I. Introduction

1. The GSIM Specification is the most detailed level of the Generic Statistical Information Model (GSIM). It provides a set of standardized, consistently described information objects, which are the inputs and outputs in the design and production of statistics. Each information object is been defined and its attributes and relationships are specified. GSIM is the result of a collaboration involving statistical organizations across the world in order to develop and maintain a generic reference model suitable for all organizations and meet the strategic goals (in particular the modernization effort) of the official statistics community. For contextual information, an introduction to GSIM and information on using GSIM, please refer to the GSIM Brochures, Communication and Implementing GSIM documents.

2. There is a widespread interest across statistical organizations in being able to trace how statistical information (for example, data and metadata) "flow" through statistical business processes (into and out of processes). Interested parties include broad statistical systems (like the European Statistical System), National Statistical Systems (both centralized and decentralized) and smaller task teams working inside National Statistical Offices.

3. GSIM covers the whole statistical process and is designed to support both current and new ways of producing statistics. Section II describes tasks (for example identifying statistical needs, managing statistical programs, dissemination) which statistical organizations undertake and how the model describes the information flows in those tasks. This section also contains descriptions of designing and running processes to show how GSIM has models the explicit separation between the design and execution of statistical processes.

4. There is an increasing business need to record reliable, structured information about the processes used to produce specific statistical outputs. In order to maximize transparency and reproducibility of results, it is important for a statistical organization to understand the processes it undertakes and their inputs and outputs. Section III describes the foundational information objects (that is, the conceptual and structural metadata objects) that are used as inputs and outputs in a statistical business process.

5. There are a number of technical information objects in GSIM. These objects are the fundamental building blocks that support many of the other objects and relationships in the model. They provide features which are reusable by other objects to support functionality such as identity, versioning etc. These objects are described in Section IV of this document.

6. This document provides a description of GSIM in the context of a statistical organization. It has a number of annexes which provide further details for the reader. These annexes are:

- Annex A: Exchange Channels - This annex provides further information about the three subtypes of Exchange Channel focused on data collection.
- Annex B: Glossary - The annex gives readers definitions and explanatory descriptions for the GSIM information objects.
- Annex C: UML diagrams - This annex includes all detailed UML models of GSIM.
- Annex D: Extending the model - This annex provides information for implementers on how to extend GSIM for organization specific purposes. It also contains the set of recommended attributes for the administration of GSIM objects.

7. Note: GSIM information objects have been given in italics in the descriptions that follow. The diagrams included in this section are stylized representations of the model. **The colours of the boxes in diagrams represent which group the information object belongs to (Blue for Business Group, Red for Exchange Group, Green for Concepts Group, Yellow for Structures Group and Orange for the Base Group).** In many cases there is more detail to be found in the UML. Detailed information on each information object in the model, including a glossary and UML class diagrams can be found in Annexes B and C of this document.