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11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



Background Information on SDG 11.4.1 Statistics in the UIS Database



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Objective

This document serves as a reader's guide to help data users understand and interpret SDG 11.4.1 data disseminated by the UIS. It presents the following information:

- The list of symbols accompanying the data.
- The annual data release cycles.
- The data sources used by the UIS and their updates, including population and economic data used to calculate SDG 11.4.1 indicators.
- Methodological notes

The following symbols are used:

- ... Data not available
- (a) Category not applicable
- (n) Magnitude nil or negligible
- (+) National estimation
- (£) UIS estimation
- (q) Data suppressed due to confidentiality or reliability issues
- (u) Low reliability

Data releases

The UIS launches its annual UIS data Survey Expenditure on Cultural and Natural Heritage capturing SDG 11.4.1 in September each year. As of 2022, according to UIS practices, the UIS has moved to two culture data releases through a data release in February/March and a data refresh in October in the same year. The data release includes the great majority of new national and revised national data while the data refresh includes the final set of data including countries that could not submit data by the deadline. The first data release of the SDG 11.4.1 indicator took place in June 2021.

Data release – February 2025: This is the fifth data release of the UIS data Survey Expenditure on Cultural and Natural Heritage (SDG 11.4.1). This release includes national data for SDG 11.4.1 and its disaggregation for the reference year 2023, minus 1 or plus 1 collected from the UIS Survey of Expenditure on Cultural and Natural Heritage (SDG 11.4.1). For example, most European countries report data with reference year minus 1. Despite a significant increase in the number of countries reporting data, they represent 41% country coverage. Therefore, the calculations for regional aggregates are not yet possible.



Stay informed on the latest data releases by signing up for the UIS email alert service at <http://uis.unesco.org>

UIS data can be obtained from the following sources:

- The new [UIS data browser](#), brings together all UIS dissemination data on education, science and culture, acting as a one-stop-shop resource for policymakers, researchers, and developers interested in examining internationally comparable data. The new Data browser allows users to view and filter data and metadata on SDG on SDG 11.4.1. for countries and territories.
- The Data API facilitates programmatic access to the data within our Data Browser. It allows users to efficiently retrieve data at regular intervals to inform custom analysis, data visualizations and applications.
- [Bulk data download service](#) (BDDS), which enables access to all UIS databases in comma-separated values (CSV) format. The SDG 11.4.1 data from the February 2025 data release can be referred to, through the Resources of the BDDS Data Services under the 'Culture' tab. all UIS culture data and indicators from previous UIS Culture surveys (feature films, cultural employment and international trade of cultural goods) that the UIS used to carry out and disseminate in the past (until June 2021 for International Trade of cultural goods), but which were discontinued and not updated through subsequent data releases, can still be accessed through the 'Archive' tab in BDDS. This contains culture data which had been released until of June 2021.
- **Note:** As of June 2020, the UIS SDMX API has reached its End-of-Life (EOL) and is no longer up to date with the latest UIS datasets. In addition, the [UIS.Stat Data Browser](#) has been phased out since February 2025.

Data sources

To produce internationally comparable SDG 11.4.1 indicators, the UIS collects data via its unique source: the UIS Survey of Expenditure on Cultural and Natural Heritage (SDG 11.4.1). For national data, countries use the main sources of data listed below. These data sources differ in their coverage as well as the timing and way in which they are collected:

Financial and expenditure data – these contain information on various sources of expenditure, including government spending on culture and heritage from government finance statistics, or respective ministries. This source commonly encompasses data on



direct expenditure (including subsidies), transfers, and indirect public expenditures including tax incentives. Typically, they are updated annually.

Administrative data – based on information generally available from cultural satellite accounts or environmental satellite accounts calculated by national statistics offices in partnership with respective ministries. In contrast to expenditure data, they may not be collected on an annual basis.

Surveys – dedicated surveys on cultural/ heritage activities or related activities are a potential source of expenditure data. Surveys differ in terms of coverage, frequency, objectives, and questionnaire design. In contrast to administrative data, they are collected less frequently, and by a variety of organizations and countries.

Population censuses – important as a source of population estimates (the number of persons in a country). The UIS uses population estimates from the United Nations Population Division (UNPD), which are based on a reliable, internationally accepted, methodology. These data are used to calculate the per capita SDG 11.4.1 indicators and their disaggregation.

Overview of SDG 11.4.1 indicators currently available

This data release includes new data submitted from November 2024 to the 7th of January 2025. A dozen of countries indicated that they couldn't submit the data by January 2025. Data submitted after this date will be released during the data refresh in October/November 2025. The total number of available countries almost triple from 30 to 82 from the 2020 Survey cycle to the 2024 Survey Cycle.

Table 1 provides a concise snapshot of the SDG indicators related to Target 11.4 available on the UIS website.

**TABLE 1. SUMMARY OF SDG INDICATORS DATA DIMENSIONS RELEASED FOR SDG 11.4.1**

Indicator	Indicator description		
	Total number of countries for which the indicator or one of its disaggregation is reported	Range of years for which data are available for the indicator	Dimensions of disaggregation
SDG 11.4.1	82	2017–2024	By type of heritage (cultural natural), by sector (public, private), by level of government (National/Federal, regional, local/municipal)

UIS survey of expenditure on cultural and natural heritage (SDG 11.4.1)

The UIS collects SDG 11.4.1 statistics in aggregate form from official administrative sources at the national level. The survey collects the data needed for global monitoring of SDG Target 11.4, which calls on countries to “strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage.” Collected information encompasses financial resources data for the preservation of cultural and natural heritage. These statistics cover expenditure from both public and private sectors.

These data are gathered annually by the UIS through an online survey that can be accessed from the UIS website at <http://uis.unesco.org/en/uis-questionnaires>.

The UIS SDG 11.4.1 questionnaires are sent to 205 UNESCO Member States annually. The questionnaires are based on international standards, classifications, and measures that are regularly reviewed and modified by the UIS to address emerging statistical issues and to improve data quality.



External data sets: Inputs to indicators

Population estimates

The standard source of population estimates is the United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2024) (UNPD). World Population Prospects: The 2024 Revision (<https://population.un.org/wpp/>).

Population-based indicators are listed as missing (..) if population data are not available.

The UN Population Division (UNPD) is the standard source of population data used for the calculation of the per capita component of the SDG 11.4.1 indicator at the UIS. For the February 2025 data release, total population as of 1 January for each reference year, is used from the 2024 Revision of World Population Prospects when calculating SDG 11.4.1 indicator values.

TABLE 2. SOURCES OF POPULATION DATA FOR UIS SDG 11.4.1 INDICATOR CALCULATION

Source of population data	Number of countries	Criteria used
United Nations Population Division (UNPD): World Population Prospects (WPP) 2024	82	UNPD is the main source of population data used by the UIS for all countries

Economic statistics

SDG 11.4.1 indicators are published in purchasing power parity (PPP), constant 2017 United States dollars. Data on economic indicators, such as PPP, are World Bank estimates as of June 2024. This data release uses the PPP conversion factor (local currency per international dollar) and the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) deflator of the most recent World Bank International Comparison Program of 2017. Data on total general government expenditure (all sectors) come from the April 2024 release of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) World Economic Outlook database. Data are converted into PPP, constant 2017 United States dollars according to the World Bank Atlas methodology available at:

<https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/114942-what-is-the-difference-between-current-and-constant>

Where PPP conversion factor estimates are not available, UIS convert the data in Constant US\$ instead of constant PPP\$. When economic indicators are missing for a given year, UIS estimates are used.



Methodological notes for SDG 11.4.1 indicators

Summary of countries reporting data that could not be released

Following the launch of the 2024 SDG 11.4.1 survey, data for 48 countries were collected. Three countries indicated that they did not have the necessary data to complete the questionnaire. Data for eight countries were not published due to issues described in Table 3. This number is stable compared to the 2023 data cycle.

Table 3 presents a summary of the number of countries for which data was reported for the 2024 SDG 11.4.1 Survey, but not released, grouped by key causes.

TABLE 3. 2024 SDG 11.4.1 SURVEY – SUMMARY OF CAUSES PREVENTING THE PUBLICATION OF DATASETS

Issues preventing the publication of datasets recently received for reference years 2022- 2023 and 2024	Number of countries
Significant partial /under coverage data	4
Trend is not consistent with no explanation available or significant data quality issue	4

Note: the table includes only countries where the data received is not published. There are new data being published for 42 countries.

Technical notes on SDG 11.4.1 data

SDG 11.4.1 data and indicators methodology including related concepts, definitions, and international standards are described in the metadata repository of the United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Website available at:

<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/files/Metadata-11-04-01.pdf>

UIS SDG 11.4.1 Metadata is accessible on the Resource page under methodological documents of the New Data browser available at

<https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/metadata-11.4.1.pdf>

Definitions/Metadata for culture data and indicators can be accessed at: UIS Glossary webpage: (<http://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary>)



Country notes

Australia: The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) did not complete the 2023 nor the 2021 and 2022 questionnaire instead, the UIS gathered the 2021 and 2022 data from the Culture Funding by Government for 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 to estimate public expenditure on heritage. UIS completed the 2020 data to estimate natural heritage from the ABS Integrated Environmental-Economic Accounts: Experimental Environmental-Economic Accounts for the Great Barrier Reef 2017. No new data for 2022–23 were available as the survey has become biennial.

Andorra: As PPP\$ are now available for Andorra, indicators for this country from 2021 to 2023 are now calculated in PPP\$ 2017 constant.

Bosnia Herzegovina: Data for Regional / state / provincial refer to 10 cantons within the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina entity. Data are not available for the level of entity Republika Srpska.

Canada: By combining the unconsolidated federal and consolidated provincial with local, there is a very small overestimation when compared to Canada General Government which includes (federal, provincial, local on a consolidated basis).

Croatia: The Croatian Bureau of Statistics completed the questionnaire for the 2021, 2022 and 2023 survey cycle. However, at their request, data were suppressed from the dissemination database hence not released due low reliability issues. Croatia did not report data for the 2024 survey cycle.

Iraq: State board of antiquities and heritage completed the questionnaire for the reference year 2024. As the economic indicators were not available for 2024, UIS estimated their values to be able to calculate the indicator and its disaggregates.

Japan: The values published until February 29, 2024, are based on the initial budgets. The values published after March 1, 2024, are based on the supplementary budgets included.

Kenya: Break in data series due to two different data sources. While data for 2021 were reported by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics using the fiscal budget of the country, the State Department for Culture, The Arts and Heritage of Kenya reported the data for 2022.

Monaco: As PPP\$ Monaco are not available in the World Bank database, its indicators are calculated in \$ in constant 2017 United States dollars instead.

Norway: The use of status code “U – Low reliability” does not reflect the quality of the reported data – which is good, but rather that the country is aware of that the reported data only reflects a very small part of the total picture.



Republic of Moldova: Break in series: Data reported from 2019 to 2022 were Actual expenditure while data for 2023 are from budget allocation.

Syrian Arab Republic: The Directorate General of Antiquities & Museums completed the questionnaire for the reference year 2023 during the 2023 Survey Cycle. As the economic indicators were not available for this country for 2023, UIS estimated their values to be able to calculate the SDG 11.4.1 indicator and its disaggregates.