The Global Forum on Trade Statistics brought together close to 200 participants, including policy makers, economists, trade analysts and, of course, many statisticians. The Forum identified policy needs, especially regarding the need for more detailed data on trade in services, described research issues in the area of global value chains and trade in value-added, and offered solutions in connecting trade and global business statistics. The Global Forum, which was organized jointly by UNSD and Eurostat in collaboration with WTO and UNCTAD, took place from 2 to 4 February 2011 at the WTO in Geneva, Switzerland.

The outcome of the Forum consists of (i) an Annotated Vision Statement (see box on page two), (ii) the background document ‘International Trade Information Systems in 2020’, (iii) an outline of a proposed compendium on International Trade and Global Business Statistics, and (iv) a report which contains brief illustrations of all presentations during the six sessions. The detailed report as well as all other outcomes are available on the Global Forum website at: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/s_geneva2011/outcome.htm. Below some highlights of the opening session of the Global Forum are presented:

**Political leaders expressed their urgent need for more informative trade statistics**

In the opening session, political leaders from WTO and UN, as well as leaders in trade analysis, research and statistics gave their views on the most prominent and urgent trade issues and their corresponding data needs. In his opening statement, Mr. Alejandro Jara, Deputy-Director General, WTO, stated that the concept of comparative advantage in final goods, as developed by Ricardo, is no longer fully relevant to explain trade between countries. We need to have information on the inter-connectivity of national economies, not only through high frequency trade data but also through linking firm activity (production) with export activity (trade).

Similarly, in a video message, Mr. Jomo Kwamé Sundaram, Assistant Secretary-General of UN/DESA, stated that trade patterns have moved from country specialization in types of goods to intra-firm/network specialization in tasks, with the South greatly expanding production of manufactures. Further, the changing patterns of trade and production have important implications for trade and industrial policies in the broader context of development strategies. Current statistical data are deficient for international trade in services from the point of view of both analysis of such trade and use by negotiators.

In his keynote speech, Dr. Supachai Panatpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD, stated that statistics are very important as basis for econometric models and that economists cannot develop and prove their theories if they lack the appropriate data. Commodity prices are high again. To properly analyze these kinds of new trends, there is a need for the right data on trade and commodity prices, and for data on inventories of commodities. Other challenges for trade statisticians are the differences in mirror statistics between final goods, as developed by Ricardo, is no longer fully relevant to explain trade between countries. We need to have information on the inter-connectivity of national economies, not only through high frequency trade data but also through linking firm activity (production) with export activity (trade).

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OUTCOMES OF GLOBAL FORUM ON TRADE STATISTICS

(Continued from page 1)

trading partners, the lack of data on trade in services and a better measurement of multi-national enterprise statistics.

Panel Discussion on Measuring Global Trade – Do we have the right numbers?

In his opening remarks the moderator Mr. Walter Radermacher, Chief Statistician of Eurostat, stated that we should get better data for trade in services as we already have for trade in goods. The challenge is to find a smarter way of collecting services data. Further, a shift in paradigm is needed not only to observe the economic activity from the perspective of the national territory, but also from an international perspective. For such a purpose there is a need for connecting international transactions with other economic statistics, like trade in relation to environment or to energy statistics.

Mr. Enrico Giovannini, President of ISTAT, the Italian Statistical Office, pointed out that we need to have the right vision. The background document ‘International Trade Information Systems in 2020’ is a good starting point. In terms of what needs to be done he mentioned, among other things, the development of an integrated data warehouse linking trade with other economic statistics as the right way forward; further, national authorities should legalize institutional arrangements on cooperation in trade statistics and the measurement of quantities, prices and volumes should be improved.

Mr. Aaron Sydor, Deputy Chief Economist, Canada, pointed out that, while analyzing trade issues, we encounter many data gaps; for instance, for statistics on international trade in services there is an apparent lack of detail on modes of delivery, a lack of country detail, and a lack of matching between the BOP service components and industry categories; other gaps that exist relate for example to intra-firm trade and value-added measures of trade.

Prof. Gary Gereffi, Duke University, Durham, USA, explained that the global value chain (GVC) framework was developed over the past decade by a diverse interdisciplinary and international group of researchers who tracked the global spread of industries and their implications for both corporations and countries. Global value chain analysis provides both conceptual and methodological tools for looking at the global economy; either with a focus on lead firms and inter-firm networks, using varied typologies of industrial “governance” (top down) or with a focus on countries and regions, which are analyzed in terms of various trajectories of economic and social “upgrading” or “downgrading” (bottom up).

Vision of the future of international trade statistics

Responding to demands of policy makers for more information on international trade and its relation to global value chains, employment, environment and the interdependence of economies, the participants of the Global Forum on Trade Statistics identify the following points of improvement.

Improve the relevance of international trade statistics by connecting trade information and integrating it with its economic, social, environmental and financial dimensions while minimizing the response burden.

Improve the statistical production process by better defining and organizing the co-operation among national stakeholders

Improve international classifications and correspondence tables relevant for research on international trade and globalization, such as research on trade in value added, on global value chains and on outsourcing of business functions.

Further details on the forum outcomes are available online:
The following analytical tables on international merchandise trade statistics have been updated since the last issue of this newsletter. They are published in the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics (MBS) and are also available online at: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/imts/analyticaltradetables.htm

### Analytical Trade Tables Published in the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics

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<td>Manufactured goods exports: unit values, volume indices and value</td>
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The fourth edition of the Annual Totals Table (ATT) has been issued and is available at: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/imts/annual%20totals.htm. The ATT provides annual totals of imports and exports for all countries for the years 2000 to 2009 as far as such data are available for publication. The ATT is an effort to reconcile and explain any differences in the merchandise trade data published by UNSD and an important tool to ensure the quality of the data published on UN Comtrade. A reference and link to the Common Dataset (CDS) at WTO is provided.

Table: New data fields following the adoption of IMTS 2010 (include if already available)

| Second partner country or area | In national nomenclature; country of consignment for imports and country of consignment (destination) for exports |
| Second value for imports       | In national currency or US dollars; FOB for imports |
| Mode of transport              | The means of transport used when goods enter or leave the economic territory in the encouraged nomenclature provided in IMTS 2010, para. 7.2 or national nomenclature |
| Custom procedure code (or applicable transaction code) | Code of the customs procedure applied to individual transactions by customs; any applied procedure or transaction code if customs procedure codes are not available or if additional codes are used |

**UNSD DATA REQUEST 2011 – NEW DATA FIELDS**

In February 2011 UNSD sent out its annual data request to non-OECD countries (OECD is requesting and sharing with UNSD the data for its member countries). The data request is asking for annual but also for monthly and quarterly (if only quarterly data is available) data and the inclusion of four new data fields according to the new recommendations for merchandise trade statistics (IMTS 2010) if such data is available. These new data fields are (i) Second partner country or area, (ii) Second value for imports (FOB), (iii) Mode of transport and (iv) Custom procedure code (or applicable transaction code) – see table below.

**FORTH EDITION OF THE ANNUAL TOTALS TABLE HAS BEEN MADE AVAILABLE**

The fourth edition of the Annual Totals Table (ATT) has been issued and is available at: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/imts/annual%20totals.htm. The ATT provides annual totals of imports and exports for all countries for the years 2000 to 2009 as far as such data are available for publication. The ATT is an effort to reconcile and explain any differences in the merchandise trade data published by UNSD and an important tool to ensure the quality of the data published on UN Comtrade. A reference and link to the Common Dataset (CDS) at WTO is provided.

**INTERNATIONAL MERCHANDISE TRADE STATISTICS: CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS (IMTS 2010) SUBMITTED FOR REPRODUCTION AND TRANSLATION**

IMTS 2010 has been submitted for reproduction and translation. It has been carefully edited and an index has been added. This final version is available on the UNSD website at http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/EG-IMTS/EG-IMTS%20web%20announcement.htm. The publication is expected to become available in the coming months.

**COOPERATION WITH COUNTRIES AND AGENCIES:**

**RESULTS OF FIRST VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE EG-IMTS ON THE UPDATE OF THE IMTS COMPILERS MANUAL**

In its first virtual meeting on the update of the Compilers Manual which took place from 12 January to 28 February 2011 the Expert Group on International Merchandise Trade Statistics (EG-IMTS) overall agreed with the annotated outline and the proposed contents of the individual chapters of the Compilers Manual, subject to several amendments and clarifications. The report of the meeting is available at: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/EG-IMTS/EG-IMTS%20web%20announcement.htm.
PROGRESS IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE STATISTICS - SIDE EVENT DURING THE 42ND SESSION OF THE STATISTICAL COMMISSION


RESULTS OF THE MEETINGS OF THE EXPERT GROUPS ON TRADE STATISTICS, LUXEMBOURG, 28 - 30 MARCH 2011

The meeting of the Expert Group on International Merchandise Trade Statistics (EG-IMTS), which took place from 28-29 March 2011 in Luxembourg focused on the implementation of IMTS 2010 and discussed the drafting and various specific technical issues of the IMTS Compilers Manual and UNSD’s request for new data elements to be provided by countries, in particular the recording and provision of customs procedure codes and the country of consignment. The subsequent joint session with the Task Force on Statistics of International Trade in Services, which met in parallel, discussed the follow-up to the Global Forum on trade statistics, the vision paper “International Trade Information Systems in 2020” and the proposal for a compendium of relevant practices and examples in linking trade and business statistics.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

WORKSHOPS ON IMTS PLANNED FOR 2011

During 2011 UNSD considers conducting at least two workshops on IMTS implementation in the second half of 2011, one for countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia and a second one for countries of Eastern/ South-eastern and Southern Asia. Full details will become only available later in the year.

EDITORIAL NOTE

The Trade Statistics Newsletter is a quarterly publication prepared by the International Merchandise Trade Statistics Section of the United Nations Statistics Division — Department of Economic and Social Affairs. This Newsletter is not an official document of the United Nations nor does it express the official position of the United Nations. Editorial team: C. Sean Lovell and Matthias Reister.