



International Seminar on Trade and Tourism Statistics

7-10 October 2013, Jakarta, Indonesia

*Organized jointly by UNSD, APEC and ASEAN Secretariat,
hosted by BPS-Statistics Indonesia
with support from AANZFTA ECWP and APEC TATF*

Background

The services sector accounts for the largest share of business activity, employment, and economic growth in most economies, yet the role of services trade, particularly in designing policies and negotiating regional agreements, continues to be poorly understood. A major reason for this disconnect is the absence of abundant, high-quality data on trade in services that is comparable across economies – making it difficult to measure the impact of services trade on the economy and provide useful information for negotiators and policy makers in coming up with market access or policy tools that could facilitate trade in services.

Among the key initiatives undertaken to address this issue is the development of the 2010 Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services (SITS) spearheaded by the United Nations Statistic Division (UNSD) together with OECD, WTO, IMF, UNCTAD and Eurostat. Since then, several initiatives and capacity building have been undertaken to improve understanding and compliance in terms of SITS data collection.

This Seminar builds on several initiatives undertaken at regional levels.

In June 2013, APEC has organized a workshop on trade in services statistics for statisticians and trade negotiators in Medan, Indonesia to improve the statistical information base to feed into the policy process on free trade agreements within APEC, particularly in the services sector.

Similarly, the ASEAN with support from international organizations and facilities, including the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA) Economic Cooperation Work Programme (ECWP), has implemented SITS user-producer capacity-building Workshop on International Trade in Services Statistics Collection and Management (in March 2011), two producer workshops (in December 2011 and November 2012), and a second user-producer workshop (in April 2012).

In November 2012, the ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS) Committee, comprising the Heads of national statistical offices of the ASEAN Member States, reported some progress in the harmonisation of ASEAN statistics, including on international trade in services, and have expressed their commitment to support enhancement of SITS compilation and dissemination.



Seminar Scope

Recent developments in Asia point to travel and tourism as two of the main drivers of economic growth and are seen as tools for development and change in the region, thus the agenda proposed to cover closely the data collection and compilation of these statistics.

The Seminar will take advantage of the draft versions of the compilers guide for MSITS 2010 and the compilation guide for Tourism Statistics, which are both in their final stages of completion. Specific topics will include enterprise and establishment surveys; surveys of persons and households; Travel and Tourism statistics; Transportation statistics; Manufacturing services on inputs owned by others; FATS, FDI and multi-national enterprises; and linking trade, FDI and FATS with the business register; as well as the compilation of the Tourism Expenditure side and the Tourism Supply side.

In addition, trade statistics should also be seen in the broader context of measurement of Global Value Chains (GVCs). As highlighted in a recent report by the policy unit of the APEC Secretariat it is important for APEC policymakers and businesses to have sufficient knowledge and information, on how these value-chains work, and understand the major challenges and factors that affect their governance.

At the most recent session of the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2013, UNSD presented an overview report¹ which highlighted the growing concerns regarding the limitations of current trade statistics to inform the policy debate. It also raises policy questions regarding international trade and tourism in a world in which production processes are spread among many countries creating not only economic and financial interdependencies but also social and environmental ones.

¹ *International Trade Statistics*, Report of the Secretary-General, E/CN.3/2013/7