Concept Note

Addressing new developments in Business Statistics

Tuesday, 5 March 2019

8:15 am – 9:30 am

Venue: Conf. Room 7

Meeting organized by United Nations Statistics Division

Business statistics provide information on the structure, economic activity and performance of businesses. Statisticians are increasingly confronted with new measurement challenges in business and trade related statistics with the demand for broader measures of business characteristics and economic performance which integrate the role of technological change and the impact on environment and social responsibility, also including the emergence of new business models of production and new jobs.

With the globalization and digitalization of our economies and their impact on our society and environment, there is a need for an integrated and holist approach to business and trade related statistics linking economy to society and to the environment. This broad approach will allow for the identification and differentiation between categories of firms not based on standard economic classifications but rather on the combination of information based on the link of different data sources, such as exporter/non-exporter, foreign-owned/domestically owned, market/non-market, and the location of the production units in statistical business registers. These additional details for the business in the registers require the development of guidance and best practices in: economic profiling of statistical units; new classifications; data sources on businesses; business registers; and data management. The approach must also provide evidence and support analysis of the drivers of economic activity, such as: research and development; innovation activities; information and communication technology usage; measurement of price indices; and the environmental and social responsibility activities of businesses.

In 2017, the United Nations Statistical Commission (see E/2017/24, decision 48/114) "requested the creation of a committee of experts with balanced geographical representation and with terms of reference to prepare the guidelines for statistical business registers and give guidance on issues of business and basic economic statistics, taking into account the use of administrative data, the choice of statistical units in the context of globalization, and issues related to a large informal sector".

In 2018, a first meeting of the Committee was organized in Mexico with the objective to discuss and prepare the mandate and governance of the Committee of Experts and identify possible workstreams of the programme of work. These recent developments include the proposed establishment of dedicated Task Teams to take the workstreams forward in 2019 and 2020 are submitted for endorsement to the 50th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission.

More specifically, the objective of this side event is to brief the delegates of the Statistical Commission on the mandate and governance of the Committee of Experts, and to illustrate the proposed

workstreams and priority areas of work for the next two years. The proposed five workstreams include: globalization and digitalization (led by Statistics Canada), exhaustive business registers (led by Statistics Netherlands), wellbeing and sustainability (led by UK ONS), business dynamics and demography (led by INEGI), and capacity building (led by Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics).

Draft Agenda

Chair: Mr. Ivo Havinga, Assistant Director, UNSD

Panelists: Mr. Stefano Menghinello, Director of Business Statistics (ISTAT) and Chair of the Committee of Experts

Mr. André Loranger, Statistics Canada

Ms. Amineh Khasib, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics