

Workshop on the Methodology and Data Compilation of International Merchandise Trade Statistics (IMTS)

Phnom Penh, 2-5 February 2010

Agenda item 8: Revision of the international recommendations for IMTS



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41 session of the Statistical Commission (23-26 February 2010)

- The Commission will have before it draft of revised recommendations entitled “International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions 2010” (IMTS2010) for consideration and adoption

In addition the Commission is requested:

- To endorse the IMTS 2010 implementation programme including preparation of the revised Compilers Manual, providing technical assistance to countries and enhancement of the UN Comtrade database to ensure efficient data storage and dissemination at the global level;
- To request that both EG-IMTS and TF-IMTS continue their work aiming, *inter alia*, to further develop the analytical potential of international merchandise trade statistics to more effectively address globalization, climate change and environmental concerns.

IMTS 2010: a 2 year long journey

3-6 Dec. 2007	First meeting of the Expert Group on IMTS (EG-IMTS): The EG-IMTS identified the critical issues for the IMTS revision;
26 - 29 Feb. 2008	39th Session of the Statistical Commission : The Commission endorsed UNSD's strategy to revise the existing recommendations for IMTS and requested that the draft revised recommendations be submitted at its 41 st session in 2010;
May-June 2008	Worldwide consultation: UNSD organized a worldwide consultation with national IMTS Compilers on issues relevant for setting the scope of the IMTS2010: 115 countries participated in the consultation;
5 Nov. - 5 Dec. 2008	First virtual meeting of the EG-IMTS: The EG-IMTS discussed the results of the first round of worldwide consultation and their incorporation into the IMTS2010;
25 Mar. - 21 Apr. 2009	Second virtual meeting of the EG-IMTS: The EG-IMTS reviewed the draft text of the chapters on "Coverage and time of recording" and "Trade System";
27 May - 30 June 2009	Third virtual meeting of the EG-IMTS: The EG-IMTS reviewed the draft text of the remaining chapters;
July-Sept. 2009	Worldwide consultation: UNSD organized a worldwide consultation on the full text of the provisional draft of the IMTS2010. More than 100 countries replied to the consultation paper;
3-6 Nov. 2009	Second meeting of the EG-IMTS: The EG-IMTS reviewed and endorsed the draft of IMTS2010;
23 - 26 Feb. 2010	41st Session of the Statistical Commission: The Commission will have before it for review and adoption the draft of <i>International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions 2010 (IMTS2010)</i> .

IMTS 2010: a 2 year long journey with broad support from countries

- Two rounds of worldwide consultation
 - In 2008 on 17 critical issues which define scope of revised recommendations – 115 countries participated- over 1,000 detailed comments
 - In 2009 on the full draft of the revised recommendations – over 100 countries participated, strongly supporting the provided draft text and the contents of the individual chapters (Countries saw it as a comprehensive and balanced as well as containing necessary updates and new recommendations. At the same time, countries confirmed that the main elements of the conceptual framework should be maintained.)
- 2nd meeting of EG-IMTS in November 2009
 - endorsed the draft text of IMTS 2010 subject to several amendments and clarifications

Overview of revised recommendations

- **Continuity of conceptual framework**

In accordance with the results of the worldwide consultation and conclusions of EG-IMTS the IMTS2010 retains the following previously adopted recommendations:

- definition of the scope of international merchandise trade statistics as recording of goods which add to or subtract from the stock of material resources of a country by entering (imports) or leaving (exports) its economic territory,**
- preference for the application of general trade system,**
- use of the Harmonized System (HS) for basic data collection,**
- use the FOB-type statistical value for exports and CIF-type statistical value for imports,**
- use of the net weight and the WCO quantity units,**
- use for partner country attribution country of goods origin (imports) and the last known destination (exports).**

Overview of revised recommendations

- **New and updated recommendations**
 - ❖ **Update** of the recommendations concerning the scope of international merchandise trade statistics. (Clarifications, separate identification of certain transactions)
 - ❖ **Updated and new** recommendations on valuation (encourages to compile or estimate imports on the FOB basis in addition to the standard CIF valuation; covers valuation of specific categories of goods)
 - ❖ **Updated** recommendation to record quantity data. (recommendation further clarified)
 - ❖ **Updated and new** recommendation for the recording of a second partner country.

Overview of revised recommendations

- New and updated recommendations
 - ❖ New recommendation to add mode of transport as an additional data dimension.
 - ❖ New recommendation on the use of different data sources.
 - ❖ New recommendation regarding the establishment of necessary institutional arrangements.
 - ❖ New recommendations regarding data quality.
 - ❖ New recommendations for comprehensive metadata compilation and dissemination.
 - ❖ Updated and new recommendations on data dissemination. (confidentiality for merchandise trade statistics, time table for data release, revision policy)
 - ❖ New recommendation to promote linking trade and business statistics.

Overview of revised recommendations

- **Responding to the needs of balance of payments and national accounts**
 - ❖ **Separate recording of goods for processing without change of ownership and trade with related parties is encouraged in IMTS2010**
 - ❖ **IMTS2010 recommends symmetrical recording of a number of transactions previously treated differently in export and import statistics (i.e. bunkers and stores)**
 - ❖ **Encouragement to cooperate with BOP/NA compilers with respect to the recording of goods of special interest (i.e. media)**
 - ❖ **IMTS2010, Annex F provides detailed description of conceptual differences between IMTS2010 and BPM6/2008SNA**

Outline of implementation programme

1. Updating the IMTS Compilers Manual and related knowledge base

1. **IMTS Compilers Manual** aims to provide further and more detailed explanation of certain recommendations and practical guidance by describing good practices applicable under different circumstances. (planned for end of 2011)
2. **IMTS knowledge base** will serve as a comprehensive repository of information on relevant concepts and methods as well as contain reference to national practices and the available country metadata

2. Technical assistance

1. tentatively planned to hold two workshops per year and deliver training to countries which need it most by the end of 2012
2. In collaboration with other international organizations

Outline of implementation programme

3. Enhancing the UN Comtrade database

1. Aim to accommodate the new data items already in 2011 for testing purposes (EG-IMTS will provide guidance)
2. increased emphasis on obtaining, processing and making available to users comprehensive metadata and information on special trade flows and transactions.

4. Future research agenda and international cooperation

1. To address imbalances in partner statistics
2. finding innovative methods of linking trade and business statistics in the context of an integrated approach to economic statistics,
3. trade in terms of value added and to clarify the international production chain,
4. good practices in the compilation of the trade indices and various analytical indicators and
5. **Efficient ways of automated data transfer between countries and international organizations.**



Thank you for your attention!