

# **International trade statistics:** *achievements, challenges and opportunities*

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# Content

➤ **Achievements**

➤ **Challenges**

➤ **Opportunities**

## Achievements: **more country data are available**

- **Virtually all countries compile some international trade statistics**
- **Availability of detailed country trade statistics improved significantly**

# Achievements: **more country data are available**

- **For example, detailed (commodity/partner) IMTS is available now for about 140 countries/areas for a preceding year by the end of the year, representing more than 95% of world trade while in earlier years only data for about 120 countries were available.**
- **Within 3 years after the end of the reporting period data for more than 170 countries is available in UN Comtrade.**
- **Around 50 countries are able to provide detailed service trade statistics by partner countries/areas. More and more developing countries are in the process of making their national system ready to provide such details in the coming years.**

## Achievements: **improved international databases**

- **UN Comtrade functions as the global database on international merchandise trade. It is the most comprehensive source of official standardized data; available on-line free of charge, user-friendly interface**
- **UN Service Trade is gradually maturing**
- **ITS databases maintained by OECD, WTO, Eurostat etc. Agencies coordinate activities to minimize the reporting burden on countries and ensure consistency of the disseminated data**

# Achievements: **improved methodology**

**ITS methodology is well established:**

- **IMTS - from League of Nations recommendations (1928 Conference) to IMTS, Rev.2 (1998)**
  - **IMTS: Compilers Manual (2004)**
  - **Supplement to IMTS: Compilers Manual (2008)**
- **IMTS 2010**
- **BPM5 and MSITS (2002)**
- **BPM6 and MSITS 2010**

# Achievements:

## Working together

- The UN Expert Group on IMTS
- The OECD Working Party on ITS
- TFIMTS (convener- WTO)
- TFSITS (convener-OECD)
- The IMF BOPCOM
- UNSD workshops on IMTS and SITS
- Workshops and seminars organized by the IMF, Eurostat, WTO and WCO
- ITC – helps to collect data and promotes use of trade statistics for policy and business needs

# Challenges **for international organizations**

- **Provide effective assistance to countries on the compilation issues**
  - **UNSD ITS knowledge base - 2010**
  - **IMTS2010: Compilers Manual – the provisional draft by the end of 2011**
  - **BPM6: Compilers Guide – 2011/2012**
- **Conduct training workshops in a more coordinated manner focusing on countries which need help most**
- **Improve databases to accommodate new data and metadata; continue synchronize them as much as possible**



# Challenges **for countries**

- ➡ **Adjust national ITS programmes to implement IMTS2010 and MSITS2010 to the maximum extent possible**
- ➡ **New data and metadata to compile (attention – IMTS and SITS are not mutually exclusive)**

Example: **Goods for processing/Manufacturing services on physical inputs owned by others**

# Challenges **for countries**

## IMTS examples:

- ➡ Additional partner country attribution
- ➡ Encouragement to compile imports FOB
- ➡ Trade by mode of transport

## SITS examples:

- ➡ EBOPS/partner country
- ➡ FATS

# Opportunities

## New recommendations will help to:

- **Promote IMTS and SITS as multipurpose statistical domains**
- **Make ITS more policy relevant and useful for analysis of globalization**

# Opportunities

- **Improve institutional arrangements in countries between National Statistical Offices, Customs Administrations, Central Banks, Ministries of Trade/Economy etc. – MoUs**
- **Strengthen cooperation between compilers of IMTS and SITS**

**Compilers of IMTS and SITS should see themselves as partners in a common effort and to streamline/harmonize their data compilation and data dissemination practices**

# Opportunities:

- ➡ **Mainstream quality assurance and quality reports**
- ➡ **Linking trade and business statistics – an opportunity to enhance the analytical value of the data**

**Thank you for your kind  
attention!**