



**REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON INTERNATIONAL MERCHANDISE TRADE STATISTICS**  
**Implementing IMTS 2010 Concepts and Definitions**  
 24-28 June 2019, Johannesburg, South Africa

Draft Concept Note

BACKGROUND

Economic globalization, advancement in technology and the emergence of Big Data present many new challenges and opportunities for International Trade statistics. In order to meet these challenges and measure Trade more accurately, new recommendations for International Merchandise Trade Statistics (IMTS) were adopted by all UN member states through the UN Statistical Commission in 2010 (called IMTS 2010). Countries have been implementing the elements of these new recommendations, notably trade by mode of transport, trade by country of consignment, trade by inward and outward processing, reporting of customs procedure codes, and imports valuation on a Free On Board (FOB) basis.

In addition to these methodological challenges, the expectation and demand of Trade statistics users have increased. Data producers are now expected to offer modern dissemination platforms, relevant analyses and informative visualizations. Trade data producers are also encouraged to implement international standards for Data Exchange (SDMX) and share their data to be published in the global repository of official international trade statistics, the UN Comtrade database maintained by UN Statistics Division.

Finally, in order to support the sustainable development agenda, Trade statistics need to be properly understood in conjunction with other Economic statistics and macro-economic frameworks, such as National Accounts statistics (see the System of National Accounts 2008), Balance of Payments statistics (see BPM6), and statistics of the International Trade in Services (see MSITS 2010). Linking Trade statistics with Business statistics, and alignment across all Economic statistics are essential for measuring the Global Value Chain and for informing policy. The 2012 Guidelines on Integrated Economic Statistics are useful in this regard.

OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

The workshop is a continuation of IMTS e-learning course organised by UNSD and UNCTAD in cooperation with WTO which was held from 25 March to 3 May 2019. The core concepts and definitions have already been covered in the e-learning course. The face-to-face workshop would focus on implementation challenges in countries. The main objectives of the workshop are:

- a. to improve knowledge of latest methodology of Trade statistics;
- b. to discuss and address challenges in data compilation, and to exchange country experiences in dealing with practical issues such as data acquisition, data processing, data dissemination, data exchanges, etc.;
- c. to discuss emerging challenges in Trade statistics such as measuring digital trade, use of Big data; and how to address them;



- d. to establish close cooperation among institutions providing, compiling and using Trade statistics; and
- e. to understand linkages between Trade statistics and other related domains of Economic Statistics.

### PARTICIPANTS

The workshop is intended for Trade statisticians from national statistical offices, central banks, customs administrations and ministries; customs officers; and experts from regional and international organizations. The participants of the IMTS e-learning course will be able to benefit most from the workshop since it draws on the online course and expands into practical issues.

### ORGANIZER

The Workshop is a joint undertaking by African Union Commission (AUC) and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD). The workshop will be hosted by South African Revenue Services (SARS).

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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