UNITED NATIONS
International Merchandise Trade Statistics

Seminar on International Trade Statistics
Implementation of IMTS 2010 and follow-up to the Global Forum
26 – 30 September 2011, Vilnius, Lithuania

Agenda items 13-15:
Data compilation strategies:
Customs and non customs data sources;
Institutional arrangements
Linking trade and business statistics
- Points for discussion -

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1

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A   Data sources

Q1:   Do you have a long term strategy?

Countries are encouraged to review their current data compilation practices and to develop a long term strategy to deal with the emerging issues to ensure uninterrupted availability of high quality and timely trade statistics (para. 8.1)

Use of Customs records

Q2:   Do you plan to cooperate with customs in the use of information contained in the Customs Procedure Codes?

It is recommended that statisticians closely cooperate with customs experts in order to correctly allocate customs procedure codes and associated trade transactions according to the general or the special trade system. **(para. 8.4 – New recommendation)**

It is recommended that information about the customs procedures applied to individual transactions is part of the dataset provided by customs to the agency responsible for the compilation of international merchandise trade statistics. **(para. 8.6 – New recommendation)**

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2

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A   Data sources

Q3: Do you have access to accompanying information?

Compilers should gain access to and use the additional information available at Customs, such as the commercial invoice, transport documents, import licenses and certificate of origin that is usually accompanying the customs declaration (as required and as permitted by law). (para.8.7)

Use of Non Customs records

Q4   Do you supplement customs based data with information obtained from other sources, as necessary to achieve full coverage? (para. 8.9 – Updated recommendation)

Q5   Will you/ do you consider an integrated approach to economic statistics when using non-customs sources? (What are the issues/ problems?)

In the case of the use of non-customs data sources such as enterprise surveys **it is recommended** that countries take an integrated approach to data collection and make use of business registers and enterprise identification numbers in order to obtain the required information with minimal costs and burden on enterprises. (Important for satisfying additional data requirements) **(para. 8.11 – New recommendation)**

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3

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B   Institutional Arrangements

Q6: Based on your experience what is needed for effective institutional arrangements and to further strengthen them?

Effective institutional arrangements are usually characterized by

(a)   the designation of only one agency responsible for the dissemination of official trade statistics,

(b)   a clear definition of the rights and responsibilities of all agencies involved,

(c)   the establishment of formalized working arrangements between them including agreements on holding inter-agency working meetings as needed and on the access to micro data that those agencies collect.

The formal arrangements should be complemented by the informal agreements between the involved agencies and institutions as required. (para. 8.16)

Q7: Do you, whenever appropriate, actively participate in the discussion of national legislation or relevant administrative regulations? (Always, sometimes, never?) (in order to establish a solid foundation for the high quality and timeliness of trade statistics. (para. 8.14)

Q8: Do you periodically review the definitions, methods and the trade statistics themselves (to ensure that they are compiled in accordance with the recognized international methodological guidelines, are of high quality, and are available to users in a timely fashion. (para. 8.18))

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4

C   Linking with business statistics

Q9:   Do you link the register of traders with the business register?

    10.1 Do you have a register of traders?

    10.2 Do you have a business register?

    10.3 Is your register of traders linked with your business register?

    10.4 On the custom declaration do you have a trader or business identification number?

Q10: What are your projects and plans regarding linking trade and business statistics?

Q11: Where do you see the main obstacles for further linking trade and business statistics?

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5

Updating the IMTS Compilers Manual

Q12: On which items (chapters) would you like to see the updated Compilers Manual to provide more guidance/ best practices and examples? /Where do you think you might be able to contribute your experiences and best practices?

IMTS Compilers Manual - Draft table of contents:

–   **Part I**   **Legal framework and data sources**
–   Chapter 1 Legal framework
–   Chapter 2 Customs declarations and related customs records
–   Chapter 3 Non-customs administrative sources
–   Chapter 4 Enterprise surveys
–   **Part II**   **Data compilation**
–   Chapter 5 Institutional arrangements
–   Chapter 6 Statistical territory and organization of data collection
–   Chapter 7 Integration of data from different sources
–   Chapter 8 Data processing and database management
–   Chapter 9 Data quality: assurance, measurement and reporting
–   Chapter 10 Data compilation in the case of customs unions
–   Chapter 11 Integrating trade and business statistics

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6