II. Purpose

5. A reference architecture is described as "in the field of software architecture or enterprise architecture [a reference architecture] provides a template solution for an architecture for a particular domain. It also provides a common vocabulary with which to discuss implementations, often with the aim to stress commonality." (Wikipedia)

6. In the context of this document, the domains are the (data aspects of) individual statistical organisations around the world.

7. The purpose and use of the Common Statistical Data Architecture as a reference architecture is to act as a template for statistical organisations in the development of their own Enterprise Data Architectures. In turn, this will guide Solution Architects and Builders in the development of systems that will support users in doing their jobs (that is, the production of statistical products).

8. The CSDA supports statistical organisations in the design, integration, production and dissemination of official statistics based on both traditional and new types of data sources.

9. The CSDA shows the organisations how to organise and structure their processes and systems for efficient and effective management of data and metadata, from the external sources through the internal storage and processing up to the dissemination of the statistical end-products. In particular, in order to help organisations modernise themselves, it shows how to deal with the newer types of data sources such as Big Data, Scanner data, Web Scraping, etc.

10. The CSDA must be seen in the context of a whole suite of standards, developed and maintained by the international statistical community, led by HLG-MOS. Among these are GSBPM, GSIM, and CSPA. Where applicable, the CSDA also links to other international standards such as TOGAF, DDI, SDMX, etc.

11. Another useful reference is the European Interoperability Reference Architecture (EIRA). EIRA focuses on building blocks and distinguishes architecture and solution building blocks. In EIRA terms, an architecture building block "represents a (potentially re-usable) component of legal, organisational, semantic or technical capability that can be combined with other architecture building blocks".