

Task Group on Measuring e-commerce value (TG-eCOM)

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Chair of TG-eCOM

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➤ Background

- Pandemic drew attention to severe **lack of information on the economic importance of e-commerce** (notably, the scale of transactions it facilitates)
 - increasing **country requests** to UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) for support with e-commerce statistics
 - **Measuring the value of e-commerce** (UNCTAD, 2023)
 - Stock-take of statistics on e-commerce sales by businesses
 - only a **small number of countries** have published figures
 - Analysis of definitions, sources, methods used
 - many **differences, likely to affect completeness and international comparability**
- Through the Working Group on Measuring E-commerce and the Digital Economy (WG-ECDE), and its parent committee, **UNCTAD's 195 member states established a Task Group on Measuring e-commerce value (TG-eCOM)**



➤ Purpose

Central objective:

to develop internationally agreed guidelines and recommendations on measuring the value of e-commerce transactions involving businesses (both sales and purchases) and thereby to support the development of internationally comparable statistics on e-commerce value (and the related concept of digitally ordered trade).

These guidelines will serve as the basis for technical assistance and capacity building in this area.

To that end, the TG is focused on:

- Clarifying the **policy needs** related to the measurement of e-commerce value.
- Detailed discussion on the **strengths and limitations of existing approaches** to measuring the value of e-commerce.
- Considering all relevant aspects – including compiling the value of e-commerce by the **recommended breakdowns** (e.g. according to firm characteristics, transaction characteristics, products, etc.)
- Ensuring that **circumstances specific to developing countries** are adequately considered, and accounted for in the measurement guidelines, including:
 - Important role played by email, messaging apps and social media platforms in facilitating online ordering.
 - E-commerce value of the informal economy. (e.g. individuals selling on social media)
- Discussion on **capacity building efforts**.

➤ Participants

National representatives with **hands-on experience of measuring e-commerce value**

- Mainly from NSOs / other government bodies

Partner **International Organisations**

All Member States were invited to express interest in participating through:

- UNCTAD WG-ECDE
- UN CEBTS Task Teams on Globalisation and Digitalisation; Trade Statistics
- OECD Working Party on Digital Economics, Measurement and Analysis (WPDEMA)
- Other fora

Those **known to publish e-commerce value statistics** were also directly approached to participate



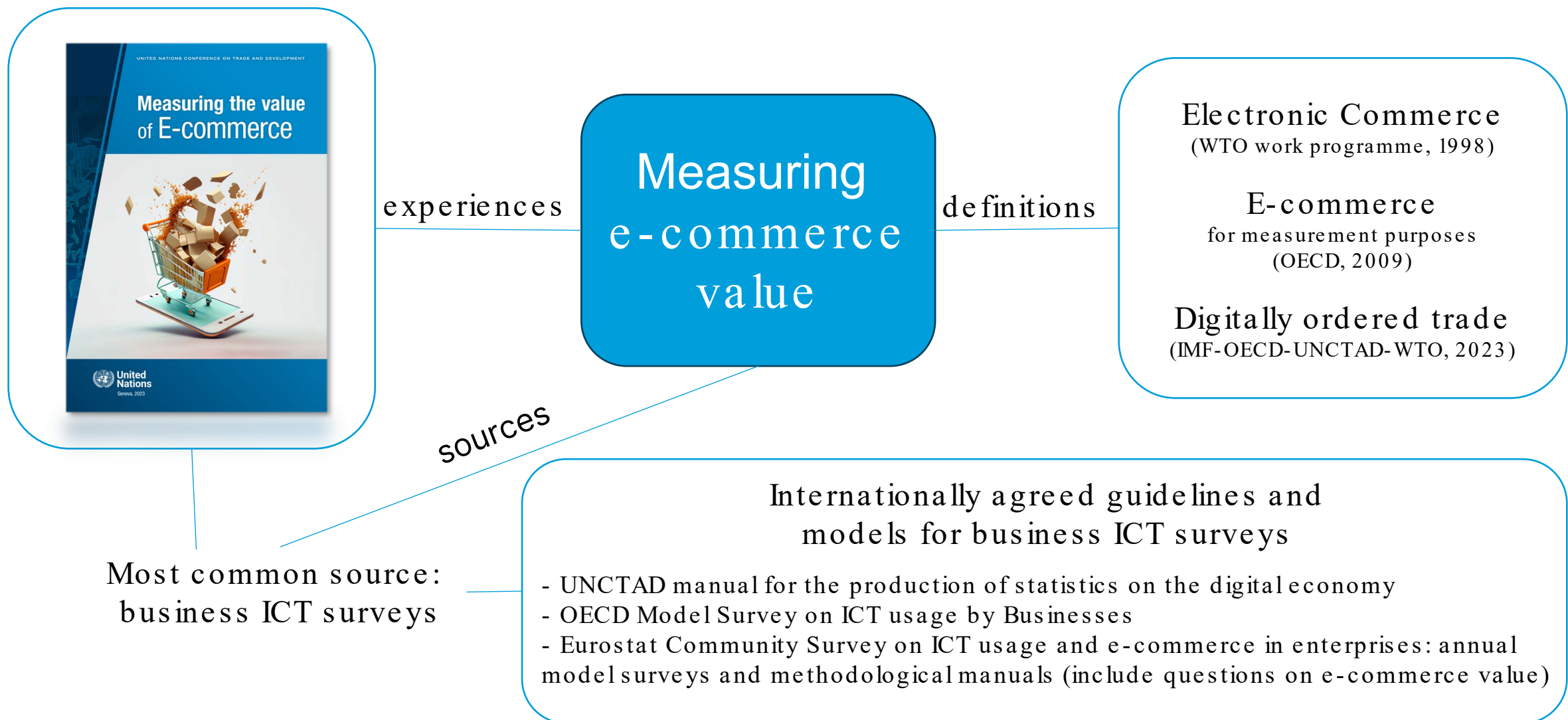
Participants

- Austria (Statistics Austria)
- Brazil (cetic.br)
- Canada (Statistics Canada)
- China (National Bureau of Statistics)
- Egypt (Ministry of Communications and Information Technology)
- Finland (Statistics Finland)
- France (INSEE, Banque de France)
- Hungary (Central Statistical Office)
- Indonesia (BPS)
- Jamaica (Bank of Jamaica)
- Korea (Rep.) (KOSTAT)
- Malaysia (DOSM)
- Malta (NSO Malta)
- Mexico (INEGI)
- Poland (Statistics Poland)
- Singapore (SingStat)
- Slovenia (Statistical Office)
- Türkiye (Turkstat, TICARET)
- Thailand (Electronic Transaction Development Authority)
- United Kingdom (ONS)
- United States (BEA, Census Bureau)
- Uzbekistan (Ministry of Digital Technologies)
- Zimbabwe (Ministry of Industry and Commerce)
- Eurostat
- ITU
- OECD
- UNSD
- UN Trade and Development
- WTO

Chair: TAN Si Yuan, Deputy Director, Business Statistics Division, Singapore Department of Statistics

➤ Foundations

We aren't starting from scratch!



➤ Continuous development process

Topics bundled for discussion:

- User needs
- Scope of e-commerce
- Coverage of e-commerce statistics
- Data sources and collection
- Analysis and dissemination

Quarterly meetings

1. TG **discuss topic** in detail
2. UN Trade and Development Secretariat produce **initial draft guidelines and recommendations** (G&R)
3. Draft G&R **reviewed** at next meeting - along with discussion of the next topic

TG-eCOM online platform facilitates collaboration – including commenting / editing of draft G&R directly in Word.

➔ Full G&R to be submitted to WG-ECDE for approval by end 2025 (planned)

The screenshot shows the Microsoft 365 web portal for the Task Group on measuring e-commerce value (TG-eCOM). The page is titled "Task Group on measuring e-commerce value (TG-eCOM)" and includes a search bar. The main content area features the UN trade & development logo and a large image of a globe. The text on the page reads: "Task Group on measuring e-commerce value (TG-eCOM)", "Guidelines and recommendations for the measurement of e-commerce value", "Draft guidelines and recommendations", and "REVIEW THE DRAFT →". There are also sections for "News", "Terms of Reference", "Meetings", and "Up-coming meetings". The "Up-coming meetings" section lists two events: "Meeting Meeting 2024/3 (online)" on October 1st and "Joint workshop with OECD WPDEMA" on November 15th.

➤ Joint workshop with OECD WPDEMA

- Many points raised by TG -eCOM participants touch, directly or indirectly, on the [definition of e-commerce](#)
 - E.g. in relation to online orders placed through messaging apps or social media (which do not count as e-commerce), on-premises ordering through digital kiosks or QR codes...
- Predecessors to the [OECD Working Party on Digital Economics, Measurement and Analysis](#) (WPDEMA) developed the internationally accepted definition of e-commerce for measurement purposes in the early 2000s; last revised in 2009
- The definition is accompanied by [“guidelines for interpretation”](#) which aid consistent interpretation and application – but which may need updating for technological/social developments
- A [joint workshop of WPDEMA and TG -eCOM](#) in November 2024 will bring together a broad pool of expertise to [discuss experiences and issues](#).
- This will [advance the work of the TG -eCOM](#) and [input to WPDEMA work on the definition](#).



➤ Links to TT-G&D and UNCEBTS

- Communication between the two groups identified that **some work areas proposed by TT-G&D overlapped with those of TG -eCOM**
- The TT -G&D therefore decided to **proceed in partnership** (rather than duplicate efforts)
 - TG-eCOM work has been presented to TT-G&D for input
 - TT-G&D members were invited to join TG -eCOM (common members include CAN, IDN, MEX, GBR and Eurostat)
 - Progress will continue to be shared and TT-G&D input invited

We will continue to update UNCEBTS on the e-commerce measurement work through TT -G&D

