

**12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts,  
27-29 November 2018, Luxembourg**

**Agenda item: 3.f**

**Digital trade – Report of the Inter Agency Task Force on International Trade**

Introduction

The Internet and digitalisation are fundamentally changing the way people, businesses and governments interact. This has led to a new phase of globalisation underpinned by the movement of data across national borders, changing the nature, patterns and actors in international trade in goods and services. While digitally related transactions are not new, the current scale of transactions and the emergence of new (and disruptive) players transforming production processes and industries are unprecedented.

However, despite the growing importance of what is commonly referred to as ‘digital trade’, little empirical and internationally comparable information currently exists, inhibiting a full understanding of the scale and policy challenges of digital trade. This partly reflects the lack of a common understanding and definition of digital trade, but also the conceptual and practical measurement challenges involved.

To fill this gap, and in coordination with the work of the OECD Informal Advisory Group on Measuring GDP in a Digitalised Economy, looking at the impact of digitalisation in the broader economic accounts, the inter-agency Task Force on International Trade Statistics, supported by an Expert Group of more than 20 developed and developing countries and building on two OECD-IMF inventories of measurement practices among more than 70 countries, is currently developing a Handbook on Measuring Digital Trade. A draft for broader international consultation – fully consistent with on-going discussions in the broader OECD Informal Advisory Group - is expected to be circulated by end November 2018, with a view to a final draft being presented at the 2019 meeting of the UN Statistical Commission.

Draft chapters (as below) are available on request and in advance of the broader consultation.

- Chapter 1. Introduction
- Chapter 2. Conceptual framework for digital trade
- Chapter 3. Compiling digitally ordered goods and services
- Chapter 4. Compiling digitally delivered transactions
- Chapter 5. Compiling transactions facilitated by digital intermediary platforms
- Chapter 6. Trade statistics by digitalisation-related product classifications
- Chapter 7. Conclusions and next steps

Documentation

Towards a Handbook on Measuring Digital Trade: status update, Paper prepared by the OECD and the IMF Statistics Department for the Thirty-first Meeting of the IMF Committee on Balance of Payments Statistics (Washington, D.C., October 24 – 26, 2018).

Item for information