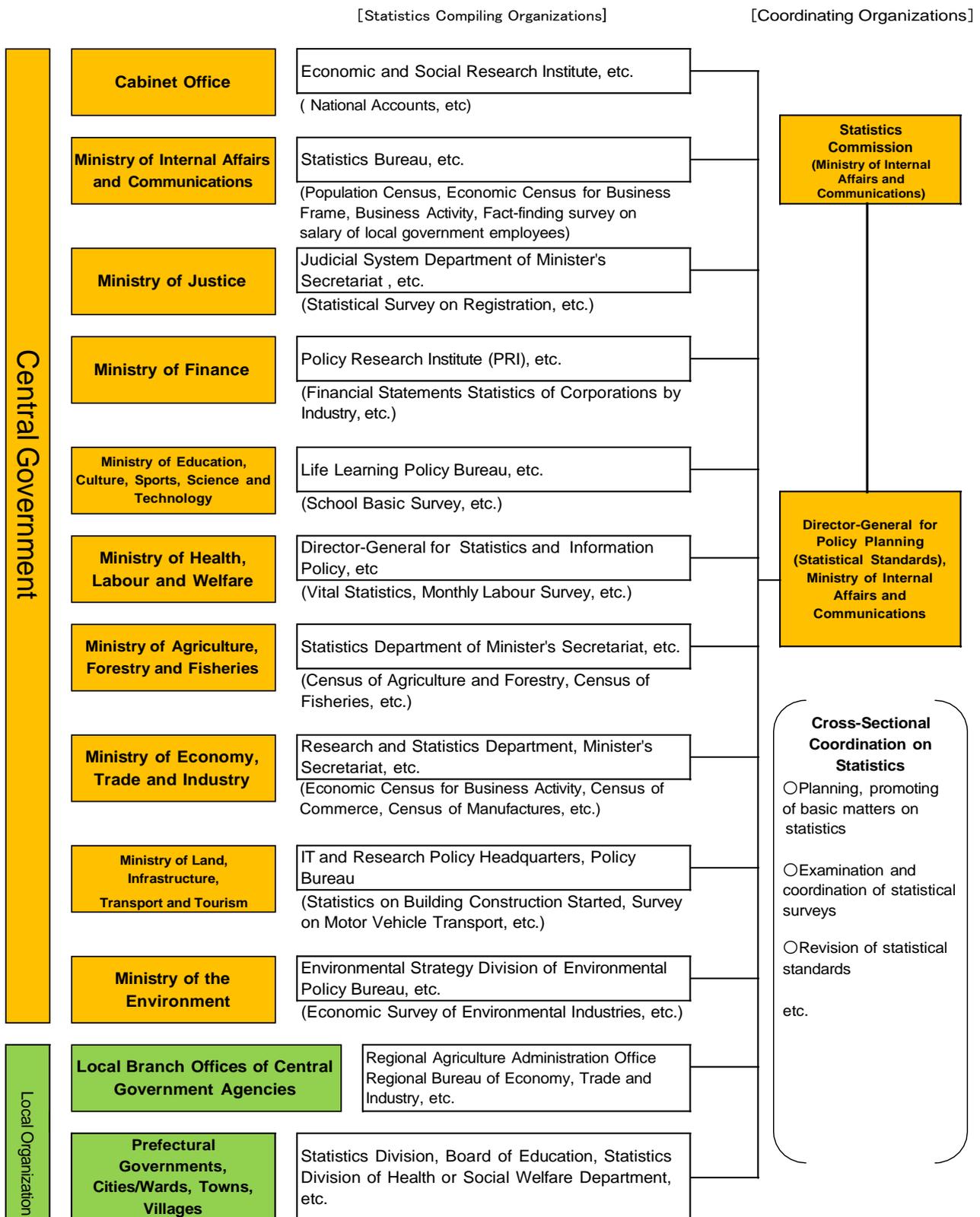
On the other hand, a decentralized statistical organization requires coordination so as to ensure consistency among different surveys and avoid overlapping. The creation of an organization that performs system-wide coordination is thus indispensable. (See Figure 1-1)

In Japan, the Director-General for Policy Planning (Statistical Standards) is in charge of overall coordination among organizations. As for the matters that the Statistics Act explicitly requires the Statistics Commission of Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications to deliberate, the decisions are made based on the commission's opinions. This section provides an outline of the organization for government-wide coordination and the organizations for producing statistics. (See Figure1-2)

Figure 1-1: Decentralized and Centralized Types

	Decentralized Type	Centralized Type
Mechanism	Statistical functions are spread out among individual administrative organizations.	Statistical functions are assigned to one central organization (such as the Central Statistics Bureau).
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Statistics that respond to changes in the social and economic trends can be compiled ✓ Enables each ministry/agency to utilize its knowledge on and experience with the administration under its jurisdiction for planning and conducting statistical surveys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Easy to capitalize on the professionalism of statistics. ✓ A consistent statistical system is built more readily.
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Comparability of statistics may receive little attention in some situations. ✓ Duplicity of statistical surveys and gaps in the statistical system may occur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ May be difficult to conduct statistical surveys that accurately and promptly reflect administrative needs. ✓ May be difficult to utilize knowledge and experiences on the administration under the jurisdiction for planning and conducting statistical surveys.
Examples of Major Foreign Countries	The United States, the United Kingdom, France, India	Canada, Australia, the Netherlands, Sweden

**Figure 1-2 Outline of the Government Statistical System in Japan
(As of 1st April 2016)**



1.1. Coordinating Organizations

The office of the Director-General for Policy Planning (Statistical Standards) is the cross-sectional coordination organization of the government of Japan with respect to government statistics. It provides coordination in accordance with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications Act (Act No. 91 of 1999), and the Statistics Act (Act No. 53 of 2007). The major duties of the Director-General for Policy Planning (Statistical Standards) of MIC with regard to overall coordination are as follows:

- (i) To draw up a draft basic plan stipulated by a cabinet decision in order to promote comprehensive and systematic development of official statistics in the whole government.
- (ii) To make preparations for deliberation of statistical survey plans, etc. in the Statistics Commission and take necessary steps to realize the commission's recommendations.
- (iii) To examine implementation guidelines of statistical surveys, and to promote the development of statistical systems, elimination of overlapping surveys and reduction of response burden on the public.
- (iv) To review plans to implement statistical surveys from technical aspects soon after receiving budget requests from ministries for statistical surveys, and furnish the Ministry of Finance (Budget Bureau) with an opinion so that the opinion can be reflected in the budget.
- (v) To establish various standards for statistics and improve the compatibility and comparability of statistics.

The office of the Director-General for Policy Planning (Statistical Standards) also provides coordination with local statistical organizations, collective coordination of international statistics-related operations, and assistance with training seminars at the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific.

Moreover, as a third-party organization to conduct neutral, fair and specialized research and deliberation, the Statistics Commission is established in Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. The Commission consists of thirteen or less academic experts, who conduct research and deliberate on the designation of fundamental statistics or the approval of statistical surveys in response to consultation with the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications and also on the draft basic plan for the development of official statistics.

1.2 Major Statistics Compiling Organizations

Individual ministries prepare statistics, and their statistical organizations are multi-layered. Core statistics of each ministry are prepared by the ministry's division that is dedicated to statistics preparation, while statistics that are directly tied to the administrative needs of individual departments are often prepared by the departments themselves.

1.2.1 Cabinet Office (CAO)

The Economic and Social Research Institute was established as a statistics-compiling organization. It conducts statistical surveys that mainly concern economic trends, such as the Business Outlook Survey (jointly managed with the Ministry of Finance), Machinery Orders, and the Consumer Confidence Survey. In addition, CAO prepares process statistics, the most important of which is the System of National Accounts.

1.2.2 Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC)

The Statistical Survey Department of the Statistics Bureau has functions that are different from those of other administrative organizations that prepare statistics. The department implements the Population Census and other statistical surveys about the basics of national trends without being confined to any specific area. Its major surveys consist of such cyclical surveys as the Population Census, the Economic Census for Business Frame and Business Activities, the Housing and Land Survey, and the Employment Status Survey, as well as such current surveys as the Labour Force Survey, Family Income and Expenditure Survey, and Retail Price Survey. With the exception of a few, the surveys that are conducted by the department are basically Fundamental Statistics Surveys.

The National Statistics Center, which became an incorporated administrative agency in April 2003, handles the compilation of the Population Census, as well as the compilation of statistical surveys that are implemented by various ministries.

1.2.3 Ministry of Finance (MOF)

The major statistics that are prepared by the ministry are the Financial Statements Statistics of Corporations by Industry, which are prepared by the Statistical Research Department of the Policy Research Institute, the Statistical Survey of Status of Salaries in the Private Sector by National Tax Agency, and Trade Statistics, which is prepared as administrative statistics by the Tariff Policy and Legal Division of the Customs and Tariff Bureau.

1.2.4 Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)

The Office for Research and Statistics Planning, Policy Planning and Coordination Division, Lifelong Learning Policy Bureau prepares basic statistics concerning education administration. Major statistics include the School Basic Survey, the School Health Survey, the School Teachers Survey and the Social Education Survey.

1.2.5 Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW)

The Director-General for Statistics and Information Policy prepares basic statistics concerning health, labour and welfare administration.

Major statistics are Vital Statistics, which combine data on population changes based on the family register, etc., the Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions, the Survey of Medical Institutions, the Monthly Labour Survey, and the Basic Survey on Wage Structure. The ministry provides statistics that are important and fundamental for social and economic policy purposes, such as those on health and welfare, as well as labour statistics. The National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, which is affiliated with the ministry, conducts such activities as population and household projections, surveys on population and social security, production of the financial statistics of social security, and research of population and social security issues.

As for local governments, health and welfare statistics divisions are staffed by dedicated statistics employees, and prefectural labour bureaus also take part in work for statistical surveys.

1.2.6 Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)

The Statistics Department of the Minister's Secretariat is the main

statistical producing department in MAFF.

Major statistics are the Census of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Census of Fisheries, the Crop Survey, the Statistical Survey on Farm Management and Economy, and the Survey on Marine Fishery Production.

In addition, there are statistics departments at the Regional Agricultural Administration Offices and Hokkaido District Agriculture Office, which are set up in each of the regional blocks as field survey organizations and conduct statistical surveys.

1.2.7 Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI)

The Research and Statistics Department of the Minister's Secretariat serves as the statistics department. The core statistics are the **Economic Structure Statistics** (the Economic Census for Business Activity), the Census of Manufacturers and the Census of Commerce. In addition, a wide array of statistics is compiled, including the Basic Survey of Japanese Business Structure and Activities, the Current Survey of Production, and the Current Survey of Commerce.

Regional Bureaus of Economy, Trade and Industry, which are set up in each of the regional blocks, also conduct part of the statistical surveys.

1.2.8 Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT)

The IT and Research Policy Headquarters, Policy Bureau, produces basic statistics for the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, including major statistics, such as the Survey on Ports and Harbors, the Survey on Motor Vehicle Transport, the Statistics on Building Construction Starts, and the Statistics on Construction Works.

District Transport Bureaus are branch offices of the MLIT. These organizations conduct surveys in connection with several major statistical surveys.

1.2.9 Other Government Organizations

Statistics are prepared by the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Environment, the National Personnel Authority and other ministries. Many of these are administrative statistics.

2. Local Statistical Organizations

2.1. History

In July 1947, the Cabinet approved the “Outline of Local Statistical System Establishment,” which set the policies for the reconstruction of local statistical organizations, and in fiscal year 1947, under these policies, 4,751 full-time national government-funded positions were created at the prefectural level (increasing to 5,030 positions in fiscal year 1948) in addition to 11,500 national government-funded fulltime workers that were added at the municipal levels. As a result, fieldwork for major statistical surveys of the national government began to be delegated to the heads of local governments.

The purposes of this decision were as follows:

- (i) Harmonization of the execution of the national government’s statistical survey work and local autonomy.
- (ii) Improvement of the statistical organizations of local governments with aid from the national government.
- (iii) Encouragement of the expansion of statistics compilation by local governments.
- (iv) Improvement of local government statistics and contribution to the growth of local autonomy through such improvement.

Local statistical organizations have played an important role in developing and maintaining the infrastructure of statistical surveys in Japan.

2.2 Division of Functions between the National Government and Local Governments

The fundamental structure of Japan’s system of large-scale statistical survey implementation is that the national government takes responsibility for the planning phase, including the establishment of survey guidelines and survey rules, the designing of questionnaires, and the creation of survey manuals, while the local governments conduct physical survey work, including the selection of subjects to be surveyed, training and supervision of statistical enumerators, determination of the survey areas, and the distribution and collection of questionnaires, as well as evaluation and compilation.

2.3 Statistical Systems in Local Regions

2.3.1 Prefectures

All prefectures have a division that is responsible for statistics. In addition, statistics are prepared and used by other groups, such as the governor's department and the board of education, for reasons related to technical specialization and direct relevance. Nonetheless, statistics divisions hold a central place in the statistical organization of their respective prefectures because of their scale of statistical surveys, the volume of their work, and the number of the employees who are dedicated to statistical work.

The statistics divisions of prefectures centrally process administrative work related to the Fundamental Statistical Surveys of CAO, MIC, MEXT, MHLW, MAFF, and METI. The costs of these surveys are paid for by the respective ministries.

As this shows, the statistics divisions of prefectures handle a part of various national statistical surveys (Figure 2-1) while also serving as the center of implementing organizations in local regions by providing explanations about the content and questionnaires of large-scale surveys that are carried out through municipalities.

In addition, the statistics divisions carry on not only process the administrative work related to national statistical surveys but also independent statistical operations of their prefectures. Specifically, they conduct (i) statistical surveys, (ii) estimation of population, estimation of the income of prefecture's residents, analysis of input and output, economic forecast, preparation of various indicators, and other analyses and processing, (iii) publication of statistical reports, such as the statistical yearbooks, summaries of prefectural trends, and reports of the statistical survey results. In addition, they are engaged in the training of their employees and measures related to statistical enumerators and award ceremonies.

Figure 2-1: Fundamental Statistics Surveys are Part of Operations Conducted by Statistics Divisions of Prefectures

Cycle	Title of Statistical Survey
Monthly	Labour Force Survey, Retail Price Survey, Family Income and Expenditure Survey, Current Survey of Production (Partial), Current Survey of Commerce, Monthly Labour Survey
Quarterly	Unincorporated Enterprise Survey
Annually	School Basic Survey,* School Health Survey*
Every 5 Years	Survey on Time Use and Leisure Activities

Note: Surveys that are marked with an asterisk are conducted also by boards of education.

2.3.2 Municipalities

Municipal governments conduct fieldwork for the large-scale statistical surveys listed in Figure 2-2.

Figure 2-2: Large-scale Statistical Surveys in which Municipal Governments Conduct Fieldwork

Responsible Organization	Title of Statistical Survey
MIC	Population Census, Economic Census for Business Frame, Economic Census for Business Activity(*), Housing and Land Survey, Employment Status Survey, National Survey of Family Income and Expenditure
MEXT	School Basic Survey
MAFF	Census of Agriculture and Forestry, Census of Fisheries
METI	Census of Manufacturers, Census of Commerce

(*) MIC implements this survey in cooperation with METI

2.3.3 Branch Offices of the Central Government

Branch offices of the central government that perform statistical survey operations as part of the statistical organizations in local regions are shown in Figure 2-3.

Figure 2-3: Branch Offices of the Central Government that Conduct Statistical Surveys

MOF
— Economic Research Division of the General Affairs Dept. of the Local Finance Bureaus (LFBs), Finance Division of Local Finance Offices, Okinawa General Bureau, Cabinet Office (Financial Division and Budget and Funds Division of the Finance Dept.), Research and Statistics Sec. of the Post Clearance Audit, Investigation and Intelligence Div. of the Customs Houses
National Tax Agency
— Planning Div. of the General Affairs Dept. of the Regional Taxation Bureaus, General Affairs Div. of Okinawa Regional Taxation Office
MHLW
— Prefectural Labour Bureaus
MAFF
— Hokkaido District Agriculture Office (Statistics Div.)—, Regional Agricultural Administration Offices (Statistics Div.), Okinawa General Bureau (CAO) –Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Center
METI
— The Regional Bureaus of Economy, Trade and Industry Okinawa General Bureau (Policy Div. of the Dept. of Economy, Trade and Industry)
MLIT
— District Transport Bureaus, Regional Development Bureaus
National Personnel Authority
— Regional Bureaus

Of these, the organizations that conduct Fundamental Statistical Surveys and the titles of the statistical surveys are shown in Figure 2-4. Regarding these

Fundamental and General Statistics Surveys, the Director-General for Policy Planning (Statistical Standards) of MIC reviews the survey plans ahead of time to ensure avoidance of overlapping, enhancement of the statistical system, and reduction of burden on the survey respondents.

Figure 2-4: Fundamental Statistical Surveys Implemented
by Branch Offices of the Central Government

Branch Office	Title of Statistical Survey
Local Finance Bureaus	Financial Statements Statistics of Corporations by Industry
Regional Taxation Bureaus	Statistical Survey of Status of Salaries in the Private Sector
Regional Agricultural Administration Offices	Census of Agriculture and Forestry (Partial), Census of Fisheries (Partial), Statistical Research of Farm Economy, Crop Survey, Survey of Marine Fishery Production, Statistics on Lumber
Regional Bureaus of Economy, Trade and Industry (Including the Dept. of Economy, Trade and Industry of Okinawa General Bureau)	Current Survey of Production (Partial), Current Survey of Production Concerning Gas Industry
District Transport Bureaus	Survey on Shipbuilding and Engineering, Survey on Seamen's Labour
Prefectural Labour Bureaus	Basic Survey on Wage Structure

3. Statistical Enumerators

3.1 Responsibilities of Statistical Enumerators

Many of the surveys that are conducted by government offices in Japan use the statistical method of statistical enumerators for reasons related to the collection rates and accuracy of statistics. All Fundamental Statistics Surveys involve fieldwork at the municipal level, including the Population Census, the Economic Census, the Census of Agriculture and Forestry, the Census of Manufacturers, and the Census of Commerce. Many of the sampling-based surveys that are conducted at the prefectural level, such as the Family Income and Expenditure Survey, the Retail Price Survey, the Labour Force Survey, the Current Survey of Production, and the Monthly Labour Survey, are conducted by statistical enumerators. As this shows, statistical enumerators serve an important purpose at the forefront of statistical surveys.

There are the following two types of duties that statistical enumerators perform and many of the surveys by enumerators in Japan use the second method.

- (i) Statistical enumerators interview survey objects, and fill out questionnaires
(Non-self-reporting method; also referred to as the "Interview Survey.")
- (ii) Statistical enumerators distribute and collect questionnaires. Survey objects themselves fill out questionnaires. (Self-reporting method; also referred to as the "Drop-off Survey.")

3.2 Status of Statistical Enumerators

Survey workers engaging in statistical surveys of the national government are public workers who are appointed for each survey. During their employment, they are granted the same public servant status as that granted to employees of the central government, prefectural government, or municipal governments. Because their employment is temporary, however, they are treated as part-time public workers.

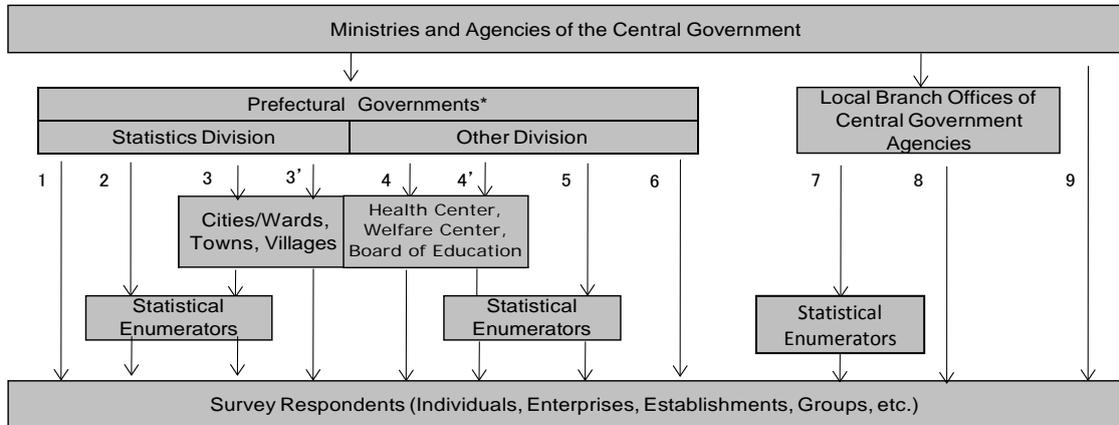
Most statistical enumerators who are engaged in the Population Census are public employees of the national government (appointed by the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications) whereas statistical enumerators who are engaged in all other statistical surveys, including the Housing and Land Survey, are public employees of local governments (appointed by prefectural governors).

Because of the special nature of their duties, statistical enumerators are treated differently from other ordinary public workers in regards to their status. For example, statistical enumerators are exempt from restrictions regarding engagement in profit-oriented business.

Statistical enumerators are compensated for their labour. The compensation is typically called “survey worker pay” and its rate is determined depending on the number of days it takes to complete each survey.

Statistical enumerators’ full-time occupations vary. A relatively large number are self-employed, homemakers, or unemployed, while others are government workers or corporate employees.

Figure 2-5: Flowchart for Implementation of National Statistical Surveys
(Fundamental Statistical Surveys)



*Some statistical surveys are conducted by prefectural governments.

1	2	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School Health Survey (9) - Monthly Labour Survey (2, 9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Labour Force Survey - Retail Price Survey (1, 9) - Family Income and Expenditure Survey - Unincorporated Enterprise Survey - Survey on Time Use and Leisure Activities (9) - Current Survey of Production (1, 8, 9) - Current Survey of Commerce (1, 9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population Census(9) - Economic Census for Business Frame (1, 3', 9) - Economic Census for Business Activities (1, 3', 9) - Housing and Land Survey(9) - Employment Status Survey(9) - National Survey of Family Income and Expenditure (2, 9) - Census of Agriculture and Forestry (7, 8, 9) - Census of Fisheries (7, 9) - Census of Manufactures (9) - Census of Commerce (9)
		3'
		- School Basic Survey (1, 9)
4	5	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School Teachers Survey (6, 9) - Social Education Survey (6, 9) - Vital Statistics (9) - Survey of Medical Institutions (6, 9) - Patient Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Statistics of Production by Pharmaceutical Industry (6, 9) - Survey on Port and Harbor(9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporations Survey on Land and buildings (9) - Statistics on Building Construction Started (5, 9) - Statistics on Construction Works (5, 9) - Fact-finding Survey on Salary of Local Government Employees (3')
4'		
- Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions		
7	8	9
- Basic Survey on Wage Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial Statements Statistics of Corporations by Industry (9) - Statistical Survey of Actual Status for Salary in the Private Sector (9) - Statistics on Crops (7) - Statistics on Marine Fishery Production (7) - Statistics on Lumber (7, 9) - Statistics on Farm Management and Economy(9) - Current Survey of Production Concerning Gas Industry (9) - Survey on Shipbuilding and Engineering(9) - Survey on Seamen's Labour(9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current Survey of Petroleum Products Supply and Demand - Survey of Research and Development - Survey on Current Rolling Stock Production - Current Survey of Energy Consumption in the Selected Industries - Survey on Motor Vehicle Transport (8) - Statistics on Milk and Dairy Products - Survey on Coastwise Vessel Transport - Survey of Selected Service Industries - Basic Survey of Japanese Business Structure and Activities

Note

- i) A fundamental statistical survey which has several flows is classified into a main survey flow with the other flows described in parentheses ().
- ii) Shaded areas shown as an enumerator survey.
- iii) It is mentioned as of April 2016.
- iv) '9' includes online-respondent.