1st Meeting of the Friends of the Chair Group on Economic Statistics
UNHQ, New York, USA, 28 – 30 May 2019

Agenda item 2 b)

**The future design of a system of economic statistics
from the perspective of international agencies**

Eurostat input

Economists, but also other users, request that economic statistics **take into account new phenomena** such as globalisation and digitalisation or encompass aspects of economic well-being and sustainability, and that these are reflected in a timely way in the data. This requires a conceptual update of the manuals and of the relevant classifications, and the collection of new, more granular data.

The UN Statistical Commission has agreed with three System of National Accounts (SNA) priority research areas - globalisation, digitalisation, economic wellbeing and sustainability, and the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA) has launched dedicated work streams on each of them.

Similarly, the Committee of Experts on Business and Trade Statistics (CEBTS) aims to take a holistic approach to business statistics linking economy to society and the environment. Eurostat supports the overall work programme of the group articulated around the following five task teams:

1.   Globalisation and digitalisation

2.   Well-being and sustainability

3.   Exhaustive business registers

4.   Business dynamics, demography and entrepreneurship

5.   Capacity building

Explicit support from the FoCG would help these processes.

Eurostat highlights the importance to focus on the implementation of the most recent recommendations and guidelines issued in the area of business and trade statistics, in particular the work of the Wiesbaden Group on registers. Eurostat also supports the drafting of UN guidelines on Statistical Business Registers in the view of keeping these UN guidelines consistent with European Statistical System (ESS) guidelines and manuals.

In Europe, the ESS has started a review of NACE, its **classification of economic activities**, and supports the revisiting of the relevant global classification (ISIC) to improve its relevance as the economy evolves.

Users also increasingly request an **integrated presentation** of data from different economic statistics domains. The SNA has acted as a central point for organising economic statistics over decades, and should continue to play that role, based on close cooperation and coordination with related statistical domains. Until now there has been a growing number of satellite accounts, which both deepen and extend the SNA core system. As the discussion of a potential future SNA update is underway, an early insight into user thoughts on a future integrated presentation approach would be helpful.

A third request from users is for an **integration of macro and micro data** - many economists work extensively with microdata now and want to link it to existing macro data. Statisticians need to consider how to best serve this approach, and the agenda point on this meeting's agenda represents a good opportunity to start this reflection.