

Minutes of the ISWGNA meeting
Friday, November 6th 2009, Paris, France

Participants

OECD: Nadim Ahmad; Esther Bolton (minutes)
UNECE: Tihomira Dimova;
Eurostat: Gallo Gueye;
World Bank: Barbro Hexeberg;
UNSD: Herman Smith (Chair);
IMF: Manik L. Shrestha;

1. Finalisation of the 2008 SNA

Following the release of the 2008 SNA on the update website on 4 September 2009 the ISWGNA found that some extra text may be needed to further clarify the treatment of insurance claims for catastrophic events as capital transfers in line with the conclusions of the 2009 UNSC. As the methodology followed by the USA was accepted as the preferred treatment by the AEG, the ISWGNA requested the opinion of the BEA to provide these clarifications. On advice from the BEA, the ISWGNA subsequently agreed that all insurance claims related to a specific catastrophic event should be classified as capital transfers and information on these claims should be obtained from insurance corporations.

In the event where direct information is not available from insurance corporations the ISWGNA agreed that the 2008 SNA should provide guidance, without being prescriptive, to estimate the capital transfer as the difference between "adjusted claims" (i.e. under normal risk profiles) and the total claims for the period when the catastrophic event took place.

2. Note on changes to the pre-edit version of the 2008 SNA.

According to its undertaking to the Statistical Commission in February 2009 the ISWGNA will prepare a note on the changes incorporated into the pre-edit versions of Vol 1 and Vol 2 of the 2008 SNA that were presented to the Statistical Commission. Eurostat will prepare a draft note by the end of November 2009 for consideration by the ISWGNA.

3. Publication of the 2008 SNA

Following the incorporation of the clarifications on insurance capital transfers and the correction of a number of typo's the document will be submitted for publication. Only at that time an expected date of the availability of printed copies will be known.

UNSD reported that good progress have been made on the French translation by Eurostat, the Spanish translation by ECLAC, the Chinese translation by the NBS of China and that Rosstat agreed to translate the Russian version. Negotiations are still ongoing to obtain services for the translation of the Arabic version. The 2008 SNA will also be translated in Korean, Japanese and Portuguese.

4. Statistical Commission report/Implementation strategy

The ISWGNA discussed the draft report prepared by UNSD and agreed that the main elements should refer to the finalization of the 2008 SNA, progress on the SNA implementation programme and the coordination of research and training. Some members expressed reservations at the incoherent and in some cases unfocused regional implementation plans. The ISWGNA agreed to assess the regional implementation plans in their comments and contributions to the Statistical Commission report with the view to consider if more precise guidance is needed to ensure the success of regional implementation plans. Particular attention would need to be focused on the roles of other international organisations in the context of coordination and the need to ensure that activities conducted by the international organisations are harmonised and not duplicated – this is particularly important in the context of training.

UNSD will submit a revised draft to the ISWGNA for comment and will complete the report by the end of November.

5. Future ISWGNA meetings

Following the completion of the 2008 SNA the ISWGNA agreed to revert back to its quarterly teleconference meetings. It was also agreed that at least one (preferably two) meetings per year should be face to face over a two day period (alternating between Europe and the US) to discuss issues under the research agenda of the 2008 SNA, new research issues, the coordination of the implementation programme etc. The aim of a dedicated meeting is to ensure that new developments are timely recognised and addressed.

6. Coordination of training and research

The ISWGNA recognized that the coordination of training and research are key elements in the implementation of the SNA. The ISWGNA agreed to pursue standardised training material on the 2008 SNA, but recognised that it is resource intensive and may take some time to develop. The ISWGNA agreed to ensure that a mechanism is put in place to coordinate research and to incorporate research results in the international standards or guidance handbooks. Consequently, the ISWGNA agreed that all research on the research agenda of the 2008 SNA should be coordinated by the ISWGNA. The ISWGNA would provide the required elements of the mandates for research to task forces or expert groups who will then, submit their results to the ISWGNA. The ISWGNA will approve (or not) the results as either clarifications or changes to the SNA. In the latter case the ISWGNA will present them to the Statistical Commission for approval.

The ISWGNA agreed that one way in which activities could be monitored to ensure a harmonised approach would be a database showing each organisation's activities and projects. UNSD offered to look into this.

7. Advisory Expert Group

To ensure that there is a mechanism to coordinate SNA research issues and to incorporate research results in the international standards or guidance handbooks, the ISWGNA agreed to form an Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts (AEG) to assist the ISWGNA in evaluating and coordinating SNA research issues. It is foreseen that the AEG would consist

of about 10 national accounts experts with representation from all regions of the world and that it would meet annually, back-to-back with an ISWGNA meeting.

The ISWGNA agreed to present a draft mandate for an AEG to the ISWGNA management group

8. Next meeting

The ISWGNA requested UNSD, as current chair, to arrange the next meeting of the ISWGNA in the first quarter of 2010 and to make arrangements for the first annual ISWGNA meeting in 2010.

9. To do list

Action	Due date	Responsible	Status
Inform Editor on insurance decision	18 Nov	UNSD	
Note on changes to the pre-edit versions	30 Nov	Eurostat	
Statistical Commission report	30 Nov	ISWGNA	
Knowledgebase of ISWGNA activities	Next meeting	UNSD	
Prepare of a draft mandate for an AEG	Next meeting	UNSD	
Annual ISWGNA meeting	2010	UNSD	