
This was the first SDMX conference to be held in Asia, and as such, it is expected to help drive SDMX adoption in a region which is a relatively recent implementer of the standard.

Delegates made presentations and held Q&A sessions on a wide and compelling variety of subjects from regional statistical offices and international organisations that included SDMX implementation stories, presentations on the technical architecture, SDMX strategy, development and usage of “plug-and-play” components, and the work of the SDMX working groups.

The main conference ended with a “Future of SDMX” discussion, in which panellists were prompted on these themes:

Gaps and areas partially covered by SDMX

In response to the questions “In your view what are the key features that the current state of SDMX only partially covers or does not cover at all?” and “What do you think as high priority outstanding development (or where co-ordination is needed to fill gaps)?” panellists mentioned that some of the identified gaps are dealt with in the Statistical and Technical SDMX working groups. For example the forthcoming Validation and Transformations Language (VLT) standard will cover the data validation gap in SDMX, and will provide a structured way of coding a range of validation rules. Nonetheless several items were brought forward, which at present are not yet formally on the agenda of the SDMX working groups. The most prominent of these were handling code list inheritance (to enable better code-list reusability), and designing a standard way to remove dimensions from a dataflow (in order to improve the specificity of data exchanges). It was also mentioned that reference metadata exchange is limited at this stage, and as a first step Metadata Structure Definition standards could be improved to better support metadata exchange. Similarly, in order to better connect interlinked artefacts in various data-structures the Structure Set artefacts should be documented and made more flexible to make one-to-many and many-to-many relationships easier to represent.

Guidelines and documentation

The discussion point “In order to keep momentum in implementation and adoption of SDMX what documentation, guidelines and trainings would you consider necessary to be written or revised, and what kind of communication and promotions channels would you favour?” prompted the fact that, SDMX.org is expected to remain the focus-point for SDMX related communication, and to maximise its effectiveness it is currently being completely revamped. This revamp, expected to be operational in the first quarter of 2015, will bring a much-improved functionality, revised content, and a new SDMX forum generating new communication opportunities. The new SDMX.org content will include new SDMX guidelines from the working groups in response to community requests, such as, how to represent a statistical domain in SDMX; how to version SDMX artefacts; and how to represent embargoed data. In order to get the most from the SDMX Global Registry and have clear guidance for registry managers and users, a policy on SDMX Global Registry content is being drafted with
related guidelines on when to use either a local, public or the SDMX Global Registry. A new request was put forward for SDMX-JSON related guidance, to help system architects and developers through the presentation of use-cases in making implementation choices and gain traction with the new format.

**Governance**

In the final round of questions: “What are your views on the (high level) governance structure of the SDMX standard, has the current setup proven to be successful, and should it change to adapt to the evolving landscape of SDMX users?” panellists evoked previous discussions from 2013 on changing SDMX governance to be more open, noting that these previous discussions did not lead to a changed governance structure. Therefore it was suggested that a different approach, perhaps more directly related to the needs of the SDMX community, could be to survey the official statistics community on how the same or a different SDMX governance structure could better serve their needs. It was also mentioned that it’s possible that an expanded “ownership” of the SDMX standard could lead to new funding opportunities to drive development and implementation.

The OECD would like to thank KOSTAT whose organisation, administration and facilities of the conference were excellent and helped networking and further discussions around the conference. The conference was sold-out, especially the capacity building day where many senior SDMX experts stayed on, which made the event more interactive and useful on several levels.