

## Draft document for the UNSC meeting in February 2012



# SDMX PROGRESS REPORT

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In 2001, the Bank for International Settlements, the European Central Bank, Eurostat, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations joined together to develop more efficient processes and standards for exchanging and sharing data and metadata for their statistical activities. The World Bank joined the initial group of SDMX sponsor organisations in 2003.
- 1.2 The aim of the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) initiative is to create and maintain technical and statistical standards and guidelines, together with IT architecture and IT tools, to be used and implemented by the sponsor or other organisations dealing with statistical data and metadata. Combined with modern IT technologies, these SDMX standards and guidelines should improve efficiency when managing statistical business processes. After 10 years of SDMX, the SDMX standards and guidelines reached a good level of maturity and are ready for broad implementation.
- 1.3 The UN Statistical Commission has received SDMX progress reports since 2002. The Commission has recognised and supported the SDMX standards and guidelines in 2008 as 'the preferred standard for the exchange and sharing of data and metadata', requesting the SDMX sponsors to continue their work and encouraging national and international statistical organisations to increase the use and implementation of SDMX.

## 2. The SDMX progress in 2011/2012

### 2.1 SDMX technical standards 2.1

SDMX technical standards 2.1 were created and released in April 2011. The SDMX technical standards 2.1 improve technical features relating to web services, structure queries, registry interface reconciliation, code-lists and SDMX data formats. Backward compatibility is ensured as much as possible and conversion issues are explained in the underlying documentation. As next steps the SDMX technical standards 2.1 will be submitted to ISO; also the work on further improving the standards will be continued.

## 2.2 The SDMX Technical and Statistical Working Groups setup

The SDMX Technical Work Group (SDMX TWG) and the SDMX Statistical Working Group (SDMX SWG) were constituted in 2011, with 20 members each. Members are from SDMX sponsoring organisations, national statistical institutes and national central banks for each of the two groups. Both working groups met during the year 2011, to start their work based on an agreed work plan. The work plans of the two working groups are fully consistent with the SDMX Action Plan 2011 to 2015 (see chapter 3). First work results are expected in 2012.

## 2.3 Implementation of SDMX in statistical domains

Further progress was made in implementing SDMX among sponsoring and other statistical organisations. Main new flagship activities for SDMX implementation are the use of SDMX for National Accounts (SNA2008) and Balance of Payment (BPM6) Statistics:

- For both statistical domains SDMX artefacts and Data Structure Definitions for global use will be developed and implemented within the framework of good practice project governance and in close liaison with the SDMX sponsors and other statistical organisations. More detailed project plans were defined with subgroups of international (sponsoring) organisations co-operating with the SDMX work structure on SDMX implementation.

However, the implementation of the SDMX standards and guidelines in statistical organisations is facing resource constraints. Many statistical organisations have expressed the need for more operational SDMX Data Structure Definitions which are to be used for data exchange in statistical domains and which are stored in global SDMX registries.

## 2.4 SDMX Global Conference 2011

The SDMX Global Conference 2011 - jointly hosted by the World Bank and IMF - took place in Washington from 2 to 4 May 2011. The SDMX Sponsors reviewed 10 years of SDMX development and implementation; they also identified main SDMX priorities for the years to come. Many interventions at the SDMX Global Conference dealt with SDMX implementation cases in statistical organisations which are getting more and more frequent. Overall, SDMX seems to be getting more and more into the regular business process of national and international statistical organisations.

For the Summary Report of the SDMX Global Conference 2011 please see:  
<http://sdmx.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/SDMX-Global-Conference-2011-Summary-Report-2-4-May-2011.pdf>

## 2.5 SDMX Capacity building

Knowledge about SDMX is continuing to accrue at national and international levels within each of the sponsoring organisations and their respective constituencies. Seminars and workshops are being held all over the world to discuss how to use and implement SDMX at various levels. SDMX self-learning packages explaining SDMX to various addressees are now available on the SDMX website; additional SDMX videos are in preparation.

### **3. The SDMX action plan 2011 to 2015**

As main follow-up of the SDMX Global Conference 2011, the SDMX Sponsors endorsed the SDMX Action Plan 2011 to 2015. This action plan outlines priority actions planned for the coming years. These actions relate to SDMX implementation, SDMX outreach and training, to the SDMX Content-oriented Guidelines, the SDMX technical standards and to SDMX governance issues.

The SDMX Action Plan 2011 to 2015 is annexed to this document.

The actions are in general to be carried out by the SDMX Sponsoring organisations, the SDMX SWG and TWG or the SDMX Secretariat. The implementation of this SDMX action plan will be closely monitored.

### **4. Summary**

**The SDMX technical and statistical standards and guidelines, combined with IT architecture and IT tools, facilitate the efficient exchange and sharing of statistical data and metadata. SDMX plays a leading role in supporting the integration of statistical business processes. This is gaining importance in many statistical organisations around the world, also as a result of increasing resource constraints.**

**As demonstrated at the SDMX Global Conference 2011, SDMX is increasingly used and implemented in statistical organisations. In the follow-up of this global conference, the SDMX Sponsors endorsed the SDMX Action Plan 2011 to 2015.**