

INTRODUCTION

The Solomon Islands National Statistics Office (SINSO) successfully conducted a National Economic Establishment Census (NEEC) among business establishments in 2024. The census has covered all principal locations within the 9 provinces and Honiara. Using 55 enumerators and 18 team leads, all formal and informal businesses in the principal locations were identified and their main characteristics were registered. The NEEC was supported technically and financially by the World Bank as part of the Capacity Building for Statistics and Audit (CAPSA) project.

The NEEC results provide comprehensive data on an important set of business characteristics. Next to the number of establishments, it reveals the industry of the establishment (e.g., manufacturing, trade or services), the number and type of workers (hired/non-hired), location data, legal status, ownership of establishment, turnover classes and other business demography information.

Details on the methodology and important figures of the NEEC findings are presented in the main report. This press release only contains some highlights and a [URL](#) to access a much richer dataset on the number and characteristics on all formal and informal business establishments identified during the census. Formal business establishments are formally registered, licensed and regulated and often they have paid employees. Informal establishments are mostly smaller and not registered with the government and mostly operate by self-employed workers and family members.

METHODOLOGY

The majority of the industries could be covered well by means of a census as many businesses have very visible premises. Therefore, this census publication is an excellent estimate of the visible economy with a more or less permanent location. Meanwhile, some industries or some size classes within these industries lack visible premises (like for the transport sector, small construction firms, etc.). Therefore, more work is needed to build a complete Statistical Business Register (SBR) based on the census data and using data from the housing and population census, administrative data as well as applying statistical techniques to derive more comprehensive estimates. Future publications on the business sector (Business Demography), will therefore be more complete.

Furthermore, for some industries like mining and the financial sector, there are better a more authoritative data sources from Ministries or the Central Bank, than a census. Census results of those industries are thus omitted in the publications.

Given the geographical structure of the Solomon Islands, the need for efficiency and the possibilities of statistical methods 108 wards out of a total of 183 wards were selected, mostly in proportion to the population density of the provinces. In the selected wards all streets were canvassed and all found business activities were registered using a digital questionnaire on tablets. The digital data collection helped to improve efficiency, quality and timeliness.

For the remaining 75 wards, an imputation method was applied to estimate establishment numbers and employment size using ratios between the provincial population obtained from the 2019 Population and Household census and the current NEEC results.

HIGHLIGHTING MAIN RESULTS

This press release and the related data sets cover all provinces and estimates that there are 22,567 business establishments on the Solomon Islands. Out of this total 11,991 establishments are regular (formal) business establishments and 10,576 are informal micro establishments. As a province Malaita has the most business establishments (6,697). Meanwhile Honiara together with the rest of Guadalcanal account for 8,298 business establishments. Trade is my far the industry with the largest number of businesses (78.3% of the total), followed by Manufacturing (10.3%) and Hospitality (4,8%)

Distribution by Establishments (Number & Percentage)		
Establishment Type	Number	Percentage %
Formal	11,991	53%
Informal	10,576	47%
Total	22,567	100%

For the actual detail data excluding the imputation figures, can be viewed using the Link below:

[\[Click to view the available **NEEC FIELD DATA TABLES 16 OCTOBER** \]](#)

Distribution of Establishments by Economic Activity (Number & Percentage)		
Economic Activity (ISIC level 1)	Number	Percentage %
Agriculture, forestry and fishery	564	2.5
Manufacturing	2,321	10.3
Electricity and water	10	0.0
Construction	20	0.1
Trade	17,674	78.3
Transport	235	1.0
Accommodation and food service activities	1,086	4.8
Information and communication	283	1.3
Banking and insurance	40	0.2
Real estate activities	17	0.1
Professional, scientific and technical activities	49	0.2
Administrative and support service activities	36	0.2
Education	123	0.5
Human health and social work activities	38	0.2
Arts, entertainment and recreation	13	0.1
Other service activities	58	0.3
Total	22,567	100

Distribution of Establishments by Region (Number & Percentage)		
Region	Number	Percentage (%)
Choiseul	642	2.8
Western	2,275	10.1
Isabel	776	3.4
Central	825	3.7
Rennell-Bellona	95	0.4
Guadalcanal	3,307	14.7
Malaita	6,697	29.7
Makira-Ulawa	2,306	10.2
Temotu	654	2.9
Honiara	4,991	22.1
Total	22,567	100

For more detailed data can be viewed using this link: [[Click to view available Data Tables](#)]

NEXT STEPS

The outcomes of the NEEC will be used for maintaining a Statistical Business Register (SBR) for Solomon Islands. This SBR will be the foundation for compiling all economic statistics in the upcoming years and will result in more, better and more robust economic indicators for policy making and policy evaluation.

The next major milestone in the development of economic statistics is the launch by SINSO of the Annual Economic Survey (AES) later in 2025. During this survey a sample will be drawn from the SBR and all sampled businesses will be visited to collect more detailed data on economic performance (revenues and costs) and employment. The AES survey will result in the publication of Business Statistics and a new estimate of GDP (National Accounts). We count on the cooperation of the business community in achieving this new milestone.

The AES survey and its publication are again part of the Capacity Building for Statistics and Audit (CAPSA) project, a joint effort by SINSO and the World Bank to improve statistics on the Solomon Islands.