



UNITED NATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
STATISTICS DIVISION

**Expert Group on Distributive Trade Statistics
New York, 22-25 August 2005**

Purpose and organization of work the Expert Group on Distributive Trade Statistics

Purpose

The Expert Group on Distributive Trade Statistics (EG-DTS) is being organized by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) in order to assist UNSD in revision of the existing UN Statistical Commission's recommendations on distributive trade statistics published in *International Recommendations on Statistics of the Distributive Trades and Services* (Statistical Papers, Series M, No 57, United Nations, New York, 1975) and in updating the UNSD compilation advices contained in *Organization and Conduct of Distributive-Trade Surveys* (Statistical Papers, Series F, No 19, United Nations, New York, 1977). EG-DTS expected to (a) provide an assessment of those recommendations and advices in view of the new realities in the distributive trade and current country practices in compilation of the relevant statistics, (b) contribute to drafting of the revised recommendations and suggest new approaches in data compilation including organization and conduct of distributive trade surveys, and (c) review a draft of the UN publication *International Recommendations on Distributive Trade Statistics*, which will contain the new recommendations, and to comment on a provisional draft *Distributive Trade Statistics: Compilers Manual*. The EG-DTS is expected to conduct two meetings – the first on 22-25 August 2005 and the second in mid 2007 (the exact dates are not set yet).

The purpose of the first meeting is to (a) provide an assessment of the UN recommendations published in *International Recommendations on Statistics of the Distributive Trades and Services*, (b) advise on the areas where updating of the existing and/or developing of the new recommendations is needed, and (c) contribute towards such updating/revision. Please note that the UNSD Manual *Organization and Conduct of Distributive-Trade Surveys* will not be reviewed in all its details during the meeting. Rather, its contents and plans for its revision will be briefly discussed under the Provisional agenda item 12 (Data sources and data collection methods). Based on the meeting's results and the follow-up consultations UNSD will prepare the drafts of both revised publications. The second meeting will review those publications.

Agenda of the first meeting

Apart from the procedural and administrative matters, the proposed provisional agenda includes a number of substantive items (see document ESA/STAT/AC.102/4). The agenda items are ordered to provide an initial background information from the UNSD side and then to hear the country presentations on their current practices. This will be followed by an in-depth discussion of such key issues as (a) scope and classifications, (b) statistical and reporting units, (c) data items and their definitions, (d) data sources and data collection methods, (e) indices and performance indicators, (f) distributive trade statistics and compilation of the national accounts. The meeting will be concluded by a round-table discussion, formulation of the preliminary conclusions and the UNSD outline of the future activities.

Compendium of Country Practices and guidelines for their preparation

Each participant is requested to prepare a country note on its country practices in distributive trade statistics including description of both good experiences and difficult issues. Those notes will be assembled in a document *Compendium of Country Practices*, which should be finalized before the meeting and presented to the EG for information. The notes should be sent by e-mail to Vladimir Markhonko, Chief of Trade Statistics Branch (markhonko@un.org), by 1 August 2005. To ensure comparability of the country experiences and to better organize further discussion, UNSD is asking that presentations contain sections identified under the provisional agenda. If there is nothing to report under a specific agenda item, a note should contain a clear statement in this regard. In consultation with the EG members, several participants will be asked to make a presentation of their notes at the meeting.