Presentation
UNSD

Item 14: Meta Data and Data Quality
The United Nations Expert Group on International Merchandise Trade Statistics
First meeting
New York, 3-6 December 2007

Agenda item 14
Metadata and data quality

UNSD Introduction
(by Matthias Reister)
Metadata – current situation

- IMTS, Rev2 recommends that countries publicly disseminate documentation on their sources and methods and 75% of countries confirmed to comply with this recommendation.

- Yet, based on the experience from the UN Comtrade data collection crucial metadata is often very difficult or impossible to obtain – also the majority of countries do not include metadata in their data submissions to international organizations.

- Also, available metadata is often incomplete and at times statistics appear to be not fully aware how international recommendations are implemented.
Metadata
– possible issues for discussion

• Should the international recommendations regarding the dissemination of metadata be strengthened ??

• How could the recommendations on metadata be strengthened ??
Data quality – current situation

• IMTS, Rev2 does not cover the issue of data quality.

• IMTS, Compilers Manual discusses problem areas at Customs (registration errors) and Statistics (processing errors) and makes suggestions.

• National practices to ensure data quality vary significantly, often there is a lack of IT use and a lack of coordination between Customs and Statistics.

   → Clear lack of standards

• International recommendations in other statistical areas such as Distributive Trade Statistics include a chapter on metadata and data quality.
Data quality – possible issues for discussion

• Should IMTS, Rev3 contain recommendations / a chapter on data quality ??

• Should such recommendations/ such a chapter deal with data quality on a conceptual basis and provide for example a quality framework or dimensions and indicators for data quality ??

• Should such recommendations/ such a chapter deal with the practical steps/ measures/ best practices for ensuring data quality in IMTS ??
Thank you for your attention