

**Minutes  
of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA)  
Teleconference, May 25, 2005**

**Participants:** C. Aspden, F. Lequiller (OECD), A. Bloem, R. Dippelsman, L. Laliberte (IMF), B. Newson (Eurostat), I. Havinga, M. Csizmada, E. Smith, G. Singh, V. Vu (UNSD), C. Carson (Project Manager), A. Harrison (Editor), M. Belkindas (Chair), B. Hexeberg (World Bank)

**1 Adoption of agenda**

The agenda is attached as annex I.

**2 Progress with action items agreed during the April 28 teleconference**

Only item two—Send comments to author on issue paper for issue #40 Goods sent abroad for processing—was outstanding. It was agreed that a smaller group (author and a few other involved commentators) should work out a proposal. The paper will be presented at the next BOPCOM meeting, and be for decision at the July AEG meeting.

**3 July AEG meeting**

(i) Logistics

The UNSD informed that the invitations were sent earlier this week, and that meeting facilities and arrangements are being fixed. The World Bank, as manager of the Trust Fund, will take care of the financing of the members from developing countries, and, in cooperation with UNESCAP, arrange for the booking of the hotel.

(ii) Agenda

(a) Issues

The meeting discussed the availability and quality of the issue papers for the upcoming AEG meeting, and how the ISWGNA can best comment on available drafts so as to ensure that the papers are of satisfactory quality before sending them to the AEG members. It was noted that as the deadline for sending papers to the AEG members is minimum four weeks ahead of the meeting, the ISWGNA should have time to check the papers.

The meeting agreed that the secretariat/UNSD would distribute a list of issue papers to the ISWGNA members, asking sponsoring organizations to indicate closing dates for comments or any problems in finalizing the papers. The meeting reminded itself that the Operational Guidelines set out the standard format for the papers. In addition, the manager had written a supplementary note that should work as a guideline for the review.

Furthermore, after the deadline for comments, the sponsoring organization will finalize the paper based on the comments received before forwarding to the UNSD posting on the web and distribution to AEG members. Last, it was requested that all member of the ISWGNA should be copied when a final paper is forwarded to the UNSD.

(b) E-consultations

Given the need to economize on face-to-face meeting time and to set priorities in that light, the manager and OECD suggested several issues that could be candidates for e-consultations. The AEG members would be asked to express their views on the issue electronically. In cases with a clear majority solution, only the outcome of the consultation would be reported at the AEG meeting in July. In cases with no clear outcome, a short presentation and discussion would take place at the meeting with the aim of reaching a decision at the meeting. The meeting agreed to the proposal, and to redefine due process, saying that electronic discussion may lead to decisions that stand.

(c) Allocation of time and finalization of the agenda

The UNSD had distributed a draft agenda prior to the meeting. Before discussing details of the agenda, the meeting agreed that (i) the agenda should include one “block,” (0.5 day or less) for summing up the e-discussions; (ii) morning and afternoon coffee-breaks should be included in the agenda; (iii) 15 minutes after lunch each day should be allocated for reviewing previous day’s summary conclusions; and (iv) the agenda, if possible, should allow for a mix of heavy and lighter issues each days, with the heavier in the morning sessions and the lighter in the afternoon (the meeting, however, realized the difficulty in doing so as some issues are connected.)

The meeting went over the agenda, discussing the availability of issue papers and allocation of time. Based on the discussion, the UNSD will revise the draft agenda and distribute for further comments.

(iii) Meeting minutes and conclusions

The editor volunteered to work on the summary conclusions (short reports), in cooperation with one or two members of the ISWGNA. With regards to the long report, the manager suggested to look outside for assistance. The idea would be to ask a NSO (Australia Bureau of Statistics, ABS, in this case) to volunteer staff time, while the project would pay travel, hotel and per idem. The meeting endorsed the suggestion and asked the manager to contact ABS.

(iv) Consultations

The manager had prepared a note setting out some possible procedures with regards to approaching countries for comments on the conclusions made by the AEG. The meeting agreed to send comments on the note and further suggestions to the manager by email in the coming weeks.

**4 Availability of selected documents in several languages?**

Based on a request received by the IMF for documents on the review in French, the meeting discussed the need and possibility of translating selected documents into French and other languages. The UNSD and IMF promised to look into some options with regards to which documents that could be candidates for translation, what languages would be most needed, and whether there was capacity to make the translation in such a speedy fashion that it becomes useful.

**5 Compulsory memo items**

The meeting agreed to move this agenda item forward to the next meeting.

**6 Other**

The meeting agreed to another teleconference on June 20 to discuss the outcome of the e-discussions, how to deal with consultations, and outstanding issues, if any, with regards to the upcoming AEG meeting. The face-to-face meetings in conjunction with the July AEG meeting are confirmed for July 17 and 23.

Annex I

**ISWGNA Teleconference  
Wednesday May 25, 2005**

**Agenda**

- 1 Adoption of Agenda
- 2 Progress with action items agreed during the April 28 teleconference
- 3 July AEG meeting
- 4 Availability of selected documents in several languages?
- 5 Compulsory memo items
- 6 Other

