

Other Activities

Other Activities

Co-ordination of OECD Statistical Activities

Purpose

To co-ordinate OECD statistical programmes with Eurostat, ECE, IMF, UN and other organisations with respect to both data collection and the development of international statistical standards. To increase the visibility of statistical activities carried out by the OECD and to co-ordinate internal OECD statistical activities to improve the quality of statistics and the efficiency of the OECD statistical organisation.

Objectives and outputs

Collaborate with other Directorates of the Organisation, with national data providers and with other international organisations to: reinforce the quality of OECD statistical data and the efficiency of statistical activities across the Organisation, improve data collection and data provision on Member countries, increase the visibility of OECD statistical work, and contribute to the development of the international statistical system.

Co-ordinate the preparation of and publish the annual OECD statistical programme of work.

Improvement in the consistency of data collected and disseminated by the OECD through the development of the OECD statistical information system and co-ordination of the migration of existing statistical activities towards the new statistical information system. Provide linkages with similar facilities in other international organisations and national agencies.

Further improve relationships with national statistical activities and improve international co-operation between OECD member countries in the area of statistics through the OECD Advisory Group on Statistics and the High-Level Group on statistics, composed of Heads of National Statistical Agencies.

Databases

OECD statistical programme of work

Main Developments for 2004

General aspects:

Usage of the integrated OECD statistical programme of work to improve co-ordination and management of information on all statistical activities across the Organisation.

Dissemination:

Publish the first integrated catalogue of all OECD statistical products.

Other Activities

Implementation of the OECD Quality Framework

Purpose

To enhance the quality of OECD statistics, to provide a systematic mechanism for on-going identification and resolution of quality problems, to increase the transparency of the processes used by the OECD to assure quality, and to reinforce the political role of the OECD in the context of an information society.

Objectives and outputs

The framework focuses on improving the quality of data collected, compiled and disseminated by the OECD through an improvement of the Organisation's processes and management, although there will be a positive spillover effect on the quality of data compiled at national level. The framework is composed of four elements: a definition of quality and its dimensions, a procedure for assuring the quality of proposed new statistical activities, a procedure for evaluating the quality of existing statistical activities on a regular basis, and internal quality guidelines covering all phases of the statistical production process.

Main Developments for 2004

General aspects:

Conduct quality reviews, ensure the implementation of quality guidelines for all new activities.

Update the Quality Framework for OECD Statistics.

Other Activities

Metadata Management System (MetaStore)

Purpose

To provide a central repository for accessing and managing statistical metadata. Under the guidance of the OECD Quality Framework, the MetaStore aims to address issues for metadata accessibility, timeliness of metadata management, as well as coherence, interpretability, credibility, relevance and accuracy of metadata content.

Further purposes relate to the integration of MetaStore with other ITC components of the Statistical Information System. These include the facilitation of metadata import processes to OECD.Stat, the use of MetaStore for StatWorks metadata management, and the storage of publication specific metadata for the Publication Toolkit.

Objectives and outputs

The first production version of MetaStore is expected to be available during the first quarter of 2004. The primary objective is to provide a central repository for STD and StatWorks database users to manage and access metadata. In terms of a more detailed perspective of the specifications for the new system, several other objectives for metadata management are expected to be achieved. The system will allow the sharing of metadata content within and across datasets. It will also allow for the enrichment of metadata content through features such as HTML formatting, attaching external hyperlinks, reference to glossary terms, and organisation into themes and classifications. Finally, as datasets are added to the system, it is expected that common standards for classifying metadata (such as those prescribed by the SDMX) will be determined and implemented in the objective to make metadata content more coherent at the organisation level.

Databases

OECD MetaStore

Main Developments for 2004

General aspects:

New activity

Data management:

Metadata will be managed centrally in SQL Server and accessed through a web interface as opposed to previous fragmented storage in a wide variety of formats.

Other Activities

OECD Statistical DataWarehouse (OECD.Stat)

Purpose

OECD.Stat is the core element of the new OECD Statistical Information System as it is the central repository and retrieval tool for the Organisation's statistical information resources. OECD.Stat is designed to contain the validated datasets to be shared and/or published, a special dataset for "Reference Series", all the statistical metadata associated with these datasets, and the glossary of statistical terms.

Objectives and outputs

OECD.Stat consists of a closed data warehouse with its standard entry and exit gates and a user front end (browser). OECD.Stat is the basis of the new corporate tools for the statistical publications and electronic dissemination.

The main objectives and benefits for statisticians are: improved efficiency of statistical processes; improved quality, timeliness, visibility and accessibility of OECD's statistical resources; recording of historical data; harmonisation effect of statistical classifications etc.; new and easier horizontal data products such as "Statistical Yearbook" and "OECD in Figures"; simplified and harmonised user access right management.

The data warehouse is physically independent from production systems and permits an easier management of connections from production databases (when new database versions or platforms), avoiding multiple interlinks between different production platforms.

Main objectives and benefits for analysts are: fast and user-friendly tools for locating and retrieving verified statistical data and metadata.

Reference Series; joint display of data from different OECD sources.

Easier interpretability of data; easier gathering of data to support horizontal projects; pre-defined executive reports; accessibility in-house and on the Internet without additional installations.

Main Developments for 2004

General aspects:

In 2003, the main databases from STD (Annual and Quarterly National Accounts, Main Economic Indicators and the set of Reference Series) have been made available on OECD.Stat through an EXCEL wizard interface. The Economic Outlook 73 from the Economics Department was available as well. In 2004, several other datasets from STD and other substantive directorates will be made available. A web browser interface will be released with advanced search functions, joint display features across datasets and advanced access control mechanisms for both internal and external users.

Other Activities

Publications toolkit for OECD Statistical Databases (PubStat)

Purpose

Provide a toolkit for publishing statistical data in the framework of the new OECD Statistical Information System. The toolkit brings together data stored in OECD.Stat and metadata, improving the efficiency of the publishing process and improving the quality of final paper and electronic publications.

Objectives and outputs

Standardisation of applications used for publishing statistics and developing a common look and feel for statistical publications.

The toolkit will be used in 2004 for several OECD statistical publications and progressively extended to all statistical outputs.

Main Developments for 2004

General aspects:

Produce pilot publication and gradually implement for other databases as they are migrated into the central database OECD.Stat.

Other Activities

Software Toolkit for OECD Statistical Databases (StatWorks)

Purpose

To provide a generic software toolkit for the management of OECD statistical production data. The StatWorks software provides a common, SQL-based repository for statistical data and a set of tools for data management. The application is designed to be fully integrated with other OECD corporate systems such as the OECD.STAT data dissemination warehouse, the MetaStore metadata interface and new tools for paper and electronic publications.

Objectives and outputs

The main objective of the StatWorks development is to modernise the software platforms for management of OECD statistics in replacing multiple, non-standard systems with a single, generic application. The application manages the following statistical production processes: initial data migration, database administration, security management, data collection, data importing and validation, calculations, data querying and data export.

StatWorks is applicable for all existing OECD statistical applications not considered to have particular special processing needs. In some cases the generic functionality will be supplemented with additional customised processes. It will serve to improve quality in the following areas:

1. Data management and content, as: interactive questionnaire will provide an additional layer of quality control at the data provider level; common validation module will provide a tool to ensure coherence checks and monitoring; user control of validation rules and formulas; dynamic links to corporate reference data; guaranteed tools to meet in-house standards for quality
2. Database user, as: StatWorks will provide end-users with a standard approach using generic application toolkit; foster staff mobility - a standard database application will lead to a reduced learning curve when transferring to a activity.
3. IT support, as: reduced development cycle for new activities; ease of support based around single platform; reduced change turnaround time; additional enhancements will be available for all end-users.

Main Developments for 2004

General aspects:

Delivery of production version of the software and implementation to several databases.

Other Activities

Statistical Quality for Non-member Economies

Purpose

One important aspect of OECD's work with non-member countries relates to governance issues and is organised in the 'Global Forum on Governance' by the Centre for the Co-operation with Non-member Countries (CCNM). This work includes a component on statistics, in particular statistical quality, that is seen as an important element of governance. The purpose of this activity is to enhance statistical quality in selected non-member countries by establishing a dialogue on statistical policy and carrying out relevant workshops and research.

Objectives and outputs

In 2003, a first general workshop on statistical quality took place that brought together representatives of five large non-member countries (Brazil, India, Indonesia, Russia, South Africa) and representatives of OECD countries. The workshop dealt with the conception, implementation and use of statistical quality frameworks. In 2004, a follow up event will be organised that focuses on a more narrowly defined aspect of statistical quality, such as revision analysis of GDP.

Main Developments for 2004

General aspects:

After a general seminar on statistical quality in 2003, the event in 2004 will focus on one particular area of statistics or statistical quality

Other Activities

Statistical Training Programme

Purpose

To develop and maintain a programme of training events in statistical subject areas, to include: a programme of regular courses provided by OECD staff; a dynamic timetable of events such as seminars/workshops provided by staff and visiting speakers; liaison with other agencies providing training, e-learning materials, and a statistical "knowledge base".

The events are aimed at both compilers/managers of data and users, and may be open to both OECD staff and external participants.

Objectives and outputs

This initiative was launched in early 2001, and has been carried forward by an OECD-wide co-ordination group which reports to the SPG. All statistical staff have been surveyed to identify their statistical training needs, and a programme of regular training courses and one-off seminars has been designed and largely put in place to address the needs of staff. Regular courses are available covering national accounts, financial accounts, CPIs, seasonal adjustment, and productivity measurement. IT courses covering OECD specific software such as STD browsers and more generic techniques are also provided on a regular basis. One-off workshops and seminars are organised during the year.

Main Developments for 2004

General aspects:

2004 will see fine tuning of the programme to better meet internal needs. Further courses will be added, including training in various aspects of statistical quality. Regular courses and more co-ordination with other international organisations and NSOs will increase the training opportunities for OECD staff.

Other Activities

Statistical Yearbook

Purpose

To meet the needs of a wide range of users for a one-stop resource containing broadly based, comparative, country-based, economic, social and environmental data. To help users in assessing the position of a single country taking into account multiple dimensions and promoting the importance of "policy coherence".

Objectives and outputs

The OECD is currently producing only one "horizontal" statistical product: "OECD in Figures". Published once a year it provides a very limited summary of basic statistics (population, GDP, etc.) for OECD countries. On the other hand, the latest development of the OECD.stat project gives the Secretariat new tools for extracting data from various databases and updating them very efficiently. Therefore, the development of new horizontal products become much easier.

The objective of the activity is the production of an OECD Statistics Yearbook to bring together data concerning various economic, social and environmental phenomena and highlight measurement issues, underlining areas where the comparability of statistics across countries is weak and describing initiatives undertaken to overcome these problems.

A paper version of the Yearbook will be developed according to high editorial standards to make it one of the high profile publications of the OECD. In addition, an electronic version of the Yearbook (as well as the related database) will be made available through the various channels according to different formats and updated as new data become available.

The first edition of the Yearbook will be presented in the first quarter of 2005.

Main Developments for 2004

General aspects:

In 2004 the Yearbook will be designed and developed, to be disseminated at the beginning of 2005.