Summary Report of the
Fifth Meeting of the UN UNCEBTS of Experts on Business and Trade Statistics
New York, NY USA
6 – 9 September 2022

1.	The fifth meeting of the UN Committee of Experts on Business and Trade Statistics (UNCEBTS) was organized by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) in New York from 6 - 9 September 2022. The meeting gathered more than 40 participants from 19 countries and several international and regional organizations. The UNCEBTS discussed its work plan in light of its new strategic view on business and trade statistics, which focuses on a stronger integration between business and trade statistics, but also on a stronger coordination across other statistical domains and with the macro-economic frameworks, such as the national accounts and the environmental accounts. Particular focus for the future work of the UNCEBTS will be on (1) digitalization, productivity and innovation; (2) well-being and social inclusion; and (3) green economy and the identification of the best data production framework to achieve them (i.e., reinforcement of the business register strategy, use of new data sources, etc.). The meeting also discussed new areas of work, such as: mainstreaming gender in business and trade statistics, the development of Integrated Data Infrastructure to link micro data on people and businesses, and a global initiative on unique identifiers.

2.	The meeting was opened by Mr. Stefan Schweinfest, UNSD Director, and Mr. Stefano Menghinello, Chair of the UNCEBTS and Director of the Directorate for analysis and enhancement of economic statistics and for the information needs of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan at the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT). They highlighted the work of the UNCEBTS in helping to improve the statistical infrastructure to boost the production of internationally harmonized and better quality business and trade statistics that respond to the 2030 sustainable development agenda and support new policy demands; to develop new indicators to address specific gaps identified by the priority areas and to overall increase granularity and timeliness of statistics; to ensure consistency with other economic statistics frameworks; and to strengthen capacity building programmes on business and trade statistics to facilitate their implementation in countries with the objective of leaving no one behind, as well as the importance of the foundational use of the statistical business register (SBR) for business statistics; the importance of non-financial reporting by companies; and micro-data linking.

3.	The UNSD Director highlighted that while there is demand for more data and fewer resources at NSOs, there are also opportunities, such as new data sources and rapid IT development. In a broader context, business and trade statistics is operating in an environment where the revision of the SNA is underway; the Friends of the Chair Group in Economic Statistics has been created by the Statistical Commission to undertake an assessment of the efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness of the current system of economic statistics; and the Network of Chief Economic Statisticians is looking to facilitate networking, coordination and communication on new innovations, experiments and best practices for the purpose of making progress on priorities to keep economic statistics relevant.

4.	The UNCEBTS reviewed the work done by its various Task Teams and discussed its work programme for 2022-2024. Among the most notable achievements of the UNCEBTS have been:

the preparation of two draft manuals presented to the Statistical Commission – one on Principal Indicators for Business & Trade Statistics and one on the Maturity Model for Statistical Business Registers; the identification of principal indicators for business and trade statistics based on evolving policy needs and to address certain data gaps; the development and provision of e-learning course on Statistical Business Registers based on the Maturity Model; and the establishment of a new task team on International Trade Statistics for the revision of the trade statistics manuals and the advancement of the integration between business and trade statistics. Among the areas identified in the UNCEBTS's future work programme are: mainstreaming gender in business and trade statistics; improving measures of digitalization, innovation and productivity; measuring impacts of business and trade on the green economy and social inclusion; accessing new data sources; furthering the work on global value chain analysis; exploring the feasibility of an initiative to help countries strengthen their business registration and issuance of national unique identifiers and encourage the link with global identifiers; collaboration on registers of multinational enterprises at the global level; looking deeper into policy questions about entrepreneurship; utilizing microdata linking to better respond to user demands, including the development of integrated data infrastructures to link microdata on people and businesses; and responding to users of business and trade statistics within the statistical system.

5.   This report summarizes the main conclusions of the meeting. The meeting documents and presentations are available online at: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/business-stat/uncebts/Fifth_Meeting_2022/. Annex I of this report includes the list of participants.

Session 1: Follow-up to the UNSC and objectives of the meeting

6.   Ms. Ilaria Di Matteo and Mr. Markie Muryawan of UNSD provided an overview of the discussion at the UN Statistical Commission (UNSC) in March 2022 and the decisions of the UNSC. Namely, the UNSC endorsed the update of the strategic view underscoring the importance of a horizontal and vertical integration of business and trade statistics and the priority areas; requested the UNCEBTS to coordinate with relevant groups of experts to avoid duplication of work and strengthen coordination with other statistical domains; encouraged the UNCEBTS to share practices on microdata linking and on the development of an integrated data infrastructure to link microdata on people and businesses; took note of the manual on the maturity model for statistical business registers and encouraged the development of a toolkit and endorsed the launching of a regular global assessment on the status of implementation of statistical business registers in countries; suggested developing guidelines for the integration of geospatial information into statistical business registers; took note of volume 1 of the Manual on the Principal Indicators on Business and Trade Statistics and encouraged the preparation of volume 2 of the manual to further elaborate on the international trade indicators; encouraged the UNCEBTS to prioritize the indicators and to assess the possibility of developing global databases for the indicators; welcomed the work program, terms of reference and research agenda of the task team on international trade statistics; and supported the development of a global initiative aimed at improving the availability of unique business identifiers in administrative data sources, considered essential to help countries in strengthening SBRs and requested the UNCEBTS to further elaborate the initiative and to report to the Commission at its fifty-fourth session in 2023.

7.   The Chair outlined the objectives of the meeting; reviewed the strategic view and accompanying new emerging priority areas of digitalization, innovation and productivity; well-being and social inclusion; and the green economy; and addressed how to meet the new challenges. The Chair emphasized that the UNCEBTS should leverage external coordination in its work; improve internal coordination across Task Teams; adjust or evolve the current production framework; and improve capacity building of all countries to integrate statistical domains. The Chair also stated that the agenda of the meeting was explicitly designed by the Bureau to meet these challenges by fostering discussion and encouraging cross-fertilization across the Task Teams and improving the coordination with other statistical domains. The Chair also discussed whether the SBR approach is still the best to be adopted when using new data sources for the compilation of new business and trade statistics.

Session 2: Business dynamics, demography and entrepreneurship

8.   Mr. Gerardo Durand on behalf of Mr. Arturo Blancas of INEGI, Mexico, leader of the Task Team on Business Dynamics, Business Demography and Entrepreneurship (TT-BDDE) introduced the session, which included two country examples on business demography statistics; an overview by UNSD of discussions of the TT on measuring entrepreneurship; and a presentation of the proposed workplan of the TT.

9.   Mr. Søren Andersen of Statistics Denmark presented the project on "Scale-ups in the Nordic   countries"   (http://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1660182&dswid=8142), in which the Nordic countries were asked by policy makers to establish evidence of importance of fastest-growing enterprises, in which activities they operated, how many jobs they created, and their export share. The presentation illustrated an example of coordination among statistical agencies and the process of harmonizing datasets linked from different sources. The presentation highlighted possible ways forward in this area, including linking employee data; collecting longitudinal panel data on such enterprises to analyze results over time; analyzing enterprises in different growth categories, including those with declines in turnover; and investigating characteristics of such enterprises prior to and after the three-year growth period. The UNCEBTS also discussed how countries without access to administrative data calculated growth at the enterprise level for the total enterprise population.

10.   Ms. Nancy Snyder of UNSD presented considerations on measuring entrepreneurship that the TT-BDDE has discussed, particularly within the context of the existing statistical definitions and frameworks for entrepreneurship. The TT highlighted the policy need of availability of more granular data on entrepreneurial firms, particularly on size classes (which would benefit policy-making aimed at SMEs); how to define and measure innovation in entrepreneurial firms (or among entrepreneurs); investigating the determinants of entrepreneurial success (and failure) and how these change with the growth (or death) of the enterprise; and better identification of, and characterization of, entrepreneurs themselves in terms of age, education, gender, etc. The next steps in this work include identifying the policy needs; assessing the availability of data on entrepreneurship and business innovation at international and regional organizations; collecting country practices on measuring entrepreneurship and business innovation (has already begun

within the task team); and discussing best data collection methods – e.g., SBRs, profiling, and linking to more administrative sources (i.e., demographic data and patent databases), etc.

11.   Mr. Valentin Llorente Garcia of the Spanish National Statistical Office (INE) presented three cases showing Spanish experiences of measuring entrepreneurship, which included using of the National Identification Number to link the SBR and the Population Register to compile socio-demographic data on new entrepreneurs. That identifier was also used in a gender study carried out in 2012 as a reply to an OECD request in the context of the OECD Gender Initiative focused on Gender Equity in Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship in OECD countries, as well as in emerging and developing economies. The objective was to produce structural indicators (number, size, turnover and industry) and demographic indicators (births, deaths, survival rates) for women-owned and men-owned employer enterprises with a sole proprietor. Finally a project for the measurement of enterprises growth was presented, which made use of data recorded in Business Registers. The indicators produced measures of the distribution of growth (in terms of employment) in all employer enterprises over a three-year period.

12.   Mr. Gerardo Durand on behalf of Mr. Arturo Blancas of INEGI, Mexico, leader of the Task Team on Business Dynamics, Business Demography and Entrepreneurship (TT-BDDE) presented the task team's proposed work program for the next biennium, including work on gender (the development of a guidance document on how to mainstream gender in business (and trade) statistics; continuing the discussions with countries and UNCTAD about business and gender statistics); work on entrepreneurship (identifying additional characteristics on entrepreneurship in businesses through the design of a dedicated survey; creating a repository with country experiences to measure entrepreneurship; and identifying the policy questions about the contribution of enterprises to the economy and the required data sources); and work on cross-cutting issues, including addressing the comments of the global consultation for the draft Manual on Principal Indicators for Business and Trade Statistics; capacity building regarding the 16 principal indicators of the TT-BDDE; participation in the 2nd volume of the Manual on Principal Indicators for Business and Trade Statistics; contribution to the activities on linking business and trade; assessing how to integrate geospatial information; and continuing the coordination among the Task Team leaders for guaranteeing consistency with the upcoming second volume of the Manual on Principal Indicators on Business and Trade Statistics.

Outcome of discussion

13.   The UNCEBTS overall agreed with the proposed work plan. It noted the importance of longitudinal analysis in order to better understand the dynamics of the businesses, such as fast-growing and declining firms and calculating survival rates. It also suggested to look into other relevant stratification variables for enterprises and entrepreneurs, such as the ownership structure, whether an enterprise is part of a (multi-)enterprise group; its level of outward foreign direct investment (FDI); special purpose entities (SPEs) with special tax features; firms' market share; asset class and profits. The UNCEBTS also noted that identifying the characteristics of entrepreneurs (related to human capital) is highly important for policy makers. In terms of data collection, Denmark noted that it successfully uses a small enterprise survey that is easy for firms to complete and the questions can be changed each year.

Session 3: Well-being and sustainability

14.   The session was chaired by Mr. Søren Andersen, leader of the task team on Well-being and Sustainability (TT-W&S). The session comprised two presentations, the first of which focused on the activities carried out by the TT-W&S until now with emphasis on the suggested indicators based on the SDGs and the plan for the coming two years. The proposed priority areas for coming efforts in the TT-W&S was – similarly to other TTs - defined on the basis of a ranking among several possible topics and issues. These areas of work include, in order of priority: supporting the implementation of the principal indicators, especially by raising awareness and identifying training needs; developing indicators on selected key aspects about the enterprise sector's effect on equality and social inclusion (including, but not limited to, gender, vulnerable groups, and social enterprises); developing indicators on selected key aspects about the enterprise sector's 'green transition' and its environmental / climate effects; contributing to further develop and promote integration of data and statistics from different domains, including micro data linking (MDL), with a focus on data related to well-being and sustainability. In addition to these activities, the TT-W&S has had thematic presentations and discussions regarding: 1) SDG core indicators on non-financial reporting (by UNCTAD); 2) Social Enterprises (by Italy); 3) Micro Data Linking (by Eurostat); 4) Indicators on Well-being, Inclusion, Sustainability and Equality (WISE, by the OECD), and 5) assessment of the enterprise sectors contribution to the SDGs (by Denmark).

15.   Ms. Jessica Ying Chan of UNSD presented the work of the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA) Business Accounting Working Group, which aims to align private sector natural capital accounting and the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA), as well as collaborate with and contribute to relevant private sector initiatives.

Outcome of discussion

16.   The UNCEBTS discussed the efforts and prospects for aligning standards pertaining to enterprises non-financial accounting (reporting at enterprise level of their performance on key environmental, social and governance aspects) and environmental accounting (i.e., at macro level), including whether these efforts comprise agriculture and forestry in addition to manufacturing and services. Also, it was suggested that considerations for prioritising the implementation of the indicators could be guided by feedback received in the global consultation of the draft manual on key business indicators and information about feasibility (including data availability) of the indicators. The Committee encouraged more cooperation with the UNCEEA in order to improve the vertical integration between business statistics and environmental accounting, and in relation to horizontal integration of environmentally related primary business statistics.

Session 4: Exhaustive business registers

17.   This session was chaired by Mr. Hank Hermans of Statistics Netherlands, the leader of the task team on Exhaustive Business Registers (TT-EBR). The session included three presentations, the first of which was a presentation by Mr. Hermans of the work programme of the TT that emerged from the discussion with the TT members, which includes: the finalization of the Manual on the Maturity Model, including continuing the collaboration with TT on Capacity Building (TT-CB); further development of the toolkit; conducting a global assessment of SBR practices based

on the maturity model dimensions; coordination with the Wiesbaden Group (especially regarding confidentiality) and defining areas of technical assistance. Other work areas (in order of priority) include: contributing to the work on the joint UNSD-OECD global register; integration of the SBR and the trade register; contribute to global initiative on unique identifiers for businesses; guidance on the use of statistical units or institutional units; micro-data linking and SBR; guidance on protecting confidentiality when sharing MNE data; guidance on incorporating geospatial information in the SBR; and exploring using Big Data for SBR.

18.   Ms. Pinar Ucar of the United Nations Statistical Institute of Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) presented on the foundational e-learning course on SBRs that is developed jointly with Asian Development Bank (ADB) and UNSD, with contributions from the members of the TT-EBR and TT-CB. The e-learning provided a strong foundation for the concepts, methods and framework required to build high quality SBRs. The e-learning course comprised the following modules: an overview of SBR; roles of SBR; coverage of SBR; data sources, maintenance and update; Legal framework, Organizational and IT considerations; SBR Maturity Model (SBRMM); and Profiling and Global/Regional Registers. In 2021, out of 114 participants from over 30 different countries. The e-learning course is being offered again this year, from 26 September to 11 November 2022. It is envisaged the course will also be available on the UN Global platform.

19.   Mr. Andrew Allen of the UK Office of National Statistics presented developments with the UK SBR. He reported that the UK SBR, in relation to the UN maturity model, in most dimensions can be considered advanced. Efforts at ONS have been focused on improving IT environment; coverage and uses. For instance, the UK has a good computer system that meets many of the advanced criteria for IT environment, but began an SBR improvement project in 2021, which aims to modernize the user interface; provide extra stratification variables – accounting variables such as assets/liabilities, etc.; to improve financial surveys; and to include full business population using new administrative data sources – i.e., corporation tax and self-assessment. The UK also has a longstanding annual register publications and micro-data supplied to researchers and has started compiling quarterly business births/deaths. Mr. Allen also presented an overview of how Brexit has affected the SBR, especially its lack of access to the EuroGroup Register (EGR).

Outcome of Discussion

20.   The UNCEBTS welcomed the proposed work programme of the TT-EBR on the finalization of the maturity model and the toolkit, as well as the developments on the joint UNSD-OECD global register; the integration of the SBR and the trade register; and the global initiative on unique identifiers for businesses. The UNCEBTS also underscored the importance of e-learning courses on SBRs and recommended the continued engagement of the UNCEBTS in the development of future courses and its participation in the courses. The UNCEBTS agreed to work on developing guidance on incorporating geospatial information in the SBR as requested by the UNSC. The Committee took note of the UK's work on their new SBR project and also appreciated the presentation where the developments of UK's work were projected against the maturity model. From the discussion there was a lot of interest in the use of cloud techniques for SBRs in the UK.

Session 5: Focus on the developments of global registers

21.   Ms. Nancy Snyder of UNSD presented on the developments of a collaboration between UNSD and OECD on a joint global business register, building on their separate experiences of Global Groups Register (GRR) by UNSD and the Analytical Database on Individual Multinationals and their Affiliates (ADIMA). The collaboration began December 2021 and thus far the two organizations are sharing resources to combine methodologies and source data; collect and validate data; and to plan future extensions. The joint release is planned for the end of 2022. Possible future improvements include adding more sources and variables; expanding the list of MNEs; seeking broader partnerships (possibly linking to national SBRs (or parts of them) when they are publicly available; contacting possible partners in SDG and non-financial reporting, such as UN Global Compact); and exploring the possibility of hosting the database and even validation tools on the UN Global Platform (a cloud-service collaborative environment to work together as a global statistical community which allows documentation and source code to be made public). The joint product will be developed with input and guidance from the UNCEBTS and OECD's Working Party on International Trade in Goods and Services Statistics.

22.   Ms. Petra Sneijers of Eurostat reported on developments in the EGR. The European Statistical System (ESS) has agreed on a strategy for EGR that concentrates efforts to improve the attention to those MNE groups with sizable effects on statistics and by embracing new sources and technologies. EGR is implementing a Complexity and Statistical Impact (CSI) index (based on economic size and relevance of the MNE groups and user needs) allowing to distinguish the two populations of MNE groups (top-tier and bulk-tier) for the different treatment in quality management. The profiled MNE groups will have to be regularly monitored by NSIs and by Eurostat according to an event-driven model; i.e., based on events that determine significant impacts on statistics. Future improvements also include research to collect and use new data from publicly available sources to complement missing information; evaluate and introduce the use of modern data analytics platform for the visualization and analysis of the data; explore and introduce machine learning capabilities, in order to improve quality and completeness of the output; decision support systems allowing the users to introduce data from public data sources, whenever missing; and systematic error correction and handling using microdata linking techniques.

Outcome of Discussion

23.   The UNCEBTS welcomed the collaboration of OECD and UNSD on a joint global register that will facilitate the analysis of multi-national enterprise (MNE) groups and underscored the benefits of collaboration by UNSD and OECD on a joint product and that input from countries on selection of key variables is useful. The UNCEBTS also welcomed the work by Eurostat to improve the quality of EGR in a cost-effective way by prioritizing the attention to those MNE groups that have sizable effects on statistics.

Session 6: Globalization and digitalization

24.   Mr. Mark Uhrbach of Statistics Canada, the leader of the Task Team on Globalization and Digitalization (TT-G&D), presented potential areas of future work for the task team, including identifying data gaps in this area, such as comparable measures for sectoral levels of productivity;

measurement of the value of intangibles and investments; improvement of productivity data timeliness; identification of the adoption level of technologies in businesses and its contribution to business success; improvement of data timeliness, coherence and adaptability on technologies adoption by businesses; monitoring of data on global value chains trends and developments, as well as their impact on globalization; and linkage of globalization and digitalization to business innovations related to environment and societal issues, such as climate change and well-being. Other areas of work underway at Statistics Canada that could be relevant for the task team to consider are measuring the digital intensity of firms and measuring economic performance associated with digitalization.

25.   Mr. Ouljour Houssain of the Office des Changes of Morocco presented on Morocco's experience measuring electronic data and e-trade. The compilation of these transactions in Morocco are based on use of foreign cards in Morocco; use of Moroccan cards abroad; payments by foreign cards on Moroccan merchant sites; and ITRS development (i.e., improvements in the banks' indirect reporting). Future work in this area in Morocco include close coordination with customs administration to better track products digitally ordered and to implement of the Handbook on Digital Trade.

26.   Ms. MennatAllah Mohamed of the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) of Egypt reported experiences measuring the digital economy, including e-commerce and digitalization in the public and private sectors during the economic census to monitor the advantage of information and communication technologies (ICTs). Ms. Menna reported the experience of the economic census and using surveys which have specific questions and future improvements to the survey based on the experience. In the future, CAPMAS plans to cover digitalization of families/households, as well as in public and private sector.

Outcome of Discussion

27.   The UNCEBTS welcomed the focus of the TT-G&D on digitalization, innovation and productivity, by looking at measures of productivity (including total factor productivity) based on level of digitalization of firms. It was also suggested to look at new data sources and methods and provide guidance on measuring e-commerce, rather than building new indicators. The UNCEBTS also noted that although some issues related to globalization are addressed by the Task team on international trade, there are some aspects of globalization that could be further elaborated by the TT-G&D. For example, profiling and understanding the structure of large multinational enterprise (MNE) groups and their effect on business statistics in a national context and enablers of globalization, not only including digitalization but also other factors, such as ownership and participation in regional value chains. It was further noted that the TT originally focused more on digitalization but wanted to look at the interaction of globalization and digitalization, reflected in breakdowns by ownership structure of the enterprise.

Session 7: International Trade Statistics

28.   This session was co-chaired by Ms. Cristina Neves of Statistics Portugal and Mr. Houssaine Ouljour of the Office des Changes of Morocco, the leaders of the task team on international trade statistics (TT-ITS). The session was comprised of three presentations, the first of which was a

progress update on the revision of the Trade Statistics Manuals and the work program of the TT-ITS by Ms. Neves. She reviewed how the UNSC in 2021 endorsed revising the trade manuals (IMTS 2010 and MSITS 2010), while ensuring consistency with the update of other statistical standards, such as the SNA and BOP; and welcomed the creation of a new task team for the revision of the trade-related standards. The TT-ITS is taking an approach of drafting guidance notes (GN) on the various conceptual topics related to the revision of the trade manuals and other conceptual topics that may warrant a separate handbook (such as digital trade linking trade and business statistics); and on integrating business and trade statistics. The TT-ITS plans that each GN will be drafted by a team of contributors, will go through peer review, reviewed by the UNCEBTS bureau, a Global Consultation and subsequent revision.

29.   In its meeting in Lisbon earlier this year, the TT-ITS took stock of SNA/BPM revisions and reviewed impacts on updates to MSITS/IMTS, the conceptual framework and timelines for revision. The TT-ITS expects the outline of IMTS and MSITS (and possibly a common part among the two manuals) will be developed by the end of the year and to be published in 2025. Ms. Neves also presented the other activities in the proposed work plan of the TT-ITS, including contribution to Volume 2 of the Manual on Principal Indicators on Business and Trade Statistics; capacity-building and collaborations with other groups on cross-cutting topics (e.g., digital trade). Ms. Neves reported that a lot of significant work has been done in the preparation of the guidance note on linking trade and business statistics and it is expected that it can serve as a valuable input for developing a Manual/Handbook on Integration of Business & Trade Statistics.

30.   Mr. Cody Hill of the U.S. Census Bureau presented the work of the TT-ITS on developing indicators on the impact of trade on well-being and sustainability. Mr. Hill emphasized that the effects of trade on well-being are not only material but also social and environmental. The proposed indicators in this area include trade participation or trade intensity of women/men owned businesses; the share of imported goods in consumption by household type; employment and types of jobs by industry and trading status; job creation/destruction as a result of international trade; labor productivity levels by trade openness of countries; and labor income and productivity by trading status and industry. Including measures of gender, in addition to sex, in trade statistics was emphasized. The TT-ITS reported on plans to coordinate the preparation of experimental estimates for some indicators and sought the guidance of the UNCEBTS.

31.   Mr. Houssaine Ouljour of the Office des Changes of Morocco and Mr. Esmond McLean of Bank of Jamaica presented the work of the TT-ITS to put forward a proposed treatment of trade under long-term contracts relevant to the updates of BPM6/7 and its potential impact on MSITS and IMTS. Specifically, Mr. McLean explained how the Balance of Payments Manual recommends using the market price as the basis for valuation of international transactions involving contracts for purchasing commodities. However, contracts for commodities often take the form of forward and long-term contracts, which are agreed in advance and could deviate from the spot price. Therefore, it was discussed that analysis of the features of the long-term contract (such as method of payment, linking to a price index and inclusion of freight/transport charges) is necessary to determine the appropriate price. The main proposal from the TT-ITS will be to record the trade as taking place at the market (spot) price and to treat the long-term supply contract as a forward financial derivative. In addition, it was noted that a global consultation is needed to determine if long-term contracts are tradeable in their own right. Mr. Ouljour presented a case

study from Morocco in which the statistical office analyzed the underestimation of export values from Morocco for fresh produce sold on a consignment basis, based on mirror bilateral trade data. Mr. Ouljour discussed how the absence of a final bill of sale and invoice in consignment sales at the time of customs clearance leads to difficulties in determining the real value and that instead a reference price (calculated from weighted average prices and quantities sold each day in the import markets) should be adopted.

Outcome of Discussion

32.   The UNCEBTS discussed the work of the TT-ITS on the guidance notes and revision process of the trade statistics manuals, noting that it was quite an ambitious work plan. The UNCEBTS commended the efforts of the TT-ITS to engage all relevant international organizations in its work. It was further noted that data are available to compile some of the proposed trade indicators, but others are more aspirational and will take countries longer to implement. The UNCEBTS suggested that the TT-ITS assess the data availability of the source data for the proposed indicators to help prioritize the indicators.

Session 8: Capacity building

33.   Mr. Hank Hermans of Statistics Netherlands presented the proposed work plan of the Task Team on Capacity Building (TT-CB) on behalf of the TT's leader, Mr. Saleh Alkafri, who could not be present at the meeting. Based on the discussion within the TT-CB, the proposed new areas of work include: 1) the preparation of training materials and technical assistance related to SBRs and the maturity model for SBRs; 2) the organization of conducting a webinar series on specific topics related to SBRs as a mean to share knowledge; and 3) the development of preparing capacity building for TT-ITS.

34.   Mr. Markie Muryawan of UNSD presented on Trade Data Tools (TDT), including Eurotrace (developed by Eurostat) and PC Trade (developed by Statistics New Zealand). While these are both long-running and successful capacity building activities, the support of Eurotrace will be ending soon. As a result, UNSD and Eurostat to assess the current tools; undertake development of TDT; and define its governance structure, including funding mechanism and communication strategy. Currently, they are working on developing and stabilizing the core modules, to be followed by training and pilot projects and implementation over the next two years.

35.   Mr. Markie Muryawan of UNSD gave a presentation on the UNCTAD-UNSD-WTO e-learning courses on trade statistics. He highlighted that the courses are facilitated training (i.e., not purely self-paced); based content (not on instructors); complemented by a face-to-face component; based on blended learning (i.e., not starting from zero) and are offered on a pre-announced annual schedule. The lessons learned from this cooperation are that inter-agency cooperation paid off; face-to-face interaction is an important component; compilers and users have specific needs and skills; and the annual schedule allows for better planning and consistency as countries will plan to use it and put it in their calendar. Moving forward, it was announced that onsite workshops would continue after COVID-19; there will be more interactivity in the lectures; new languages will be offered; and new components in Outlook will be utilized. Finally, Mr. Muryawan reported that a

maturity model for compilation of statistics on trade in services could be developed and that e-learning could be one of the self-assessment tools used in such a maturity model.

36.   Mr. Gerardo Durand of INEGI presented an ECLAC project on strengthening the statistical use of economic administrative registers in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). The conceptual and methodological document were prepared in 2020-2021 and included good practices on the statistical use of economic registers that are applied by 11 participating countries. The objectives of the project include creating an agile and efficient register system to produce combined economic statistics; establishing a common framework in the LAC region for the creation of SBRs; creating a standardized process for linking economic information from the LAC countries, allowing the economic analysis in the region; using administrative data for the detection, updating and classification of statistical units, as well as for the creation and maintenance of sampling frames; and providing solid information for data imputation and validation of business surveys without the need to use additional resources. One of the most important recommendations from the project is the use of unique identifiers. This conceptual and methodological document is already finished by UN-ECLAC in both Spanish and English and it is expected that UNCEBTS members provide input and insights to its content.

Outcome of Discussion

37.   The UNCEBTS welcomed the proposed work programme of the TT-CB and encouraged the TT-CB to continue working on the development of tools to support capacity building on SBRs. It also supported the plan to develop a maturity model and assessment tool for statistics on international trade in services, which could be developed as part of the TT-CB or as a workstream of the TT-ITS. The UNCEBTS also commended the high quality of the current e-learning programmes on international trade statistics. It recommended to put more efforts to promote and advertise the existing e-learning courses on SBRs and trade statistics. One of the most important recommendations is the use of unique identifiers for economic units, and the advantage to disseminate them, so that they can be used by the organizations that have economic administrative registers in order to facilitate information exchange.

Session 9: International guidance on the integration of business & trade statistics

38.   This session was chaired by Mr. Markie Muryawan of UNSD and provided an overview of the on-going work in the development of international guidance on business and trade statistics. The session included three presentations, the first of which was a review of the follow-up work on the Manual on Principal Indicators on Business and Trade Statistics, Vol. 1 by Ms. Nancy Snyder of UNSD. The draft manual was circulated for Global Consultation in January 2022 and was submitted as a background document for the UN Statistical Commission. The Statistical Commission took note of volume 1 of the manual, encouraged the preparation of volume 2, encouraged the UNCEBTS to prioritize the indicators and to assess the possibility of developing global databases for the indicators. Overall, the Manual was well received in the global consultation and does not need major revisions. UNSD is finalizing the Manual with the support of an editorial board to help address the specific comments received. The task teams have discussed potential ways to prioritize the indicators and it was proposed to prioritize the breakdowns of the indicators based on data availability and an understanding of global policy relevance and user

demand. The revised version of the Manual is expected to be finalized by the end of 2022. Proposals for implementation of the Manual include producing promotion material to raise awareness; develop supporting training materials; make an assessment of which principal indicators from the Manual are published by international and regional organizations and identify gaps; and develop a global database for the indicators building on existing initiatives and based on the capacity of countries.

39.   Mr. Houssaine Ouljour of the Office des Changes of Morocco presented the plan for the preparation of Volume 2 of the Manual on Principal Indicators on Business and Trade Statistics. He highlighted the expected milestones, including identification of a set of indicators that could be recommended for countries as a reference list for trade statistics areas; improvement of the interpretation and use of the main indicators presented, with precision on the metadata, in particular the data sources and the calculation methods; organization of a meeting, or short seminar, specific to practical cases with the possible participation of researchers; and the drafting of the Manual itself. Volume 2 will use the same format of the technical sheets included in Volume 1. Some of the potential indicators considered fall into the following categories: foreign trade coverage ratio; trade openness; trade performance; geographic concentration; and trade intensity. In addition, there may be indicators linked to other domains, such as well-being, to cover such themes as affordability of imported goods; share of imported goods in consumption by household type; and product diversification of imports.

40.   Mr. Gerardo Durand of INEGI and Ms. Cristina Neves of Statistics Portugal presented the plans for the preparation of a Manual on Linking Trade and Business Statistics. The Manual is intended to present the main concepts, data sources, and technical considerations to produce statistics linking business and trade for both goods and services, highlighting the use of Micro data linking (MDL) for producing new statistics by effectively using available data sets and the SBRs without increasing the response burden to respondents. Some of the outputs from linking trade and business statistics are Trade by Enterprise Characteristics (TEC) and Services Trade by Enterprise Characteristics (STEC), which describe the structure of trade by characteristics of the enterprises, for instance by economic activity, size, or trade intensity.

Outcome of Discussion

41.   The UNCEBTS welcomed the plans for the finalization of Volume 1 of the Manual on Principal Indicators for business and trade statistics. The UNCEBTS agreed with the proposal to prioritize the indicators breakdowns based on data availability and policy relevance. There was a discussion on the possible overlap of Volume 2 of the Manual on Principal indicators for business and trade statistics and the Manuals on international trade statistics (IMTS and SITS Manuals). The UNCEBTS recommended that technical discussion on the compilation of trade statistics should be elaborated in the trade statistics manuals, while the presentation of the indicators on business and trade statistics can be elaborated in Volume 2 of the Manual on Principal Indicators. It was further noted that TEC and STEC and other indicators that integrate business and trade statistics (rather than indicators focusing exclusively on trade data) should be the focus on Volume 2 of the Manual on Principal Indicators for Business and Trade Statistics. It was also suggested that the link between trade and the environment and climate be included in Volume 2. The UNCEBTS welcomed the proposal to develop a Manual on the Integration of Business and Trade

Statistics and encouraged the authors to coordinate with the other task teams of the UNCEBTS as well as with other international bodies as the WPTGS of the OECD. In the next two years, priority should be given to the update of the trade manuals, which constitute the core of the work program.

Session 10: Access to new data sources

42. The session was chaired by Mr. Hank Hermans of Statistics Netherlands, which included three presentations. Mr. Hermans introduced the session on access to new data sources, highlighting the fact that the use of new data sources is highly important in describing new phenomena, while at the same time trying to keep the administrative burden as low as possible.

43. Mr. Ivo Havinga (UNSD consultant) presented the ongoing work of the UN Network of Economic Statisticians on accessing private data sources for compiling statistics on global supply chains and industry-specific chains. The policy need for more data on global supply chains was presented and producing GVC use cases, based on the GVC satellite accounting framework presented in the UN Handbook on Accounting for GVCs. It was also discussed how to measure intangible assets, such as human capital, technology and data. The UNCEBTS was invited to play a role in the work on GVC case studies.

44. Mr. Ronald Jansen of UNSD presented the work of the Joint Task Team on Global Facilitation of Access to Privately-held Data for Official Statistics of the UN Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics (UNCEBD) and the UN Network of Economic Statisticians. The Task Team aims to: a) negotiate globally access to data sources of private data owners under global arrangements strictly used for statistical purposes b) demonstrate in use cases the relevance of these data sources for statistical purposes to the official statistical community c) advise on institutional arrangements after the completion of successful experimentation and testing. Lessons learned thus far include the fact that there is not enough data available on GVCs and they are only industry-specific; building relationships with private data holders takes time; international data access principles are needed; and the private sector seeks win-win when providing data. Five use cases were identified by the Task team, namely: 1) Horticulture (led by Colombia); 2) Semiconductors (led by Netherlands); 3) E-commerce (led by UK); 4) Retail trade (led by UAE) and 5) Tourism (led by Maldives). Members of the UNCEBTS were invited to express interest in contributing to these case studies.

Outcome of Discussion

45. The UNCEBTS welcomed the organization of this session and recognized the importance of its collaboration with the Network on Economic Statisticians and the UNCEBD in advancing the access to privately held data. It also stressed the collaboration of business and trade statisticians with national accountants is critical to advance the measurement of GVC specific dashboards and intangible assets. With the recognition of the pertinent role of intangible assets in explaining growth and productivity, there is the need for business and trade statisticians to lead and add value in understanding the measuring the intangibles in MNEs, SMEs, and HHEs in driving growth and productivity. The UNCEBTS agreed to actively explore the interest of UNCEBTS members in participating in the Network/UNCEBD GVC use cases being essential for the development for the North-South dialogue on access principles. It was further recognized that the global use case on

industry specific GVCs can contribute the verification and extension of the global and regional group registers of UNSD/OECD and EGR.

Session 11: Global initiative on unique identifiers

46.   This session was chaired by Ms. Ilaria Di Matteo of UNSD. The objective of this session was to follow up to the recommendation of the UNSC. At its 53rd session in March 2022 which "supported the development of a global initiative aimed at improving the availability of unique business identifiers in administrative data sources…and requested the UNCEBTS to further elaborate the initiative and to report to the Commission at its fifty-fourth session, in 2023".

47.   The main objectives of the global initiative are to: strengthen the transparency on businesses in countries by improving their registration; improve the availability of unique business identifiers in administrative data sources in countries; and promote access to and sharing of administrative data for statistical business registers. In addition, in order to better understand globalization and the profiling of the multinationals in their cross border legal ownership structures, it is important to link national unique identifiers with global identifiers, which will in turn facilitate the establishment and maintenance of global registers containing the legal structure of multinationals, in particular the global registers (UNSD-OECD) and the link between business and trade. It will be important to explore how to leverage the existing initiative the Global Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) System which provides global unique identifiers of legal entities and their ownership structure and has a robust infrastructure of the issuance of identifiers with countries.

48.   It is proposed that the initial focus is on outreach to relevant international/regional organizations; coordination of technical cooperation activities aimed at strengthening the administrative registration of businesses in countries and the relevant legislation; development of guidelines and case studies on the importance of a well-functioning registration system in countries for SBRs; and demonstrate through case studies the importance and benefit of linking national identifiers with global identifiers, such as the LEI. The UNCEBTS was invited to provide comments on the draft proposal and to endorse the draft for submission to the United Nations Statistical Commission.

49.   Mr. Ricco Dun of the Global Legal Entity Identifier Foundation (GLEIF) presented the Legal Entity Identifier (LEI), a 20-digit, alpha-numeric code based on the ISO 17442 standard for businesses. GLEIF Level 1 data connects to key reference information that enables clear and unique identification of legal entities participating in financial transactions and Level 2 allows the identification of direct and ultimate parents of a legal entity. By the end of Q2 2022, there were over 2 million active LEIs globally. He also presented the areas of international support for the use of the LEI, including for cross-border payments and for (digital) identity.

50.   Mr. Olivier Aguer of the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) France presented the use of unique identifiers for businesses in France. As early as 1948, INSEE realized the importance of setting up a unique identifier for each business, to allow matching with administrative sources. In 1994, a French law enforced that the inter-administrative ID number, allocated by INSEE, would become Unique and Mandatory in relationships between administrative bodies and businesses. In 2012, the two functions (administrative / Statistical

registers) were separated and created new registers devoted to statistical purposes, called SIRUS. In addition, a legal framework ensures the quality of statistical surveys (obligation to respond, confidentiality of data) and the use of administrative (micro) data and even private sources to produce statistics. The SBR collects other core data from surveys or administrative sources (sizes, turnover, employment, restructuring, etc.). It serves as a sampling frame for 35 statistical surveys; Several business processes use SBR and its unique identifiers to interlink administrative and statistical data bases; and allows the central bank to use it to carry out their activities (i.e., to merge data files, identify units from their files, etc.). INSEE has been the main issuer of LEIs in France since 2018.

Outcome of Discussion

51.   Overall the UNCEBTS welcomed the initiative and highlighted the importance of a system of unique identifiers for business in countries as it allows for a better use of administrative data and facilitate micro data linking. Strengthening the administrative business registration in countries and the establishment of unique identifiers for legal entities was considered an important first step in improving the SBRs especially in countries where the administrative data system for businesses is not well established. The link with global unique identifiers was considered important for the understanding of multinationals.

52.   The UNCEBTS suggested that a side event to the UNSC in March 2023 could be organized to sensitize the statistical Community on the initiative and to draw the parallel with the approach used for civil registration through the UN legal identity agenda.

Session 12: Development of an Integrated Data Infrastructure to link micro data on people and businesses

53.   This session was chaired by Mr. Søren Andersen of Statistics Denmark. The session was organized as a follow-up to the UNSC recommendations to the UNCEBTS "…to share practices on microdata linking and on the development of an integrated data infrastructure to link microdata on people and businesses". Mr. Andersen introduced the topic on an integrated data infrastructure to link micro data on people and businesses, highlighting drivers, such as the fact that sustainability is about interdependencies, both horizontal and vertical integration, cause-effect analysis, and quality assurance. Highlighted the importance of this session in illustrating how dissemination and communication of statistics can deliver on the SDG agenda [in this context – but it could also be many other phenomena] and shed light on the interface between business data and social data.

54.   Mr. Ole Olsen of Statistics Denmark presented Denmark's case of presenting business-related statistics on the SDGs. He stressed the importance of clarifying whether the statistics are comparable across statistical domains (i.e., in terms of coverage, units, thresholds, industry breakdowns, and ownership, etc.). Statistics Denmark has published data on 13 indicators mainly based on UNCTAD core indicators) for 14 types of industry. It also participated in a broader study with 8 countries (including Sweden, Norway, Finland, United Kingdom, Germany, Poland and Netherlands) in which 7 indicators were selected across 14 types of industry. They encountered difficulties in measures of energy, water, sick leave, occupational injuries, and composition of boards.

55. Ms. Cristina Neves of Statistics Portugal presented Portugal's case on a data infrastructure for businesses providing a multidimensional perspective of enterprises' economic performance based on micro-data linking of administrative data and surveys. The focus has been primarily on harmonization across different data sources. The enterprise database's analytical uses still being explored to create a more efficient production of existing official statistics; designing new official statistics which are made available at an early stage as experimental statistics (Stats Lab) (innovation and size; management and performance; new: gender analysis, etc.); and support for scientific research. In particular, experimental data were presented on innovation in firms.

56. Ms. Meryem Demirci of UNSD provided an overview of population and housing census methodologies, and the types of administrative data sources used for population and housing censuses, including population register; address/dwelling/building registers; business registers (Enterprise ID, farm ID); social security/pension registers; tax data; employment records, etc. Country practices for business registers used for censuses show different types of relations between address and building/dwelling and there is no international agreed definition of an address register. The SBR in particular is used for place of work; industry/activity of the establishment in which the job of the employed person (or unemployed person) is located; industrial sector of employment; and the size of the workforce in terms of numbers of persons employed and employees, etc. The process of linking the various administrative sources was also presented and transforming the administrative registers into statistical registers (such as dealing with duplications; conflict resolution; updating and Signs of life method; editing and imputation; and validation of census outputs.

Outcome of Discussion

57. The UNCEBTS discussed how the approach followed by Portugal has contributed to data quality improvements (accuracy and consistency) as well as to reducing response burden. In addition, UNCEBTS considered the nature of SDGs indicators, of which some could be considered outside the scope of official statistics. The UNCEBTS also discussed investigating whether and how housing censuses could be used for business statistics purposes in the area of small, personally owned enterprises. The role of UNCEBTS in relation to standardised integrated data infrastructure was also discussed, particularly in relation to the usefulness of having common guidelines and sharing of knowledge and best practice. In relation to integration of data at more aggregate level, the importance of common groupings, breakdowns and thresholds was emphasised. In relation to integration of person and business data, the need for methodological guidelines and good examples was emphasised.

Sessions 13 and 14: Breakout session on selected cross-cutting topics

58. Sessions 13 and 14 of the agenda covered 3 breakout sessions on: integrating gender in business and trade statistics; Digitalization, productivity and innovation; and business Statistics on the green economy; and a report to the plenary session from each topic. Mr. Gerardo Durand of INEGI Mexico and Ms. Cristina Neves of Statistics Portugal led the discussion on integrating gender in business and trade statistics. UNCEBTS Members commented that there are no national best practices on this topic. Currently, as part of the 2022-2023 activities, the TT-BDDE has carried out meetings with member countries, as well as with UNCTAD to discuss the issue of

business and gender. UNCEBTS members agreed that the feasibility of integrating registers from different domains implies having a robust SBR, as well as high-quality Structural Business Statistics and administrative registers with unique identifiers that allow carrying out the Micro data linking. For this purpose, it is important to promote the use of unique identifiers to link different data sources and the establishment of agreements between agencies and offices, considering their current legislations. There was a discussion on the different concepts of gender and sex and in this regard, and it was considered fundamental to engage with experts in social and demographic statistics and follow international guidelines. This topic was considered a cross-cutting domain and thus the coordination among the UNCEBTS task teams was considered particularly important. It was suggested to make use of the UNCEBTS Wiki and also creating a newsletter.

59.   Mr. Søren Andersen of Statistics Denmark led the discussion on opportunities to better link business and environmental data. A 'tour de table' highlighted that the situation of data; e.g., on energy consumption by businesses, differed enormously, from detailed microdata (for example in manufacturing) to no data on energy consumption at all. Therefore, ambitions to gather more environmental data to complement business statistics (in particular using micro data linking), need different approach for different regions/countries. The same situation applies to data on, e.g., waste and water. The group also discussed business data, which can help to follow the developments (positive or negative) for ecosystems. On this matter, data hardly exist in any consolidated form. To improve the data situation on the environment (also in relation to ecosystems), the UNCEBTS members therefore found it very relevant to follow which data will (or can) be generated at business level, in the reporting of non-financial information. A dialogue with standard setters (GRI, IFRS and others) is therefore of high importance for improving the situation on environmental data – as well as regards business statistics and environmental statistics. Further, a dialogue with Global Compact on what information can be derived from their database could be important for improving the generation of data and the compilation of indications about the development aspects of business activities. This points to the question on how to balance horizontal integration (i.e. also business statistics beyond the needs and interests of environmental accounts) and vertical integration. There will be user needs from policy makers with both angles and new needs – not least with regard to energy and green investments. Also, there is the question of who should drive work on methods and guidelines, including work on concepts and definitions (e.g. how to operationalize 'green economy); classifications (including alternative groupings), and how to retrieve information from reporting enterprises. Better coordination should be sought with the UN Committee on Environmental Economic Accounting (UNCEEA) and in particular with their Business Accounts Working Group which aims at harmonizing business accounting practices and standards with the system of environmental accounting. Finally, it was noted that the UNCEBTS should not forget the need to avoid major new reporting burdens on businesses.

60.   Mr. Hank Hermans of Statistic Netherlands led the discussion on digitalization. A number of practices were shared, including micro database on companies with IT available for researchers in Italy; an innovations survey in Brazil; an IT questionnaire in Egypt; using list of businesses getting R&D credit to select businesses to include in R&D and Innovation Survey in the Netherlands; and linking patent databases to businesses in the United States. The UNCEBTS members agreed that a lot depends on the scope of digitalization because it can be very broad. Innovation is doing business in a new way – but is this the same as IT? How to measure managerial innovation? It was also discussed the need to break out productivity by level of digitalization and

the need for a classification variable for digitalization (e.g., Eurostat Digital Intensity Index based on ICT Survey). The members agreed that there is a need for classifications for digitalization, ICT-intensity, innovation and that more data on use of technology is needed from companies.

Outcome of Discussion

61.   The Chair of the UNCEBTS acknowledged that the cross-cutting issues can be managed in different ways. In order to coordinate the work in an effective way, it was recommended to develop clear work plans for each area and identifying priorities. It was also noted that communication is key, and the Bureau plays an important role in ensuring the coordination of the activities.

Session 15: Roundtable on the use of business and trade statistics

62.   Session 15 consisted of a roundtable discussion on the use of business and trade statistics in an effort to coordinate the horizontal and vertical integration of business and trade statistics. Ms. Alessandra Alfieri of UNSD presented the perspective of the environmental economic accounting community, highlighting that the SEEA has been endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission and is currently in its implementation phase. The environmental economic accounting community is also focusing on building bridges to other communities, including the private sector, with the view of improving environmental data quality and provide contextual information to businesses. UNSD is secretariat to the UNCEEA, which has a Business Accounting Working Group that aims to align private sector initiatives on monitoring and reporting on the environment with the SEEA concepts, definitions and methodology. She indicated that the UNCEBTS could play an important role in providing guidance on the establishment of an information system in support of the compilation of environmental economic accounts starting, for example, with a particular priority area (e.g., energy or water) and identify country practices and ways to improve it. It was noted that there is perhaps a role for the SBR to facilitate MDL and data sharing in this area.

63.   Mr. Herman Smith of UNSD gave an overview of the update to the revision process of the SNA, which will be completed in 2025. The research agenda includes several topics that are relevant for business and trade statistics, such as digital SUTs; treating data as an asset/product in the accounts; cloud computing; digital intermediate platforms; more information on labor and human capital; GVCs, which require more detailed information from businesses on how MNEs are working and their flows between countries; the informal economy; changes in business accounting; the enterprise-centered approach and classification updates.

64.   Ms. Annabelle Mourougane of OECD identified that filling data gaps; improving timeliness; producing more granular data; and helping to undertake multidimensional analyses are the main priority areas of the OECD Statistics Directorate. OECD is looking at nowcasting, using both machine-learning techniques and more traditional approaches, as a complement but not substitute to inform policymakers. She also noted that use of unique identifiers would help a lot with producing more granular data. In the area of digitalization, the Handbook on Measuring Digital Trade is being revised and in the area of environment and productivity, the plan is to refine the methodology to produce measures of sustainable productivity, with a sectoral focus.

65.   Ms. Petra Sneijers of Eurostat reported that Eurostat is focusing on statistics on digital; green; global; and inclusive enterprises (e.g., women, disabled, etc.); and, in addition, resiliency after COVID. More specifically, with respect to digitalization it is planning on assessing the feasibility of collecting data from platforms on other sectors of the collaborative economy using the same approach as for short-stay accommodation; it will further ensure relevance of annual ICT data by developing indicators on the use of data analytics (Big Data), AI and cloud by businesses; it will investigate if alternative data sources can be used; and it will develop approaches for the measurement of digitally delivered services. As to globalization, it is also planning on publishing official statistics on trade in services data by enterprise characteristics (STEC) and by mode of supply (MOS); working on reducing asymmetries of international trade data; and it will collect global value chains statistics (survey on which industry of business functions are being outsourced abroad). Eurostat will provide data for the European Green Deal (which includes circular economy for which information on secondary critical raw materials will become available). With respect to inclusive businesses, it foresees linking with social registers to publish trade in goods statistics by enterprise characteristics (TEC) broken down by gender and businesses owned by male/female. The recent developments resulted in a request for earlier (e.g., industrial production index), more frequent (e.g. monthly bankruptcies and business registrations) and additional data (e.g., on supply chain shortages). Eurostat will try to fulfill these new user needs by using innovative processes (including microdata linking) and new data sources.

66.   Mr. Fernando Cantu of UNIDO reported that UNIDO's priorities are measuring GVCs and disruptions; the role of MNEs; productivity; harmonization, and broader perspectives, not only labor but all factors of production. It is particularly interested in the use of advanced production technologies, including robotics, AI, how to manage inventories, etc. It is also considering the role of people related to industrial activity, not only as employees but as entrepreneurs, traders, consumers, etc. Other priority areas are gender; youth; environment; industry characteristics (especially size); changes in energy intensity in businesses; non-financial reporting on SDGs; data quality; the SBR and use of identifiers.

Outcome of Discussion

67.   The UNCEBTS noted the importance of working together with other statistical domains given the cross-cutting nature of the priority areas. It is also of foremost importance to continue the discussion in order to learn from each other on shared priorities and to avoid duplication of work. It was noted that the topics are increasingly converging. The need for more granular data from businesses was acknowledged by the UNCEBTS, but also the need to not overburden businesses was emphasized and the need to be realistic.

Session 16: Conclusions and Way Forward

68.   The Chair of the UNCEBTS noted that the work plans of each task team will be refined based on the discussion during the meeting. He encouraged the TTs to consider in their work program the new topics like access to new data sources; unique identifiers; exploring new data sources and linking them to the SBR as a first choice (with other alternatives in cases where quality of SBR is lacking); and e-learning/training. The Chair also suggested that for the cross-cutting priority areas, a Task team should be identified to lead and coordinate the activities across the task

teams and with external experts. In particular, for the area of Digitalization and productivity, the TT-G&D was considered particularly well-suited for leading this priority area; the TT-W&S was considered well placed to lead and coordinate the activities for the area of green economy; and finally, the TT-BDDE (together with Cristina Neves from the TT-ITS) was considered best-suited for the topic on mainstreaming gender in business and trade statistics. The need to reinforce communication within the UNCEBTS was also noted. The formulation of new workplans for the task teams will serve as a good opportunity to re-establish their membership and seek interest from members of the Committee. The Chair announced that the Bureau will follow up on these topics in the next Bureau meeting and that the next meeting of the UNCEBTS will be held next year in September 2023.

Annex I: List of participants

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