

Selecting a Suitable Industry Code in the Singapore Standard Industrial Classification 2025

What is the SSIC?

The Singapore Standard Industrial Classification (SSIC) is the national standard for classifying economic activities undertaken by economic units. The SSIC 2025 adopts the basic framework of the latest [International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities Revision 5 \(ISIC Rev. 5\)](#), with modifications for the local economic context. The use of SSIC in the collection, analysis and dissemination of data facilitates data sharing and ensures data coherence, where data are internally consistent and comparable with other data sources over time. 'Coherence' is one of the six data quality dimensions outlined in the [Statistical Best Practices 2020 Handbook](#).

Upholding the quality dimension of 'Relevance', the SSIC is periodically reviewed to reflect recent developments in the economy and to align with changes in the international standard. The Singapore Department of Statistics (DOS) led a multi-agency committee in the revision of SSIC 2020, where various public agencies were consulted in the development of the SSIC 2025 released in April 2025.



Basic Classification Principles

The SSIC applies a five-digit hierarchical coding system comprising five classification levels – Section, Division, Group, Class, and Sub-class.

- ✓ The SSIC of an economic unit is based on its **principal activity** that contributes the most to the value added (VA) [1] of the goods and services produced by the unit using the top-down method, such that the classification at the lowest level is consistent with the classification at the highest level.
- ✗ The SSIC of an economic unit **does not depend** on its ownership or legal organisation (e.g., government or privately-owned; local or foreign firm; sole proprietorship or company) nor the type of production or mode of delivery (e.g., manual or with machinery; online or brick-and-mortar). For example, self-employed persons who solely retail clothes online are grouped with firms that retail clothes through physical brick-and-mortar stores.

Commonly Mis-classified Activities

There are instances where economic units engaging in similar activities may fall under different SSIC categories. These examples detail commonly mis-classified activities and their correct classifications.

Example 1: Self-employed Persons



John, a self-employed graphic designer primarily collaborates with advertising firms to provide designs for advertising campaigns. Additionally, he designs magazine and website layouts for other clients. He receives most of his income from collaborations with advertising firms.

Principle: The industry which self-employed persons are in is based on the main economic activity performed, rather than that of their main clients or intermediaries who matched them with their clients.

Classification: Based on John's main activity, the appropriate SSIC is 74192 'Art and graphic design services' instead of 73100 'Advertising activities' which is the principal activity of his clients.

[1] Value added (VA) is a measure of an economic activity's contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), an aggregated measure of a country's production. Gross VA is obtained by subtracting the value of a unit's inputs for production from the value of the unit's output from production. If information on the VA of the goods sold or services rendered is unavailable, the principal activity could be determined by alternatives such as gross output, value of sales and proportion of employment or wages in the various activities, etc.



Example 2: E-commerce Activities

Firm X procures adult fashion clothing from overseas suppliers and sells them online through online marketplaces to the public.

Principle: Economic units should be classified based on their principal activity if they own the goods sold or directly provide the services rendered online. For units that facilitate orders between buyers and sellers through online platforms, usually on a fee or commission basis, without owning goods or providing the services, the classification is online marketplace conducting intermediation activity. The key distinction between wholesale and retail trade depends on the customer type, where the former involves selling to businesses while the latter involves selling to individual customers.

Classification: As Firm X owns the clothing and mainly sells to individual customers, it is undertaking e-commerce retail activities. The appropriate SSIC is 47711 'Retail sale of clothing for adults'.



Example 3: Retail of Self-manufactured Goods

Firm C sells cinnamon rolls at a kiosk in a mall. The rolls are baked by its staff on-site from flour.

Principle: A manufacturing establishment that sells its own products is classified under the 'Manufacturing' section instead of the 'Wholesale and Retail Trade' section. Bakery and confectionery manufacturing involve baking from raw materials such as flour, not from prepared dough. Sale of bakery items from prepared dough or pre-baked goods that are not self-manufactured on-site or at central facility is classified under Section G 'Wholesale and Retail Trade'.

Classification: As the rolls are baked from flour and self-manufactured on-site, Firm C is a manufacturer of bakery/confectionery products. The appropriate SSIC is 10712 'Manufacture of bread, cakes and confectionery (except frozen bakery products)', since the retail of self-manufactured goods is classified based on the manufacturing activity.



Example 4: Social Media Influencers

Betty, a self-employed Influencer, mainly performs in videos to promote her clients' products. Her clients engage video production firms to produce these clips for posting onto social media platforms.

Principle: There is no single SSIC for content creators. The SSIC depends on the actual activity, e.g., performance, writing, videography or media production.

Classification: The appropriate SSIC for Betty is 90209 'Activities of performing arts n.e.c.' as she is an own-account influencer who primarily appears in video content.



Example 5a: Cafes and Restaurants

Firm R sells western food in dine-in food eateries where customers order and have their food in the eatery.

Principle: Standalone dine-in food eateries are classified under Class 5611 'Restaurants and Cafes'. Specifically, SSIC 56111 'Restaurants' covers units that provide table service where food is served to customer's tables, and payment typically occurs after eating. SSIC 56112 'Cafes' covers establishments with limited table service where customers typically pay before eating.

Classification: As Firm R operates dine-in food eateries with limited table service, the appropriate SSIC is 56112 'Cafes'.



Example 5b: Food Stalls

George runs laksa stalls within food courts operated by Firm K. Firm K also runs drinks stalls in its food courts but mainly derives its income from the rental of stalls.

Principle: Operators of food courts and similar establishments are either classified under SSIC 56122 'Operators of food courts, hawker centres, coffee shops and canteens (with mainly food and beverage income)' or SSIC 68104 'Letting and operating of self-owned or leased food courts, hawker centres, coffee shops and canteens (with mainly rental income)' depending on their main source of income. Individual stalls operating in these establishments are classified under SSIC 56140 'Stalls selling cooked food and prepared drinks'.

Classification: The appropriate SSIC for George is 56140 'Stalls selling cooked food and prepared drinks', as he runs stalls within food courts. The appropriate SSIC for Firm K is 68104 'Letting and operating of self-owned or leased food courts, hawker centres, coffee shops and canteens (with mainly rental income)' since its main source of revenue is from rental income.

Your Handy Companion – SSIC 2025 Publication

The SSIC 2025 publication comprises seven documents available on the [SingStat Website](#).

			
Report Contains in-depth information on the latest classification principles, structure, and applications		Type of Change at Sub-class Level Describes the changes for each five-digit SSIC from the SSIC 2020	
			
Classification Structure Shows the hierarchical structure from the highest numeric level of aggregation (Division) to the lowest level (Sub-class)		Alphabetical Index Contains alternative titles that are used to describe economic activities	
			
Correspondence Tables between SSIC 2025 and SSIC 2020 Tables to convert SSIC 2025 to SSIC 2020 and vice versa		Correspondence Tables between SSIC 2025 and ISIC Rev. 5 Tables to convert SSIC-based data into ISIC-based data and vice-versa for international comparability	

In the SSIC 2025, detailed definitions for each Section provide a broad overview of activities according to the top-down classification principle. New examples of activities in each SSIC code are incorporated, providing greater clarity in the classification of emerging economic activities which enable users to distinguish between the different codes and reduce errors in assigning the appropriate SSIC codes at the five-digit level.



How are Economic Activities Cla-SSIC-fied?

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YouTube

How are economic activities cla-SSIC-fied?

This video guides the selection of suitable Singapore Standard Industrial Classification (SSIC) codes for commonly mis-...



The SSIC classification structure, detailed definitions and alphabetical index should be referenced together for the appropriate classification of the economic units. With these principles in mind, there are two ways to determine a suitable SSIC using the available resources:

- Search the **alphabetical index** for the main economic activity performed (including possible synonyms and abbreviations) and select the most appropriate SSIC by referring to the **detailed definitions**; or
- Classify the industry broadly with the **classification structure**, either at the Section, Group or Class level before narrowing down to the most appropriate SSIC. Then, confirm the selected SSIC by referring to the **detailed definitions**.

Conclusion

The SSIC is used in the compilation, presentation and analysis of a wide range of statistics. Ensuring that appropriate SSIC codes are correctly chosen improves the quality and comparability of statistics, which is essential for meaningful analyses and policy implementation.