

ISWGNA and Task Team chairs Meeting

30 October 2020

Minutes

Participants: Ivo Havinga (chair), Herman Smith, Benson Sim and Pedro Farinas (UNSD); John Verrinder, Nicola Massarelli, (Eurostat); Peter van de Ven (OECD); Catherine van Rompaey and Eric Métreau (World Bank); Jim Tebrake, Margarida Martins, and Jennifer Ribarsky (IMF); Tihomira Dimova and Rami Peltola (UNECE); Lis Soelistyowati (Indonesia); Michael Connolly (Ireland); Carol Coy (Jamaica); Sanjiv Mahajan (UK); Erich Strassner (US BEA); Amina Khasib (State of Palestine)

1. Follow-up actions from the AEG/ISWGNA meeting

The meeting agreed to:

- a. Finalize the list of issues to be addressed for the update of the SNA taking into consideration the issues raised by the AEG at its 14th meeting and issues that are under consideration by BOPCOM, and to identify issues for which separate guidance notes are required. The list of issues identified should be mapped to the work of existing task teams in consultation with their chairs and secretariats as soon as possible for reporting to the 52nd session of the Statistical Commission.
- b. The urgent need to develop the funding strategy, including the funding of an editorial team and a lead editor, and that initial funding may mostly comprise in-kind contributions.
- c. The need to operationalise review of issues between AEG/ISWGNA, BOPCOM, UNCEEA, Classifications expert group, UNCEBTS etc.

Actions:

- UNSD to coordinate the finalization of the list of issues to be addressed for the update of the SNA with the task team chairs and secretariats – end November.
- World Bank to organize a question and answer session on the various funding modalities – mid November.
- UNSD to coordinate the working arrangements for the review of issues between AEG/ISWGNA, BOPCOM, UNCEEA, Classifications expert group, UNCEBTS, etc. – end November.

2. Proposed guidance notes for global consultation

The meeting agreed to:

- a. Identify guidance notes that could be ready for a 6-week global consultation.
- b. Procedures on the global consultation to be developed such as who to consult and who should circulate the guidance notes
- c. The AEG/ISWGNA will need to approve all finalized guidance notes before they are circulated for global consultation.

- d. To consider a flexible hybrid approach whereby testing and experimentation can be conducted for some guidance notes before the global consultation, while for other guidance notes only after the global consultation.
- e. Where appropriate, technical assistance projects can include activities on testing and experimentation, especially in countries with limited capacity.
- f. The role of regional commissions and agencies should be determined for the experimentation and testing of the GNs.

Actions:

- The chairs of the relevant task teams will provide feedback time on the feasibility of finalizing some of the guidance notes – 20 November.
- IMF, UNSD and the World Bank will prepare a note on the operational guidance for experimentation and testing and circulate it for comments – 20 November.

3. Proposed dates for the next AEG meeting

The meeting agreed to schedule additional AEG meetings over two days in March and June 2021.

Actions:

- UNSD to contact members to indicate their preferred date(s) for the AEG meeting in February 2021 – 20 November.

4. Draft outline of the UNSC report

The meeting agreed:

- a. To the proposed outline of the 2021 ISWGNA report to the 52nd UNSC meeting, including a section on the initiatives to help countries resolve national accounting and business continuity issues due to COVID-19.
- b. The report should emphasize the collaboration with other the relevant committees such as BOPCOM, UNCEEEA, UNCEBTS and the Classifications expert group.
- c. The ambitious nature of the timetable to finalize the update of the 2008 SNA in 2025 and to emphasize the need to secure sufficient funding to achieve this milestone.

Actions:

- UNSD to coordinate the inputs from the task teams and regional commissions for the 2021 ISWGNA report to the UNSC – end November.

5. Initial discussion note on editorial team

The meeting agreed:

- a. There is a need for the editorial team to work with the sub-task team on digital statistical standards to decide on the technology for digitalizing the statistical standards and develop a list of common concepts to use in the taxonomy.
- b. The editorial team should adopt a more digital-based approach.
- c. The funding arrangements, especially for the editorial team, including the lead editor, need to be clarified.
- d. The editorial team will need to collaborate with the authors working on the update the BPM6 to ensure consistency in the use of concepts and definitions.
- e. The governance arrangements for the editorial team will need to be clarified.

Actions:

- Eurostat, the IMF, UNSD and UK ONS will prepare an updated note on how to address some of the above-mentioned issues – 20 November.

6. Proposed changes in ToRs of TTs in terms of additional issues, sub TTs, governance (chairs/secretariats), etc.

The meeting agreed the chairs and secretariats of the task teams will review their ToRs and provide feedback on whether they need to be changed to reflect changes in membership, new issues to be considered and identify issues. Also, the ToRs need to be reviewed for harmonization of terminology across the TT and bringing them in line with the recommendations of the FOC Group on Economic Statistics.

Actions:

- Chairs and secretariats of the task teams to review their TORs – end November.
- The IMF will invite Branko Vitas from Australia to be the co-chair of the DZTT.

7. Other developments

The IMF will send reminders to the secretariats of the task teams to update the monitoring tool every month, starting from October 2020. The monitoring tool has been streamlined after incorporating comments on an earlier version.

The Communications Task Team, in collaboration with the Wellbeing and Sustainability Task Team, will prepare a note on using net rather than gross measures in macroeconomic statistics and articulate the differences in the concepts of consumption of fixed capital, depletion and degradation of natural resources.

8. Next meeting

The next ISWGNA meeting will be held in the first quarter 2021. The date is to be determined based the progress with the drafting and the first global consultation of the guidance notes.