Working Party on International Trade in Goods and Trade in Services Statistics

PROGRESS REPORT: UN EXPERT GROUP EG SITS ON COMPILATION GUIDANCE

To be held on 22-24 October 2012
OECD Headquarters

This document for item 13.4 of the agenda presents the work of the UN expert Group on the Compilation of Statistics of International Trade in Services.

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Note by UNSD

1. Compilation guidance has been high on the agenda of the Task Force for SITS since the adoption of the new recommendations in 2010. At its March 2011 meeting, the Task Force decided to produce a guide for compilers covering the full scope of the MSITS 2010, which would be developed in parallel and in consultation with the compilation guidance for the balance of payments services statistics. The Task Force asked UNSD to take the lead in the process, which would be supported by an expert group on the compilation of statistics on international trade in services (EG-CSITS). The expert group consists of all Task Force members plus a number of national experts from developed and developing countries.

2. EG-CSITS was established in December 2011 to ensure active country involvement in the development of the compilers guide. In March 2012, the first meeting of EG-CSITS was held through virtual discussion. The main objective of the meeting was to review the annotated outlines of all chapters of the guide and to define its scope and content. A revised annotated outline was thereafter circulated for worldwide consultation in July 2012 and first draft chapters were prepared as well. The outcome of the worldwide consultation and the draft chapters were discussed in a second virtual meeting from 1 to 12 October 2012. The expert group is expected to finalize its work during 2013.

3. The compilers guide should help countries in developing a high quality and effective data collection, processing and dissemination system which complies with the recommendations of MSITS 2010. It should be useful for both developed and developing countries and should reflect practices for all regions in the world. The guide should also be fully in line with MSITS 2010 and should not prescribe any new recommendations. It will therefore elaborate on the recommendations and give practical how-to information.
4. As mentioned before, EG-CSITS electronically discussed the main parts of the compilers guide during its first meeting in March 2012, namely statistical infrastructure, data collection, data processing, quality assurance, and data dissemination. The outcome let to an updated annotated outline with the following structure.

   Part I General Frameworks (Conceptual, Legal and Institutional Frameworks)

   Part II Data Collection: overview of data sources
   (a) Registers and survey frames
   (b) Enterprise and establishment surveys
   (c) Surveys of persons and households
   (d) International Transaction Reporting System
   (e) Administrative records

   Part III Data Compilation:
   (a) Integration of data from different sources
   (b) Compilation of resident/non-resident trade in services statistics
   (c) Compilation of FATS and the international supply of services
   (d) Compilation of other indicators for modes of supply
   (e) Estimation and modelling of missing data, forecasting or back-casting

   Part IV Data Dissemination

   Part V Cross-Cutting issues
   (a) Quality management
   (b) Metadata
   (c) Use of Information and Communication Technology

5. The responses received from the worldwide consultation on the annotated outline of the guide in July 2012 did not call for a substantial restructuring of the guide, but did elicit a lot of good suggestions. These suggestions were discussed by the Expert Group at its 2nd virtual meeting in the first 2 weeks of October 2012. Besides discussing the outcome of the worldwide consultation, the experts during the 2nd meeting also commented on draft chapters regarding (1) Institutional arrangements (Chapter 3), (2) ITRS (Chapter 8) and (3) the compilation of FATS (Chapter 15). It is expected that a more definite distribution of work on the various chapters of the guide will be proposed and agreed upon during the Task Force meeting on 25 and 26 October.