

Workshop for Developing Countries on the Revision of the International Recommendations for International Merchandise Trade Statistics (IMTS)

Bogotá, 31 March - 3 April, 2009

Institutional arrangements

**Adding a recommendation on the need for establishing and
maintaining necessary institutional arrangements**

Promoting data exchange



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Institutional arrangements

1. Current recommendation(s)

IMTS, Rev.2 **contains no recommendation** regarding institutional arrangements required for the collection of basic information for the purpose of compiling IMTS. However, *International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Compilers Manual* (IMTS:CM) describes various institutional frameworks (IMTS:CM, chapter 2) and indicates some desirable practices in this area. For example:

(IMTS:CM, Ch. 2, para 15) Compilers should establish a **working arrangement** with the organizations keeping records relevant to trade statistics (e.g., records of imports and exports of electrical energy, pipeline shipments of natural gas and crude oil, maintained by specialized governmental agencies). Compilers should also initiate, whenever appropriate, **modifications to national legislation or relevant administrative regulations** in order to establish a solid foundation for enhancing the quality and timeliness of trade statistics. This includes identifying governmental agencies involved in trade statistics and setting up a clear division of responsibility between them.

Institutional arrangements

1. Current recommendation(s) - continued

(IMTS:CM, Ch. 2, para 22) The reliance by the statistical office on data from sources external to itself requires close cooperative relationships with all governmental departments and agencies involved. The statistical office and the customs agency - the largest data supplier - along with other source agencies, should establish a **memorandum of understanding** so that the roles and responsibilities of each party with regard to all aspects of the production and distribution of official statistics are clearly defined. The memorandum should be updated, as needed.

2. Result from the 2006 NCDP Questionnaire

Question :	Yes	No	N/A
Does your office have any memorandum of understanding or any similar working agreement with any of the mentioned agencies?	65.2	28.1	6.7
If you have working agreements with other agencies, does your office regularly meet or consult with these agencies before release of the trade statistics?	39.7	45.4	14.9

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3. Result from world wide consultations

Question 13: Do you agree to include a new recommendation on the need to establish and maintain necessary institutional arrangements to ensure effective compilation of trade statistics?	YES in %	NO in %	No Opinion in %	N/A in %
Replies of 115 countries	87	2	10	1
Developed (34)	88	0	12	0
Developing and transitional (81)	86	2	10	1

4. UNSD observation of wwc result

Comments from 45 countries were received on this question:

-Most countries stress the importance of appropriate legal frameworks and institutional arrangements which clearly define the responsibilities of the various institutions involved and contributing to the compilation and dissemination of IMTS.

-Several countries make reference to existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) in their country and some mention the usefulness of providing best practices.

Institutional arrangements

5. UNSD draft proposal and conclusion of the virtual meeting, Nov. 200

Recommendations contained in UNSD proposal

- > **It is recommended** that the agency responsible for the overall compilation of IMTS should, whenever appropriate, initiate modifications to national legislation or relevant administrative regulations in order to establish a solid foundation for the high quality and timeliness of trade statistics. Applies to
 - (i) the statistical laws and regulations of countries, which govern the compilation of IMTS and specify the rights and responsibilities of the involved institutions and agencies.
 - (ii) the data sources for IMTS are subject to their own laws and regulations, in particular in the case of customs records, the main data source for IMTS.
- > In most countries several institutions and agencies are involved in the compilation of trade statistics. **It is recommended** that the necessary institutional arrangements for the effective compilation of trade statistics are established and maintained by having in place appropriate laws and regulations and by implementing appropriate working arrangements between the institutions involved.

Institutional arrangements

5. UNSD draft proposal and conclusion of the virtual meeting, Nov. 2008

The EG-IMTS

- Endorsed, in general, the recommendation proposed by UNSD, but advised to streamline the proposed text as it is considered as too long and too specific;
- Advised to include a more detailed discussion of good practices in establishing and maintaining institutional arrangements (such as the experience of Mexico) in the revised Compilers Manual.

Institutional arrangements - promoting data exchange

- Internal data exchange - Specification of layout key and data fields
- External data exchange – transmitting or using data to international organizations or trading partners
- Data exchange within a customs union

Thank you for your attention