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Contact: John Mitchell (john.mitchell@oecd.org)

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Minutes of the meeting of the Informal Advisory Group on measuring GDP in a Digitalised Economy (the advisory group)

1-2 July 2019, OECD, Paris

Item 1. Welcome, background and goals for the meeting

The Chair, Erich Strassner, Associate Director, National Economic Accounts, Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to Paris. A tour de table was held with all participants introducing themselves.

Peter van de Ven (OECD/NAD) then discussed some of the goals for the meeting, in particular the finalisation of the Digital Supply-Use tables (Digital SUTs) in preparation for the consultation of all members of the Working Party on National Accounts (WPNA). Peter reiterated that while the Digital SUTs were an ideal and there was no expectation that they could be immediately completed in their entirety, at the end of the meeting he would like to get feedback from members of the advisory group regarding what outputs may be feasible in the short term.

Item 2. Update on work within the OECD related to digital measurement

Item 2.a. Update from Working Party on Measuring and Analysing the Digital Economy (WPMAD) and a summary of the “Going digital” summit held at the OECD on 11-12 March

Daniel Ker (OECD/STI) presented on the OECD project “Going Digital”. This OECD wide project includes over 100 outputs from 40 committees and covers all policy aspects of digitalisation. Daniel showcased some of the visualisation tools that can demonstrate a country’s progress on the various themes of digital transformation. Daniel discussed in detail the measurement roadmap which includes two key short term focuses; improving the international comparability of digital indicators as well as making statistical systems more flexible. Daniel finished by outlining some of the focus areas for the OECD Working Party for Measurement and Analysis of the Digital Economy (WPMAD) in 2019-20.

Thomas Schachl (Statistics Austria) enquired if it was possible to get some form of diagram or map that showed the various OECD groups working on digitalisation, detailing what they are working on, and the links between these groups. Multiple members supported the idea around making the statistical systems more flexible but wondered how this could be done. Quinten Meertens (Statistics Netherlands) enquired about the indicators for emerging digital issues such as artificial intelligence and block chain.

Daniel replied that additional flexibility is possible when there is political will and resources, although these are not always available. He admitted that indicators for these emerging digital issues are hard to come by, however some web scraping tools had shown some possibilities. Peter van de Ven (OECD/NAD) noted that many statistical agencies are already looking into ways to improve the linkages between micro and macro data, in order to be able to meet quickly evolving and more granular user demands. In addition, greater use of experimental outputs could allow systems to be more adaptive. This final point was supported by the chair, who noted that in the USA they had received positive feedback regarding experimental satellite accounts as it publically validated the work that had been done on the topic.

Item 2.b. Update on OECD-WTO Handbook on Measuring Digital Trade

John Mitchell (OECD/NAD) presented on the OECD-WTO Handbook on Measuring Digital Trade. He explained that this work runs parallel to the Digital SUTs and allows for estimates of digital trade to be consistent in both statistical templates. He then focused on the importance of Digital Intermediary Platforms (DIPs) and explained the reasons why there is keen user interest on this phenomenon. John then explained that in regards to DIPs, data availability will remain a challenge, but these challenges will be addressed in the handbook, which will continue to evolve as a “living document” as new methods and data become available.

Maarten van Rossum (Statistics Netherlands) enquired if free services are also included in this trade framework. Marshall Reinsdorf (IMF) theorised if, due to the difficulty in obtaining this information, the counterparty information from the exporting country reports could be used by the importing country.

Peter van de Ven (OECD/NAD) explained that a lot of transactions related to free service are already accounted for (i.e. advertisement etc.), but the jury is still out there when it comes to the recording of the “free” services provided by e.g. Facebook. One could look upon the latter as a barter transaction in which consumers get services in exchange for the provision of data. Several countries then spoke on the difficulty they have faced when contacting the large digital platforms directly to get data on their business.

Item 2.c. Treatment of crypto assets

Marshall Reinsdorf (IMF) presented on the IMF’s work on crypto assets. He started by showing a taxonomy of digital assets, which included bitcoin like assets, initial coin offerings, central bank issued digital currency and others. He outlined the recommendation of the BOPCOM note, that crypto assets were not a financial asset, due to the absence of a counterpart liability; were not a currency, as they are not widely available, and so had been classified as a produced non-financial assets (under valuables). He finished by noting that there were many practical considerations when it comes to measurement, i.e. working out the holder of the crypto asset is likely beyond the current possibilities of most statistical agencies.

Jorrit Zwijnenburg (OECD/NAD) complemented the IMF presentation by summarising the paper on crypto assets that was put forward to the Advisory Expert Group (AEG) on National Accounts last year, and results of the subsequent questionnaire sent to the members of the AEG. The AEG agreed on recording crypto assets as proposed by the IMF, but added that any guidance should be considered temporary.

Benson Sim (UNSD) queried to which industry the activity should be classified. Stefan Hauf (Destatis) questioned if there should be a special sub category within the SNA, since the value of crypto assets is much more volatile than other valuables. Dylan Rassier (BEA) questioned the proposed difference in treatment of crypto currency and traditional fiat currency. He argued that both include production and both are not backed by a liability, and therefore wondered whether they shouldn’t be treated the same.

Marshall and Jorrit responded that currently there was no ISIC code decided upon. They agreed that, while crypto assets are volatile in price, this may not be a sufficient criterion to have them recorded separately. Additionally, both agreed that the lack of use as a medium of exchange excluded it from being considered a currency at this stage.

The chair summarised the first session by highlighting that the advisory group provides the opportunity to work on various outputs that could feed into the toolkit that was mentioned in the first presentation. This work may include the need for flexibility in order to produce (experimental) outputs before the classifications and standards are updated, and new data sources can be exploited.

Item 3. Digital SUTs – Work completed since the last advisory group meeting

Item 3.a. Summary of feedback on the guidelines for digital SUTs and subsequent changes

John Mitchell (OECD/NAD) presented on the feedback received from advisory group members on the template for the Digital SUTs, as distributed in February 2019. He detailed the definition of, and reasons for, a new column representing digitally delivered output. In response to specific feedback, he outlined the steps to be taken in the case a unit matched multiple digital industry definitions, as well as summarising some editorial changes that were suggested by members of the group.

John concluded by speaking about the additional language that has been added to the guidelines to explain the dual purposes of the tables, firstly as a vehicle to collect internationally comparable indicators, but also as a roadmap to help guide future development in the area. He re-iterated the viewpoint of the OECD that, while this meeting includes a discussion on feasible indicators that might be produced in the short term, there was no expectation that all rows and columns of the Digital SUTs would be compiled initially.

Various members of the advisory group voiced support for the framework, including the changes made since February. Matthew MacDonald (Statistics Canada) commented that various countries will produce results at different stages, and that this was something that needs to be managed.

Peter van de Ven (OECD/NAD) concluded that the template could now be put forward to members of the WPNA seeking their agreement. This would then be followed by a formal request to start populating the tables.

Item 3.b. Toward a digital economy satellite account, ongoing research and future directions

Erich Strassner presented on BEA's publication of a digital economy satellite account, first published in March 2018 and followed by estimates for additional years in April 2019. Erich displayed various representations of the work, including some additional estimates for cloud computing which they intend to publish in late 2019. He expanded on the data sources being used, such as purchased data from "Statista", which tracks cloud computing, as well as the potential to add additional questions on cloud computing expenditure and digital intermediate service revenue to certain business surveys. Erich indicated that in the next publication they will look into ways to align their publication more closely with the Digital SUTs, as put forward by the advisory group.

Quinten Meertens (Statistics Netherlands) questioned how BEA communicates to users that these estimates are experimental. Marshall Reinsdorf (IMF) pointed out that while you may be able to track expenditure on cloud services, it may be hard to distinguish the country of origin. Thomas Schachl (Statistics Austria) commented that they also use "Statista" as a data source, and he was very interested in Erich's opinion about the quality of it as a data source. Ahmad Rasyid (Bank Indonesia) asked whether transactions that are derived from social media should also be included. Peter van de Ven (OECD/NAD) commented that he was very impressed by the work, especially the possibility of further outputs related to DIPs. He also agreed that the work on estimating the digital economy made some of the well-known globalisation challenges become more obvious.

Erich responded that the BEA is very clear about the experimental nature of the data in the language they use describing the outputs, this includes always emphasising "the next step". Even though users will most likely use the data as official statistics, the BEA were satisfied that they had at least clearly demarcated them from the official statistics. Erich admitted that while it's true that they might not be able to get everything they want from questions on cloud expenditure, they still don't know for sure what is and is not possible, and they are keen to try and get as much out of the existing surveys first. He then mentioned that while it is hard to know the quality of the "Statista" data, some of the concerns raised are ultimately the same challenges as faced by national accounts estimates more generally. Erich finished by indicating that transactions from social media should be included, as they fulfil the digitally ordered definition.

Item 3.c. Measuring digital activities in the Australian economy

Tom Lay (ABS) presented on the digital economy publication produced by the ABS and released in early 2019. He stated that it was strongly focused on reproducing the BEA work and therefore, due to the products selected, was likely to be a lower bound estimate of digital activity. Similar to the BEA, the ABS did not use any new surveys or data sources but rather delineated the existing dataset differently. Tom displayed the results which were similar in nature to those of the BEA. Tom then outlined the next steps in this work which were based around reproducing the current method but with more recent data as well as extending the time series further back.

There were several questions about possible future work, Benson Sim (UNSD) asked if in future updates, the ABS planned to go beyond the data sources currently listed? Yuko Ueno (Economic and Social Research Institute) queried if they are going to look into ways to improve their estimates on intermediate consumption (i.e. by not using the current assumption of fixed ratios between output and intermediate consumption), while Sebastián Rebora (Central Bank of Chile) questioned whether ABS is planning on doing anything on the expenditure side. Rodolfo Ostolaza Berman (INEGI) enquired if they had separated out the digital component from other industries or if they had just made it visible. Finally, Andreas Dollt

(Eurostat) queried why for some years the volume estimates of the digital economy were growing faster than the current price estimates.

Tom answered that right now, the ABS have shined a light on the digital economy and that there were no short or medium term plans on changing or reviewing assumptions, and on the extent of the currently published estimates. However, in light of some of the discussion in this meeting, he will take the proposal back to senior management. Tom explained the digital component has simply been made visible and not removed from the respective industries. He also added that for a couple of years there have been negative price changes in telecommunications which explain the slower growth in current price compared to constant price.

Item 3.d. Digital economy satellite account: Initial estimates

Matthew MacDonald (Statistics Canada) presented on the work published by Statistics Canada which used the OECD framework as far as possible, but also leveraged off the work done by the BEA. Matthew explained that similar to the other countries they had focused only on a number of industries that they considered digital, using fixed intermediate consumption to output ratios to arrive of estimates for value added. Unlike the previous two presentations, Statistics Canada had focused on current price estimates only, however they also have produced estimates at provincial level and included some products that were considered only “partially” digital, such as education and publishing. For these “partially” digital products Statistics Canada had used a third party indicator to break up the relevant national account aggregate. Matthew concluded by outlining the intended future work in this area, such as the incorporation of additional “partially” digital products, estimates of free media and free digital services, the use of digital goods and services in production as well as looking at the employment aspect of the digital economy.

There were several questions from the floor, Dylan Rassier (BEA) asked if the national results are derived based on regional data, or the other way around. Marshall Reinsdorf (IMF) asked if there were looking to produce any outputs on the expenditure side. John Mitchell (OECD/NAD) queried about the intended work on digital inputs into the production process, and whether this would require additional data sources. Peter van de Ven (OECD/NAD) followed this point up by asking whether these digital inputs could be split between investments and current expenses. He also asked if they had looked at different production functions for digital and non-digital products.

Matthew explained that most of the estimates are built up from the provincial level, however some are national and apportioned out. He agreed that overall some digital investment is moving to intermediate consumption, therefore they would like to produce more information on this. He mentioned that users are strongly encouraging the compilation of outputs related to expenditure and that this and the estimation of free services are priorities.

The chair then proceeded to summarise the session by applauding the work done by the various countries. He thought that discussions surrounding the digital economy will only increase as more tangible outputs are produced. In his opinion, countries should attempt to harmonise their work on the digital economy as much as possible at the international level, which is why the updated Digital SUTs framework is so valuable.

Item 4. Work on measurement of products (within the SNA production boundary) that feed into the digital SUTs

Item 4.a. A supplementary estimate of consumption of digital trade

Annette Meinusch (Deutsche Bundesbank) presented on the work done by the Bundesbank to improve the estimates of imports related to micro transactions in the balance of payments. Since Germany has a reporting threshold of twelve thousand euros, these types of micro transactions are not explicitly measured. Annette outlined the methodology for the different types of transactions that have been produced: video on demand, music on demand, video games and gambling. She explained that the data are usually derived from external data sources.

Quinten Meertens (Statistics Netherlands) congratulated Annette on the work and asked how she assesses the quality of the external data sources. Amir Davidson (CBS – Israel) questioned how data might be gathered for illegal downloading of music and video. Richard Heys (ONS) thinks that it would be useful to share these estimates with the countries who are counterparties to the transactions. There were additional questions from Thomas Schachl (Statistics Austria) and Rodolfo Ostolaza Berman (INEGI) regarding the consistency of some of the assumptions; they also wondered whether the estimates were derived on a residence or on a territory basis. John Mitchell (OECD/NAD) enquired if these outputs had been included in the published statistics yet.

Peter van de Ven (OECD/NAD) responded to the previous question outlining that illegal downloads would be considered stealing, and would therefore be excluded from the transaction boundary. He added his opinion that national accountants are “data omnivores” and should use all available pieces of information, including data that is external to the agency. He also whether additional information could be derived from data sources such as VAT or credit card transactions.

Annette responded that she agrees that even if the external data is not perfect it is better than no data. She believes that credit card data may be of more use going into the future. Furthermore, the central bank does not have access to tax data, although she thought that perhaps Destatis did. She then mentioned that while there is some counterpart country information, additional manual adjustments would be required in order for it to be used by other countries. Annette and Stefan Hauf (Destatis) finished by explaining that the data had already been incorporated into the BOP estimates, and would be included in the household expenditure estimates later this year.

Item 4.b. Cross-border internet purchases within the EU

Quinten Meertens (Statistics Netherlands) presented on his work on the possible automation of cross border expenditure estimates. He explained that there is a clear bias in consumer survey estimates due to the fact that many non-resident companies are setting up websites in the language of the consumers. To overcome this they wanted to create a methodology that could be applied and used across the EU, and that would provide timely estimates (within 120 days after the reference period). Quinten then outlined the data sources that were used (tax returns filed by corporations) as well as the various web scraping and text mining methods for collecting data. In addition he spoke on the machine learning that is used to automatise and optimise the choices required during the linking of the tax records in order to remove additional bias.

Thomas Schachl (Statistics Austria) asked if there is a language boundary, e.g. does the language bias matter when a large amount of the population speaks two languages? Annette Meinus (Deutsche Bundesbank) asked if part of the bias showed in the figures was due to memory bias (i.e., consumers simply forget how much they actually spent on online purchases). Peter van de Ven (OECD/NAD) asked how the methodology corrects for biases, while John Mitchell (OECD/NAD) asked if it is possible that the large difference in the outputs between their methodology and those from consumer surveys might be due to something unique to the Netherlands.

Quinten responded that while memory bias played a role the language bias plays a more significant role, the size of the bias would be impacted by the bilingual nature of some countries but generally, the results show that this bias remains an issue. Furthermore, based on literature and the results, it would appear that this underreporting from consumer surveys would be consistent across all countries. Finally, in response to the question of correcting biases, Quinten noted that the machine learning provides an accuracy assessment; this information is then used to make the relevant adjustments.

Item 4.c. A first approach for calculating the gross value added of e-commerce in Mexico

Rodolfo Ostolaza Berman (INEGI) presented on the work being undertaken to measure e-commerce in Mexico. In the presentation he explained the reasoning behind the work, before going into the methodological details. While Rodolfo admitted that strong assumptions had to be made, such as applying fixed intermediate consumption to output ratios, INEGI was first and foremost focused on generating an estimate relatively quickly. He then touched on some of the next steps, which included further

improvements to measuring digitally ordered (they are currently not looking into digitally delivered). This will entail work with Statistics Netherlands to obtain information on digitally active corporations in order to improve the business register and thus the coverage of the relevant enterprises.

Maarten van Rossum (Statistics Netherlands) enquired whether the methodology is applied at the micro (unit) level, while John Mitchell (OECD/NAD) asked about the decision to potentially include ordering done via email. To these questions Rodolfo replied that the methodology was applied at the macro (industry) level and that while the inclusion of orders via email might create some differences compared to other countries, it was very hard to delineate this from other digital ordering in the Mexican case.

The chair concluded the session by speaking on the measurement challenges faced, and how statistical agencies might need to leverage both traditional and non-traditional data to fill the data gaps. He thought these presentations were good examples of this practice. However, he also cautioned that agencies need to be vigilant about some of the risks and understand the caveats that accompany these new data sets.

Item 5. Work on measurement of products (outside the SNA production boundary) that feed into the digital SUTs

Item 5.a. Measuring the digital economy in macroeconomic statistics: The role of data

Marshall Reinsdorf (IMF) began his presentation by describing the huge amount of data that is currently flowing around, and how this could potentially be measured. He presented a taxonomy of data and listed all the various uses of data in the economy. Marshall also questioned whether all data could be considered as an asset, and presented a decision tree that allowed for data to be considered a non-produced asset, a valuable, an inventory, or a produced asset. Marshall then spoke regarding the difficulties of using standard business surveys to value data, as often data do not show up in business accounting. Following this, he discussed the advantages and disadvantages of each data valuation option (market based, cost based and income based), and showed some experimental estimates created by the IMF for the USA, using the income approach. He finished by contrasting which types of data might, or might not be, included in the national accounts aggregates. He then theorised that some data might already be included via other transactions, while other types of data, which are within the production boundary, may currently not be accounted for in the aggregates due to practical difficulties. At the end of his presentation, he summarised the types of data which are excluded from the production boundary altogether.

Stefan Hauf (Destatis) asked why an input that is used for less than a year is regarded as an inventory. Why not include it as intermediate consumption? Richard Heys (ONS) wondered which sector is the producing one in the case of barter type of transactions between a household and a provider of free digital services. Alexandre Bourgeois (INSEE) questioned whether the assumption that data is always decreasing in value is correct.

Peter van de Ven (OECD/NAD) argued, in relation to the question whether data are produced or non-produced, that automatically generating data by using, for example, certain platforms is not to be considered as a productive activity. Nadim Ahmad (OECD) noted that terminology is incredibly important and that the delineation in the IMF paper between observations and data was helpful, as it provided clarity to discussions on broader notions of 'data'. In particular the distinction helped clarify discussions on what parts were non-produced (observations) and what parts were produced (data). It was however also important to note that the definition of 'data' used in the paper was very similar (albeit slightly expanded), in practice, to those costs currently included in the 2008 SNA for databases, and so in this respect the elephant in the room, and the key question, remained how to value 'observations'. Even if there was a consensus that observations were non-produced assets and thus have zero (direct) impact on GDP, they still had value that we would need to work hard to estimate, as this was ultimately what users wanted.

Marshall responded that in their decision tree they wanted to show that inputs, even if used for less than a year, could still have value, hence the decision to include inventories. While Marshall admitted that people could find new value in old data, it was not unreasonable to assume that they have a finite life, and therefore as an aggregate would have an average life span. Marshall ended by saying that if all observations are

assigned a value, the whole idea of accounting for the role of data may become meaningless. It is important to distinguish whether or not the data are creating value (output).

Item 5.b. Treatment and valuation of data in national accounts

The second presentation on data measurement was from Matthew MacDonald (Statistics Canada) and Dylan Rassier (BEA), who started with providing some context to the classification of data along the value chain, from observations, to data, to databases, to data science. Dylan presented the interlinkages between the SNA production boundary, the asset boundary, and the boundary of what constitutes the asset category data. Dylan then proceeded to show some estimates for the USA using a conservative (sum of cost) approach to value purchased data and data produced within an institutional unit. These results showed a rapid increase in the value of data in the USA even if the initial level is quite small.

Matthew then presented on the Canadian results, which showed the value of data at levels 30-40 billion dollars higher than that for Research & Development, although it was suggested that there is likely some double counting in this series. Statistics Canada separated this amount into the previously displayed classifications of data, database, and data science, with growth observed across all three classifications, especially data science. Matthew pointed out that for the initial stages of the data value chain, sum of costs might be the most appropriate method for valuing data, however towards the end of the value chain a market value approach might be better suited. Matthew concluded by saying that he thought this work demonstrated that some form of measurement is possible even within the existing classifications, statistical sources, and methodologies.

The chair thanked the presenters and suggested this was a good starting point from which other countries might want to follow. Thomas Schachl (Statistics Austria) believed that this was courageous work, however he was concerned that there may be cross border asymmetries if different countries are producing amounts that are not well aligned. Peter van de Ven (OECD/NAD) agreed that it is very worthwhile to try and quantify the phenomenon. He questioned the way in which a distinction was made between investments and current costs for the labour input component. He also wondered whether the declining investment in software in Canada could be due to the shift to cloud services and free open source software.

Dylan responded that the problem of cross border discrepancy are not new, however with no obvious solution, and thus to be added to the list of challenges. Matthew agreed saying that there is the additional aspect that this type of asset, once produced, can move easily across countries. Matthew agreed with the suggestion that cloud services and open source software might be contributing to the decline and also suggested that the price index used to deflate the estimates might also be a reason.

The chair summarised the session by concluding that this is a really tough area for both conceptual and measurement reasons. He was very pleased on the progress of this work and hoped that some other countries might engage in similar work before the next meeting, either using this methodology or their own. He added that this work could potentially be used in the Digital SUTs and would allow for a better discussion on whether the classification of various aspects of data necessitated a large or small refinement to the current SNA.

Item 6. Future work for the Informal Advisory Group, conclusions and wrap up

Item 6.a. Initial outputs of the digital SUTs

The chair opened the session by stating that while the Digital SUTs are aspirational, countries should still look towards producing some indicators that can be developed in the short term. Peter van de Ven (OECD/NAD) then outlined the next steps in the development of the Digital SUTs template. This includes a written consultation of the WPNA and, if required, a discussion at the November 2019 meeting of the WPNA. Peter mentioned the strong support from CSSP of working on this topic and so following the November meeting of the WPNA, a formal request will then be sent to countries to start populating digital SUTs. Peter then listed a few indicators that might be achievable in the shorter run, and of most value to users.

Stefan Hauf (Destatis) believed that producing an estimate of overall GVA of the digital industries, similar to that produced by the USA, Australia and Canada, would probably be easiest and should be feasible within a year if additional information was provided on the make-up of each industry. He also mentioned that they were in the process of setting up a website for experimental data that might be utilised for this purpose. Maarten van Rossum (Statistics Netherlands) noted that from a technical point of view, all indicators should be feasible for the Netherlands, however they would have to prioritise as it would not be possible to produce all indicators.

Richard Heys (ONS) cautioned that for many countries some of the digital firms have become natural monopolies and therefore the group needed to be mindful of possible confidentiality issues. Richard suggested that the ONS could likely provide estimates on ICT investments. Marshall Reinsdorf (IMF) suggested that the Digital SUTs could be a pilot for data sharing, which has been spoken about often in regards to globalisation. Andreas Dollt (Eurostat) offered to continue to put this forward to European countries to ensure a harmonised approach to compilation.

The Chair, Erich Strassner (BEA), speaking for the BEA, reiterated that they were on board with the proposed way forward, and that they would be focusing on DIPs as well as the cloud computing estimates which they planned to disseminate in September. Yuko Ueno (Economic and Social Research Institute) suggested that Japan would be able to compile estimates on GVA generated by digital industries and that they also have some estimates for DIPs and e-commerce, however outputs on employment and prices/volumes might not be possible at this stage.

Peter van de Ven (OECD/NAD) thanked all the countries for their positive and constructive feedback. He suggested that the advisory group should certainly focus on the GVA indicator, in which case having estimates on output as well would assist in deriving relevant deflators. Peter also suggested to include some indicators on the activities of DIPs, as well as some expenditure breakdowns by nature of transaction, and intermediate consumption of ICT products. It was proposed that a more concrete proposal of indicators would be distributed, for written consultation, to members of the advisory group, along with additional guidance to gauge their feasibility, priority and expected timeframe.

The initial list of high priority indicators may include the following areas:

1. GVA of digital industries
2. The top two digital product aggregation rows (ICT goods & Digital Services)
3. Indicators associated with Digital Intermediary Platforms (DIPs) and Cloud Computing services.
4. Expenditure estimates, i.e. Total digital ordering for the whole economy, digitally ordered/delivered or platform enabled estimates of HFCE. GFCF, HFCE and trade estimates of digital product aggregations (listed on dot point 2)
5. Intermediate consumption of the digital products aggregation listed in dot point 2.
6. Transaction breakdown of some of the high profile products

Peter then suggested that any information on employment from a digital industry perspective would be very welcome as this is a key area for policy makers. He concluded that in the long term the OECD would certainly like to publish the outputs (with country permission) and, while the OECD would continue to facilitate the sharing of methodology and best practice, the production of a formal guidance document may be a little further down the road. Canada and Australia then re-iterated that they are more than willing to share their methodology as well as provide a contact person who can assist.

Based on these discussions the following timeframe for future work is proposed:

Mid July	Early August	Early September	7-8 November	2 nd quarter, 2020
Written consultation of the members of the WPNA on the template and guidelines of the Digital SUTs	Draft minutes distributed to advisory group members	Written consultation of the members of the advisory group on a more concrete proposal for high priority indicators, including feasibility and possible timeframe	Summary of progress provided to WPNA, including discussion of proposal for high priority indicators, as put forward by the advisory group	Meeting of advisory group to discuss countries' progress on high priority indicators

Item 6.b. Conclusions and summary

The chair provided some final thoughts on the meeting. He thanked Daniel Ker for providing context on how the work of this advisory group fits into the going digital toolkit. He mentioned how the work on the Digital Trade Handbook and the crypto assets is a reminder that other work in macro-economic statistics is going on parallel to that of this group. He thanked the various countries for presenting on how they have tried to apply the Digital SUTs guidance using real world data, and in the interest of international comparability, encouraged them as well as other countries producing such indicators for the first time to continue to move closer to the classifications and definitions outlined in the Digital SUTs.

The chair thought this meeting also provided examples to overcome measurement challenges, and to disseminate experimental statistics. He added that the same approach would also be a sensible way forward in producing estimates on what is currently outside the production boundary. He encouraged countries to continue to try and quantify these outputs as best they could.

The chair concluded by thanking all participants as well as those responsible for the smooth running of the meeting, he then closed the meeting.