



OECD SHORT-TERM ECONOMIC STATISTICS WORKING PARTY
(STESWP)

STESWP Task Force on Administrative Data

Country comments on outline of preliminary web-based administrative data handbook and outline of next steps for the proposed administrative data handbook

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Administrative Data Task Force – Country Comments

Austria:

The OECD initiatives in the field of administrative data use are appreciated. The information provided is helpful for MS. The structure of the presentation and the grouping of categories are clear and concise. Proposed name: administrative data framework. Once the database will become more extensive, it could be helpful to make possible search according to key words, and in general the papers relevant for STS could be elaborated in more detail. The database should be updated once a year and it should be possible to send papers if available at any time which are then posted. New documents should be marked as such. Generally, new activities should take into account work on European level in order to avoid double work and to achieve better harmonization.

In our opinion, the presented handbook options narrow the number of users, which is why we would prefer the production of a web based document which structures the existing material according to different subjects, summarizes different issues and gives references to the existing papers. The existing literature and material is at the moment widespread and unstructured and would require a clear structure.

Bank of Italy:

Feedback required from STESWP:

- 1) The way the site is organized proves very user-friendly at a first impression; however papers in the different categories are not balanced with respect to the strict connection to short term statistics and I would suggest to consider the option to list available contributions within each category in the table.
- 2) Where not available, abstracts of the papers would be very welcome, possibly in the form of an executive summary.
- 3) In connection with point 1, I would suggest to reduce the variety of categories (for example, categories 5 and 6 would collapse in one) and, in place of extending description or adding example, I would provide an index of contributions in both STES relevant and not.
- 4) I find that two groups are very useful and I do not see benefits from further disaggregation.

As for future developments, the task force could work as self-motivating device for all NSI's currently adopting administrative data to report about their experiences and solutions they adopted for issues regarding the different categories included in Table 1, so that the country coverage of the site may be enlarged and the user may find useful hints about the nature and comparability of the treatment process of administrative data underlying the STES.

As for the priority in resources allocations, I think that is more efficient to concentrate efforts on developments of the web-site framework rather than to produce an additional handbook, above all if abstracts or executives summaries of single contributions are provided in the future.

Handbook Types: provided that a Handbook is to be produced, I would consider the option 3 (reported in the bullet n. 10), possibly covering the themes now listed for the fourth option, with a larger emphasis on data validation tools.

Handbook – General: In view of the multitude and the excellent quality of the papers collected in the site in one year time, I would support the electronic format and a short version for the handbook; it could focus on a selection, based on country experiences, of main issues and solutions that can be envisaged along the different steps in the transition from administrative to STES data. Details in the operative procedures actually followed by NSI's would be made available through proper links on the web.

Norway:

The web-based framework of administrative data papers can be very useful in the work to use more administrative data in the field of short-term statistics. The overall impression of the framework is good. It is easy to navigate between the pages, and it is easy to find all the papers.

The classification of the papers in different categories is a good idea, and gives the framework a good structure. Statistics Norway got no comments from inside users on the choice of seven broad categories. Since the focus in this framework is at short-term statistics Statistics Norway also means that the division in each category between “Short-term statistics”-relevant papers, and “other papers” is important. Though, the fact that over 2/3 of the papers is classified in the “other”-group indicates that maybe also this group can be further divided.

To make it even more user-friendly, an idea could be to implement a simple search engine so that the users more easily can find and group what they are looking for. A search engine can make it possible to search between ‘year’, ‘country’, ‘author’ and ‘title’ etc. This can, as an example, make it possible to search for documents with special words in the title, as ‘retail trade index’ or ‘production index’ etc. This is not so easy to find in the framework. If the amount of papers in the framework will increase in the future, the importance of implementing a search engine will increase. An example of a search engine like this can be found at <http://www4.statcan.ca/english/voorborg/>.

On the page where the papers are listed, it would be quite useful with a short summary of each paper. This would make it even easier to find the relevant papers the users are looking for.

The big amount of papers on the use of administrative data in the new web-based framework indicates that there already are a lot of relevant papers in this area, even if not all of them are STS-relevant. The fact that there are handbooks in the field of use of administrative data, e.g. from Eurostat, Statistics Norway does not support the proposition of developing a new handbook on this area. Statistics Norway recommends to develop and update the web-based framework. The framework should be updated frequently, e.g. on a yearly basis. In the case of Statistics Norway, and we guess also for other countries, there is some administrative data papers written in our own language only, e.g. a newly developed output price index for new multi-dwelling buildings based on data from the State Housing Bank. Translation of national papers into English can supply the framework with even more papers on use of administrative data.

Germany:

In our view there is an actual need for an additional OECD administrative data handbook, if it focuses on short term statistics. The handbooks available up to now (see para. 2) have a clear focus on general aspects of the use of administrative data or on structural statistics and business registers.

We support the option in para. 8. The handbook should give an overview on best practices with a focus on NSOs starting to use administrative data for short term statistics. This includes more than the option in para. 9 and it provides a good overview on the categories of the web based framework (see topic 2.1). In the current situation data already exist for the most important fields of short term statistics in the OECD countries. Administrative data become more and more important from a “reduction of response burden” and “cost saving” perspective. In this situation the function of a handbook should be to give first guidance to people who want to check the current use of administrative data for short term statistics in other countries and learn more about the possibilities and problems faced in practice. At the same time the handbook should help people who already use administrative data to examine their own methods based on information on the practices adopted in other countries and on best practises.

Greece:

We support the preference of OECD analysts to use their resources in order to improve the web-based framework instead of writing a handbook, as the current form of the site is easy to navigate and has all the advantages of the dynamic web-based existed form in comparison to the traditional manuals. In fact, it is really useful that there are more than 70 papers at the web-based version of the manual of administrative data. The effort of a continuous updating of the site is important and we are very supportive of it.

Focusing on the structure and the content of the electronic form, our comments are:

The selection of the seven broad categories looks adequate. For the time being, there is no need to change these categories. If there are more papers in the future, then maybe, there will be the need of expanding each of the two subcategories (1. STS papers, 2. general papers) to more, distinguishing STS to different variables, and the general papers to specific statistical divisions.

Moreover, an abstract or few key words below the title of each paper could inform the user about the content of each paper and guide him to select quickly which are the papers that might interest him. This small description could include the specific topic in which the paper is referred to, within STS (e.g. retail trade) or the more general papers (e.g. population).

Another element that could be declared in the abstract is the profile of the readers of each paper. In other words, to whom the paper is referred to:

- a) inexperienced users who want to use administrative data for the first time,
- b) users who collect these data but not for STS purposes,
- c) users who want to broaden the use of this kind of data,
- d) experienced users who want to check their techniques.

Japan:

We greatly appreciate some efforts to the web-based administrative data framework compiled by OECD secretariat and many NSOs. We understand that the web-based data framework is important information resource for us to obtain procedure and methodology information on the administrative data for statistical use. Now, although we regret to say that we have no available information on the web-based data framework, we think we will be able to submit some materials on the administrative data for statistics use to the web-site after the following statistical reform activities complete the first stage for new statistical strategies.

We think, as there is too much information on the web-site to get appropriate information smoothly, it would be needed that information has appropriate abstract version. List of key words for paper is also good for abstract.

As existing seven categories are appropriate, we do not need to be expanded them.

Breaking the categories into two groups is good idea. Both categories are useful to get good information. It is also useful for us to get information on general administrative data papers in addition to the administrative data papers relevant to short-term economic statistics.

We think future updating for the site is needed. We would like to cooperate in this work to future widening for administrative data papers as soon as possible we can.

We think web-based data framework is very useful to obtain and understand the situation of member countries. As several international organizations have already prepared handbooks, it should be considered whether another handbook may be needed or not.

2) Overview of Japanese work

Although we can obtain and access some statistical information derived from administrative data or record, we do not have clear framework in the statistical law and system to use the administrative data for statistical purposes.

In order to respond and address these various problems occurred in the existing statistical system, the Committee on the Structural Reform of Official Statistics, established in the Cabinet Office in September 2005, released a final report on the plan of new structure of the statistical system on June 5, 2006 after deliberations of the committee composed of members with academic background.

In the final report submitted by the Committee, promoting advanced use of the administrative data for statistical purpose is described as follows.

Basic Viewpoint (only relevant passage)

i) The reform aims for changing system to the statistics for social information infrastructure from the statistics for administration. On reviewing the existing statistical system, following basic viewpoints should be noted. The viewpoints show appropriately that our system should match our situation referring to law system in foreign countries and international organizations.

ii) Without distinction of the information source and methodology, statistics compiled by official organs should have appropriate system to enable us comprehensive, well-planned and efficient improvement. Through reviewing existing statistical framework which is mainly based on the statistical surveys, new system should be established to promote comprehensive, well-planned and efficient development in the statistical area. This means that in the new system derived statistics and administrative records should be included for overall new statistical system in addition to statistical surveys.

Major points of the proposed reform (only relevant passage)

i) To develop a system of statistical law covering survey statistics, derived statistics and administrative records conducted and compiled by official organizations.

ii) To create the Basic Principles for Official Statistics, and to establish it as a rule across all official statistics.

iv) To create a rule covering official statistics including derived statistics and administrative records, and in the rule to stipulate two kinds of statistics; fundamental statistics which form the core of official statistics and general statistics which is non-core part of the official statistics

v) To create a rule to enable statistical organs to promote wider use of administrative records for production of statistics not only to reduce respondent burden, but also to obtain accuracy and effectiveness for statistical compilation.

Luxembourg:

The administrative data framework contains some very interesting and useful papers on administrative data issues in the short term economic statistics area and other statistical domains. The web site is easy to navigate, but an abstract for each paper should be made available in order to see what is the content of the papers. The seven broad categories make sense, but the breaking of these categories into two groups, STES relevant and not, will not be necessary whilst the abstracts are included. The framework should be made public and a regular call for papers should help to update and enlarge the framework.

The STESWP task force should bundle its resources for a further development of the web-based framework. The production of a handbook (or guide), even if this could be very useful and interesting, should not be the principal aim. The need for such a handbook seems to be limited, because of several publications by Eurostat or NSIs dealing with the use of administrative data for statistical purpose.

Netherlands:

- The “Presentation of web-based administrative data framework” is a useful project.
- The papers on the site are (almost all) from English speaking countries. At SN, many papers on this subject are available but not in English and only in Dutch. This may also be the case in other non-English speaking countries. If so, OECD might encourage countries to translate the most relevant papers on this subject.
- There is a greater need for supplementing the present data-base than for a “handbook”.
- More attention should be paid to (1) the dangers and drawbacks of administrative data and how to deal with these, and (2) the required synthesis between administrative data and surveys carried out by NSI’s (this point returns in the comments on the monthly service production indicator). Perhaps the most important danger of administrative data is that they may affect the cornerstones of the statistical system, such as comparability and consistency of statistics. This is also crucial for quarterly national accounts, the integrating framework of short-term indicators. The use of administrative data should always include activities to assure comparability and consistency. Some dangers are also mentioned in the ILO paper: “Compilation and presentation of labour statistics based on administrative records” (R.J. Pember). These dangers refer to “types of units”, “scope of registrations/applications”, “content”, “and procedures for handling data”. This list could be supplemented with: “changes in legislation which may lead to distortions and discontinuities in the resulting administrative data” (e.g. in the Netherlands: for some categories of buildings permits are no longer necessary. Therefore building permits cannot be used, without corrections, for indicating production in construction); “changes in the processing” (e.g. in the Netherlands: there may be a speed-up in the cashing of value added tax by the tax authorities, as a consequence value added tax cannot be used, without correction, for indicating production in a specific branch), “timeliness” (e.g. in the Netherlands, value added tax is too slow for constructing monthly indicators, for compliance with the international recommendations on timeliness, the administrative data should be accompanied by additional surveys).

New Zealand:

Paper 1 - Outline of preliminary web-based administrative data framework

1. Paragraph 13 of the paper requests comment on a number of questions. Comment is provided on these as follows:

- The site is reasonably easy to navigate and find your way around. The initial page, which uses the table for the seven categories is very clear, but the supplementary pages (on the seven categories) could be improved. It does not seem necessary for anything other than the category number and heading to appear on the supplementary pages. The addition of “STES Administrative Data overview” clutters the pages and in most cases forces the heading to be spread over two lines, making it less readable. The headings for the two groups within each of the supplementary pages tend to get lost in the list of articles. Is it possible to increase their size or bold them so they are more noticeable? The heading used for category 1 differs from the table to the supplementary page ie “Direct use of administrative data in registers” changes to “Direct use in register and register estimation”. This may lead users to wonder if they are on the correct page. Categories 4 and 6 have no papers relevant to short-term economic statistics. For consistency it may be useful to retain the heading on the supplementary pages and just write “No papers” below the heading.
- An abstract or summary of key headings/subjects for each of the papers would assist as the titles are not necessarily all that helpful in determining the usefulness of the material. Depending on speed of computer/internet some of the papers take some time to load and many are lengthy, so it would be extremely useful to have a better idea of what they contain. This is important where

there are a number of papers within a given category and will become more important as more papers are added to the site.

- The categories make sense as they are and do not need to be expanded, contracted or further explained. It is possible that some papers may cover more than one of the topics and on first glance it appears that none of the papers are in more than one category. Has there been any thought given to the inclusion of some papers in more than one category?
- The breaking up of the categories into two groups is a good idea and is sufficiently well explained. However, on a quick overview of the papers it is noticeable that they have a varying degree of usefulness. Some of the papers outline key issues and identify lessons learnt, while others are case studies only. As the number of papers increases, particularly if an abstract or summary of the papers is not added, the site could become unwieldy and reduce in utility as users will be required to search through a large number of papers to find the most helpful material. It may be useful to try and identify some of the key papers in each of the category areas and include these under a separate heading.

2. Paragraph 14 of the paper requests comment on future updating of the site and on expanding the range of papers on the site. Comment is provided as follows:

- It is presumed that the site is intended to be an ongoing work-in-progress in that members can continue to contribute relevant papers to the site. The framework is also useful for this as it potentially allows for member countries to direct their research programmes, where appropriate, in line with areas in the framework where there are gaps in knowledge or experience.
- Another feature, which could be a useful addition to the site, is a by-country listing of all the papers similar to that produced in Appendix 2 of the paper. While the topic based framework is a useful tool, some users may prefer to have the ability to access one particular member's contributions without having to search from category to category.
- Expanding the range of papers by a web-based search and by contacting non-OECD countries would also be valuable. As mentioned above, if more papers are to be added then it would need to be ensured that they are relevant and that measures are introduced (abstract or summary page and/or introducing a "Key papers" heading) to prevent the site from becoming unwieldy.

3. STESWP members were also asked, in paragraph 15 of the paper, to consider the relationship between the web-based framework and the proposed guide/handbook. It was suggested that a handbook may not now be required and that improving the web-based framework could become the key focus. In response to this, it is considered that the current web-based framework, while useful for research and giving some guidance, is still some way off providing the type of assistance envisaged of a handbook/guide. A considerable amount of reading and summarising of material is required for a user to extract for example, best practice principles or helpful hints, from the various papers. This is in part due to the fact that the papers have been written by the countries for their own needs and fitted into the framework, rather than written with the framework in mind. If a handbook is not to be produced, then it is considered that the web-based product needs to be further refined perhaps by including a section that somehow extracts the most useful material from the collection of papers.

Paper 2 - Outline of the next steps for the proposed administrative data handbook

4. Paper 2 discusses the proposed administrative data handbook and asks for comment from STESWP members about whether a handbook is required, what form it should take, and if the handbook should be a more web-based resource utilising the material in the site discussed in Paper 1. Comments on these aspects follow.

- As discussed above, the site in its current form is still some way off providing the type of material it is envisaged would have been expected of a handbook of administrative data good practices relevant to short term economic statistics. It is a well organised collection of papers from which the best practice information has not yet been extracted or collated. The handbook type material (in category 7) is useful, but is not necessarily complete, totally relevant, or adapted to the context of short-term economic statistics.
- In terms of a type of handbook, support of the various options suggested in paragraphs 8 to 11 depends on where a country sits in relation to their use of administrative data. New Zealand's needs probably fit best with paragraph 10, as we already use administrative data for maintaining our frame, we use some of this data in the compilation of short-term economic statistics, but are looking at ways to better utilise this data.
- The idea of the proposed handbook including web-links to the papers in the framework is a good one. As suggested in the comments on Paper 1, it may be perhaps possible to include another section or document on the site which extracts, and where necessary adapts, information from the various papers to form a best practice document relevant to short-term economic statistics. This could be linked to the actual papers, or to sections of particular papers (most of the papers are pdf format so this may or may not be possible). Such a document, if web based, could also easily be added to if more appropriate or more useful papers were received. The basic format of this web-based "handbook" could perhaps be structured using the first six categories of the framework, as these seem logical and would group the information in an easily recognised way.

Poland:

2.1 - Presentation of web-based administrative data framework

Through this web-based framework users have an access to the comprehensive collection of papers concerning administrative data issues as faced by NSIs producing short-term economic statistics, which have been received from National Statistics Institutes (NSI) and international organizations.

The papers have been gathered in the transparent and easy accessible form, because in preliminary stage, they were reviewed and sorted into the seven broad categories with a hyperlink directly to a new page where the papers are listed. It makes the particular paper easy to find. A way of designing this web-based framework will enable to add quickly the new categories of papers in the future.

It would be advisable to Task Force to provide more information concerning the papers content, e.g. an abstract for each paper (if not available in the paper), a list of key words for each paper. The range of papers could be expanded through an extensive web based search in regards to past relevant conferences and contacting non-OECD countries.

2.2 General overview of the proposed administrative data handbook

The proposed handbook (planned as a small publication), will be a useful compendium of knowledge on good practices concerning the use of administrative data in short-term economic statistics. It could be very useful to develop this handbook in an electronic form, with web-links to papers collection on administrative data. Such a solution will give the user access to more in-depth information, when they are interested in knowing more about a particular subject.

Taking into consideration a scope of the administrative data used in short-term economic statistics within Polish CSO, the most advantageous approach that could be taken for the proposed handbook, would be a handbook that is focused for NSIs presently using administrative data only in a limited scope in short-term economic statistics (for example, in sample frames), but now want to extend this use.

On the other hand the important approach seems to be fourth option focuses on particular issue involving the use of administrative data in STS especially devoted to cooperation between NSIs and administrative agencies (the legal framework and interaction with administrative bodies) and using administrative sources in specific short-term statistics (for example VAT register used for production indices).

Slovak Republic:

1. Task force on administrative data, overview of work done to date (2.1, 2.2)

Firstly, we would like to underline the fact the statistical office of the SR is in the beginning of the administrative data introduction into statistical data processing system. Slovak enterprise statistics STS (short-term statistics) as well as SBS (structural business statistics) is based on statistical surveys. At present the administrative data is used mainly for the purposes of business register updating. During the last years a great effort was made to ensure the access to administrative data.

However, regarding the complicated legal constraints there are still problems to obtain in praxis the access to individual administrative data. It is the reason why our office did not supply any methodological papers dealing with the administrative data.

- The web site is a very good idea and there is no problem to find the relevant document.
- In our view an abstract for each paper would be very useful. The names of materials are sometimes really general and the real aspect of the topic is known only after opening the document.
- I think it would not be a good idea to expand the possible categories. The documents often deal with all aspects of administrative data use: description of sources, sampling frames as well as with quality control. According to my opinion the category “Quality, timeliness and coverage” could be deleted, because the improvement of these three challenges is in most of the cases the main reason of using administrative data.
- Even breaking of the categories into two groups is complicated because of using e.g. the same methods and procedure in more statistical areas. However, regarding our interest mainly on STS it is useful to have these two groups.
- Maybe, the updating of the site could be organised once a year, to the end of November (close to the end of year).
- The idea to have a link to past relevant conferences, seminars or workshops seems to be good one. It will be an advantage to have access to all documents dealing with administrative data in one connection point.
- In my view, the production of the handbook will be really useful and efficient. In the handbook there are concentrated all general approaches e.g. in the area of basic categories. For the methodological work it is always very effective to have accessible such kind of comprehensive document instead of studying many different methods and procedures, which are often tailor-made for the particular national conditions. However, regarding the riches of available documents, maybe, an electronic creation of the set of general basic definitions could be efficiently combined with the links to the relevant documents.

United Kingdom:

The UK supports the development of a short handbook. While there exists a significant literature illustrating the use of administrative data around the world, there seems to be an absence of a single set of fundamental principles and issues which need to be considered in all cases. The web-portal will provide an excellent resource to bring available technical papers together in one place, and the structure proposed by the task force appears about right. The web-portal itself needs some overarching statement of the general principles, and a short handbook drawing on existing material, and the experiences of the task-force and other STWSTP members, will help to frame the content of the portal.

Denmark:

In general we find it very helpful and also a very good possibility to get access to these papers gathered in one site. It is easy to navigate and find the way round. Regarding abstracts or key words for each paper, maybe the need could be discussed after the site has been used for a longer period.

One thing which could be helpful was to indicate which (1 or more) concrete short term statistics the paper is about -if it is not a general paper. That could – if developed - give the user the possibility to search for a specific short-term indicator e.g. Industrial Production, and then get a total list of all papers concerning that specific short-term indicator across the main topics. That could maybe be more useful than breaking each category into two groups (STES relevant and not).

At the moment it is not a serious problem, but in the future it could be an idea to integrate the web-based administrative data framework with STES Timeliness Framework. There are close relations between the two sites e.g. point 1.1 in STES Timeliness Framework covers Direct use of Administrative Data for STS.

We understand your considerations and are aware of the view that it is important to prioritize resources. We therefore support the idea of giving more focus to enhancing the web-based framework that have been established so it could become an effective tool for NSIs using administrative data.

Italy – ISTAT:

Topic 2.1 Presentation of web-based administrative data framework

Comments about the four specific issues submitted to STESWP participants:

1. The overall impression on the presentation of the new site on administrative data is mixed: while the information conveyed by the site is very rich and valuable, the identification of papers concerning specific issues does not seem very easy and friendly; hence we consider that further attention should be given to the structure of topics, categories, and groups utilised to organise the papers.
2. As the scope of the materials collected is very large and it seems very difficult to rely just on the classification mechanism, providing an abstract of the papers would be a substantial help to users.
3. Some of the categories (and of the explanations provided in the first menu page) do not seem very clear for users mainly interested in topics related to the utilisation of administrative data in producing short term statistics. This limitation is particularly apparent when considering category 5: most of the issues concerning the direct utilisation of administrative data in compiling STES indicators fall under this heading that is probably too wide and could be further articulated in different sub-heading; moreover the title itself of category 5 is not clear enough.
4. The breaking into two groups based on the degree of relevance to short term statistics seems a very effective way in simplifying the identification of specific materials.

Topics 2.2 General overview of the proposed administrative data handbook

Istat agrees that the issues discussed in the paper concerning the scope, the approach, and the structure of an administrative data handbook are crucial and must be settled before any work on the matter will start. Then, Istat will try to contribute to develop a very comprehensive discussion on this point during the meeting. As far as the four options presented in paragraph 3.1 are concerned, we can express a general preference for the fourth option 4 (i.e. focusing on specific issues related to the utilisation of administrative data in the production of short term economic statistics); here again we consider that detailed considerations about how to implement such an approach shall be developed in the discussion of the WG.

Spain:

Directorate for Statistical Methodology and Techniques

In point 2.1 concerning the framework for administrative data based on the web, we consider that the presentation and navigation in the website is convenient and makes information searching easier. The categories included are the most representative as well as what you can expect to find, they are necessarily divided in two sections. In the future, and depending on the new documents received, it could be interesting to divide the current categories into more sections, and presented in the same way as the previously adopted in the framework “STES Timeless Framework”, that is, using two columns; the first one with the main categories and the second one with the sections that link to a list associated documents. In point 2.2 regarding the handbook on administrative data, we think that an electronic product (based on web) could be more interesting and useful than a document that is simply paper orientated. This could be included in the framework based on a previous web.

The handbook proposed should combine the first and third proposals, this is, to include a list of good practices on how to use and deal with using the administrative data in short-term economic statistics by using flow diagrams and task lists, completed with a list on types of administrative data uses for short-term economic statistics.

Directorate for Labour Statistics

In our opinion, the work carried out by the task force is very useful and interesting. In general, the web page has been especially designed to make searching easier. It would be very convenient to include an abstract with the documents to be incorporated in the web to make the document selection easier. In principle, we think that the categories used to classify the documents are correct and a reasonable amount; the name is also adequate. Also a third category focused on the short-term statistics field could be included apart from the two main ones.

The web page has to be brought up to date on a regular basis (once or twice a year), removing out-of-date documents and adding new projects or developments. Perhaps, this task should be coordinated with the countries involved. With regard to the good practices handbook we think that the manual should include the recommendations agreed in the core of the task force, which were approved by the members of the working group on the use of administrative sources in the short-term statistics field.

USA – BLS:

The present form of the framework provides clear and direct explanation and access to the relevant papers. A brief abstract along the lines of what is used in the timeliness framework would provide a service to users. The distinction between STES relevant and other uses is a useful distinction. It provides focus for the STES user to program-relevant papers while allowing for the inclusion of approaches in other programs that may be modified for the STE statistics.

It's also important to ensure that a wide range of papers be included because of the potential to transfer applications to short-term economic statistics. As administrative data use applications grow throughout the statistical system and as papers on administrative data use and research appear in more and more

conferences, the web-based search would be a useful approach to identifying additions to the framework. This framework should be updated annually, as is the timeliness framework.

The handbooks currently on the framework represent distinct approaches. Most are country- or broad program-specific, a few are more general. To consolidate them and/or to expand and update the more general handbooks of Eurostat and ILO would be a major undertaking. Rather than devoting resources to updating and expanding one of these general guides/handbooks, an alternative would be to view the framework as a dynamic handbook that is continually updated as new applications are added to the structure.

If resources were to be devoted to a handbook, then the approach outlined as the fourth option may provide a service to statistical agencies by focusing on the issues of cooperation, data validation, and limited applications to specific statistics. Web-links or links back to the framework would be an efficient method of presenting specific applications and papers.

USA – Census Bureau

Web-Based Administrative Data Framework

In answer to questions posed by the Task Force, we offer the following:

- Our overall impression of the framework is positive. We were able to navigate the site easily and response times were minimal.
- A brief abstract of each paper would be useful if one is not already available. Key words would be useful in facilitating search capabilities within the framework. Providing this capability would increase the utility of the site.
- The broad administrative data categories appear comprehensive and are sufficiently defined.
- The distinction between STES relevant and other documentation would be useful. We recommend that this distinction be incorporated into document search criteria.
- We suggest an annual call for papers to update the administrative framework in advance of the annual STESWG meeting. This would or should not preclude earlier submissions for consideration. We support undertaking a web search of relevant papers from past conferences and contacting non-OECD countries to expand the range of papers included in the framework.
- We support efforts to further develop the framework and believe this should be the focus of the task force instead of developing another handbook or guide whose future use is uncertain.

Proposed Administrative Data Handbook

We do not see a need for an additional OECD administrative data handbook and recommend that efforts instead be devoted to enhancing the web-based framework.

Czech Republic:

One of the possible ways of reducing burden on reporting unit is wider use of administrative data. The electronic data exchange extends the possibility of replacing statistical surveys with administrative data. Replacing statistical surveys with data from other sources is the most effective way to reduce requirements on enterprises and increase willingness to respond to the questionnaires containing data, which cannot be obtained from other sources. Administrative data mostly cover the whole population of enterprises and it increases the quality of the results particularly in some service activities provided by micro and small enterprises.

Administrative data can be used by statistical agencies in various ways depending on the legal status of data, quality and timelines of data. For this reason the web based framework structured according to the field of use of administrative source in various part of statistical work seem to be very handful. Sorting papers into seven main topics covers all sort of possible use of administrative data and it is well defined

and understandable. There could be only very small formal discussion if the handbook or general paper of using administrative data should not be numbered as first item in the structure of database.

The handbook of best practice of using administrative data could help countries when reaching the stage of possible using administrative data in compiling statistical data. There are some limitations in using administrative data for short - term statistics. The main limitation is timelines of data and coverage in specific periodicity. That's why the handbook for administrative data in some captures could be generally used while some part can be specific only for short - term statistics. The same could be said about different information and the amount of administrative data for specific industry, for example transport.

Sweden:

The word 'handbook' is not very clear but we believe that a well-structured summary of the papers in the web-based framework will serve about the same purpose as a stand-alone handbook. Such a summary, available both in printed form and in electronic form with links to the papers in the existing database can be produced in a short time.

It is probably more efficient to maintain, develop and enhance the existing web-based framework. For example a search function that will allow the user to search among the administrative data papers only. The examples of previously published administrative data handbooks that were given in Annex 1, the Eurostat and the ILO examples, give the impression of clear and pedagogical contents that should be useful both for experienced and less experienced users of administrative data.

The database is a good complement with its collection of different practical cases and experiences in different situations and on different topics.

If there is a general agreement that there is need for an administrative handbook our comments on the four different options are the following,

1. A handbook solely for those who have never used administrative data will soon be obsolete for obvious reasons and we believe that this is a less efficient option.
2. A handbook for users that have used administrative data in a limited fashion might be a possible option. However, we suspect that many papers in the existing database contains experiences from the extended use of administrative data, at least the titles indicate this.
3. A handbook for experienced users who want to confirm that they are utilising their administrative data fully will probably not be very much used by this category but may serve as a help to less experienced NSIs. This option can well be merged with option 2 above.
4. This option contains several issues.
 - a) The first issue about cooperation between NSIs and administrative agencies is probably not feasible because of the different conditions in the member states; a handbook will probably be too superficial.
 - b) The second issue is already treated in the database and it is probably difficult to do something beyond a summary of these papers.
 - c) The third issue about data validation tools contains the same problem as in 4.a) above, the conditions in the member states differ too much. This is also a special case of the wider topic – editing – where much information should be available already.

Conclusions

We do not believe that there is a need for an additional OECD administrative data handbook, given the available web-based framework.

If a handbook is decided we prefer option 2 or 3 in that order.

Portugal:

As long as the number of papers is relatively small there no need of further characterization of what is the subject of the papers, beyond its title. However, with the expansion of the number of papers it will be useful further information such as a list of key words fore each paper and a small abstract.

A possible title of the side would be “Administrative data and Short Term Economic Statistics”.

It seems better to spend available resources in the improvement of the web-based framework than in the production of a new handbook.

Country	Paper 1 – 13	Paper 1 – 14	Paper 2 – Yes/No	Paper 2 – General
Austria	1. Categories clear and concise. 2. Proposed name: Administrative data framework. 3. Keyword search and abstract.	1. Yearly update.	1. No – should focus on the web-based framework.	
Italy – Bank	1. User friendly, possibly reduce number of categories. 2. More focus on STES, provide an index. 3. Abstracts welcome or executive summary.		1. No – concentrate on efforts to develop the web-based framework.	1. Option three, targeted for new users of administrative data. Electronic format, short, include country experiences.
Norway	1. Overall impression is good, easy to navigate. 2. Maybe divide up the ‘other’ group. 3. Search engine. 4. Short summary would be nice.	1. Updated frequently, yearly. 2. Issue of language, Norway has papers in Norwegian.	1. No – develop the web-based framework.	
Germany			1. Yes – there is an actual need, has to focus on STES.	1. Option one, best practices also focusing on new users but have useful information for other users.
Greece	1. Site is easy to navigate. 2. May need to further split STES break. 3. Keywords or an abstract welcomed.	1. Continuous updating is important	1. No – improve web-based framework.	
Japan	1. Abstract and key words are needed	1. Updating is needed.	1. No – needs to be considered.	
Luxembourg	1. Easy to navigate. 2. Abstract needed.	2. Regular call for papers required.	1. No – not a principle aim, resources focused on framework.	

Country	Paper 1 – 13	Paper 1 – 14	Paper 2 – Yes/No	Paper 2 – General
Netherlands	1. Need more papers on the dangers and drawbacks of administrative data, and synthesis between surveys and administrative data.	1. Issue of language	1. No – greater need to supplement the framework.	
New Zealand	1. Reasonable easy to navigate and find way around. 2. Abstract would assist usefulness.	1. Intended as ongoing and work in progress. 2. Country by country listing useful. 3. Contact non-OECD countries.	1. Undecided.	1. Proposed handbook with web-links.
Poland	1. Abstract required and key words.		1. Yes – useful.	1. Electronic format best. 2. Focus on current users.
Slovak Republic	1. Abstract useful and good website. 2. Could expand the categories.	1. Updating once a year.	1. Yes – really useful.	1. Electronic format.
United Kingdom			1. Yes – supports the development.	
Denmark	1. Easy to navigate, idea of abstracts to be looked at. 2. Better STES split and search.		1. No – focus resources on web-based framework.	
Italy – ISTAT	1. Not easy to find way around, attention should be given to structure. 2. Need an abstract.		1. Need to be settled at the meeting.	1. Preference for option 4.
Spain	1. Convenient and easy searching. 2. Perhaps split the categories further. 3. Include abstract	1. Regular – once or twice a year.		1. Combination of option 1 and 3.
USA – BLS	1. Abstract needed, but clear at the moment.	1. More papers from further a field required.	1. No – view site as a dynamic handbook.	1. Option 4.

Country	Paper 1 – 13	Paper 1 – 14	Paper 2 – Yes/No	Paper 2 – General
USA – Census	1. Easy navigation. 2. Abstract would be useful.	1. Annual call for papers, just before the STESWP meeting.	1. No – devote resources towards web-based framework.	
Czech Republic	1. Well defined, understandable.			
Sweden	1. Looks good.		1. No.	1. If yes then option 2 or 3.
Portugal	1. Abstract only needed if number of papers increases.		1. No – use resources for web-based framework.	