

Report of the meeting of the Task Force on Statistics of International Trade in Services (TFSITS)

10th November 2011 - OECD Paris, La Muette

1. Welcome and Opening

1. The Chair (OECD) opened the meeting noting that an important objective of the day was to agree on the terms of reference and the composition of the expert group that would elaborate the MSITS compilation guide. Other important topics include the coordination of technical assistance and the harmonization of Trade in services statistics across international databases. A presentation on linking FDI statistics and their impact in terms of economic activity (FATS) was also on the agenda (attached as annex 1).

2. Newcomers to the Task force were introduced. These comprised Paul Farello (BEA) replacing Robert Yuskavage who had moved to another position, as well as Satoru Hagino (Bank of Japan) who was being detached for two years at the OECD, Markie Muryawan and Mina Mashayekhi (UNCTAD) and Karo Nuortila (Eurostat).

2. Adoption of the agenda

3. The agenda was adopted

3. Approval of the report of the last TF meeting in Luxembourg 28 & 29th March 2011.

4. The report was approved.

4. A progress report on the harmonization and integration of FDI and AMNE statistics (OECD).

5. Ayse Bertrand from the OECD Directorate for Financial Affairs (DAF) presented the exercise of reconciliation of FDI and AMNE statistics, which primary objective is to improve the analysis of multinational enterprises in the global economy. It was noted that in order to achieve this objective, it is necessary to reduce recognized methodological divergences and inconsistencies that may exist between the financial and economic measures of multinational enterprises and to propose a comprehensive analytical framework in the form of building blocks. This research work is also likely to contribute to FSB/G20 Data Gaps exercise (recommendations 13 & 14 relating to cross border risk management of non-bank financial and non-financial enterprises). A focus of the exercise could be to collect information on total assets through FDI information; "total assets" is one of the noncore FATS variables as recommended by the Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services (MSITS 2010).

6. The Banca d'Italia representative congratulated the OECD for the initiative and the work done so far, noting that the report was very clear and informative. He underlined the strong synergies possible between FDI and AMNEs; the streamlining of concepts and definitions, as it was very well done in the framework of the OECD initiative, was a necessary first phase, that could be followed by work about possible efficiency gains from a data collection standpoint, in survey approaches at the national level. The Central Bank of Brazil representative also underlined that the paper was very informative and confirmed that FDI surveys were currently the most viable solution to collect FATS data, although not as thoroughly as desired. He however underlined that a phased approach to data collection was appropriate noting the challenge getting data from non-financial institutions. OECD noted that some feasibility study was envisaged and the suggestion was a priori to conduct combined FDI and FATS surveys; the FDI community would also be contacted to understand which variables are of the most interest to users. In response to the UNSD asking how this work relates to the new IMF's Coordinated Direct Investment Statistics (CDIS), OECD replied that the data collection performed at OECD was by partner and industry (the latter not being covered by CDIS). It was explained that the aim of CDIS is to reduce the asymmetry in inward and outward FDI and to improve FDI statistics worldwide. IMF noted the ongoing cooperation with OECD on this matter and flagged that the OECD Benchmark Definitions were cited as reference on the IMF CDIS website. CDIS had been endorsed by the IMF Committee on Balance of Payments Statistics (BOPCOM) and is an annual exercise with a worldwide coverage.

7. The Task Force welcomed this OECD initiative aimed at linking FDI and the activities of AMNEs and focused on total assets in a first stage. The project will include some feasibility studies - interesting in the context of the MSITS compilation guide - with relevant countries that are willing to start with FDI and FATS data collection. An updated report would be submitted by OECD to the Task Force.

5. Coordination of technical assistance

a. Report on coordination of technical assistance (WTO).

8. WTO presented the proposal that was prepared jointly with ITC and UNCTAD underlining that an additional step had to be taken on the matter of coordination of technical assistance. The proposal is that WTO would coordinate the technical assistance in trade in services, which means that WTO would gather information regularly from all partner agencies on their activities, create a "catalogue" of technical assistance/capacity building activities and make this information available on the Task Force website. Also a roster of possible and available experts/consultants would be maintained. WTO will prepare a report and present it at the next Task Force meeting.

9. UNCTAD stressed its support for the initiative and informed the Task Force about a 3-year technical assistance project for Union Economique et Monétaire ouest-africaine (UEMOA) countries¹. It was noted that Eurostat and UNCTAD are discussing possibilities to build an e-learning platform on trade in services statistics for MEDSTAT countries in three languages: English, French and Arabic. In addition, ITC may be able to allocate funds to hire consultants in the field of trade in services statistics to work with some developing countries. WTO informed the TF that it had been organizing awareness-raising seminars on the importance of TIS and GATS arrangements and had also been involved in technical assistance organized by other IOs.

10. UNSD expressed its support for the initiative to coordinate technical assistance. UNSD asked if UNCTAD was only supporting the UEMOA countries and not the other members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).² UNCTAD confirmed, that the objective of the project was to implement and develop improved data collection strategies in UEMOA countries only. UNSD further asked if the overall initiative to coordinate technical assistance could also cover a review of how the current activities are carried out and identify what could be improved. UNSD suggested that WTO conduct a small survey to identify which national agencies were currently providing or benefiting from technical assistance on trade in services statistics.

11. The Central Bank of Brazil expressed support for the project explaining that the initiative would help avoid overlapping Technical Assistance initiatives. Maintaining a roster of experts would be important, among other reasons for following up on the implementation of recommendations, notwithstanding the current difficulties in finding qualified experts. He noted E-learning might not be an effective tool for many developing countries, which usually profit significantly from exchanging experiences and discussing challenges with their counterparts from other countries.

12. Eurostat expressed full support for the initiative noting Eurostat mostly focused on neighborhood area, Balkan countries. IMF also expressed full support and underlined the need to coordinate efforts. IMF has a roster of experts, some of whom conduct work in the services area. UNSD expected as positive outcome of putting all the activities together that duplication can be avoided and follow-up work be reinforced. UNSD usually organizes regional seminars but noted that seminars at the national level could sometimes be more effective, especially as follow-up activity. UNSD also underlined the importance of ensuring that the right persons attend the meeting given the objective of the activity,

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¹ Member countries of Union Economique et Monétaire ouest-africaine (UEMOA) : Bénin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinée-Bissau (depuis le 2 mai 1997), Mali, Niger, Sénégal, Togo

² Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinee, Guinee Bissau, Libéria, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo.

as international activities tend to attract mostly senior level staff. UNSD stressed further that a list of trade in services experts is also maintained by UNSD.

13. OECD expressed its support for the project and informed the TF about the “Development Strategy” for consideration by council next spring and inclusion in the program of work as a major horizontal project for 2013-14 and beyond. One of the four pillars of the strategy is “measurement,” and the OECD Statistics Directorate co-chairs this pillar with Paris21. One of the proposals of this pillar is that the OECD would become more actively engaged with Paris21 in supporting capacity development where the OECD has a comparative advantage. This would be done in coordination with the other relevant International Organisations that are also members of the Paris21 consortium.

14. The TF welcomed the ITC-UNCTAD-WTO proposal on coordination of Technical Assistance, and this should also cover the suggestions made by UNSD. It also agrees that WTO should act as a coordinating body. Task Force members will send relevant information that they know of by the end of November to WTO.

b. Upcoming seminars and expert groups (UNSD).

15. The UNSD reported it was combining trade in goods and services in all of its training activities as a matter of principle and as a first step towards implementation of the vision 2020. Training activities could be skewed towards merchandise trade or skewed towards elements of trade in services, but there should always be an element covering both areas. In 2012, a workshop is planned in the Caribbean area (CARICOM) on trade and tourism statistics. A larger seminar is planned in Latin America organized with ECLAC and ALADI, covering again both trade in goods and services (customs, NSOs, CBs). Further activities are proposed in the ESCWA region together with the Arab Institute for Research and Training in Statistics and a seminar for francophone African countries in Morocco organized with Morocco, France and the Medstat III project.

16. WTO informed the TF about a request from the Bahamas for a national seminar on trade in services statistics and creative industries. This was a follow-up to a CARICOM COTED ministerial meeting where the development of the creative industry was identified as a priority (within this meeting, and supported by material provided by ITC, UNCTAD, WIPO and WTO, statistics were seen as an important component to study and analyze these future developments). The WTO Secretariat responded positively to the Bahamas request but decided that it would be more efficient to convert this into a regional event (most probably in Barbados) to cover all CARICOM countries. Given the plans of UNSD, both organizations agreed that they should collaborate to avoid any overlap in the activities for these countries. UNESCO would be involved given its interest and expertise on cultural statistics.

17. Eurostat informed the group that the next Travel workshop would take place in Ireland on 27 -28th June 2012. The members of the Travel workshop decided to focus during the 3rd meeting on

methodological issues, decreasing the asymmetries on the travel item and to capture several developments in compilation and collection methods e.g. mobile phoning as well as credit card data.

Eurostat informed the group that a first Workshop on BoP and ITS and a Second Workshop on FDI and FATS will take place consecutively in the week 48 (28.11-2.12.2011) in Luxembourg under the framework of the IPA 2009 multi-beneficiary statistical co-operation program chaired and organized by ICON. Eurostat informed the group about the Technical Visit of a delegation of the Chinese Ministry of Commerce (MofCom) on 23 November 2011 morning.

18. The Bundesbank representative reported that still many seminars were being conducted on trade in services and balance of payments in general. Nowadays more requests were received by countries on specific subjects like transportation, travel, FISIM or processing. The seminars were in the meantime mostly held on a bilateral basis. Bundesbank trainings are conducted mainly in Frankfurt to make use of as many experts as possible. She noted that her institution is for the time being reluctant to send experts to other countries for a longer period because of resource constraints.

19. The Banca d'Italia representative noted that in June 2011 his institution had organized a two-day meeting in the framework of the MEDSTAT III project, funded by the EU, focused on Italy's brand new balance of payments data collection and compilation system. He also noted that there was a quite effective long term "twinning" cooperation going on with the Bank of Albania, aiming at providing full range assistance in the development of a new balance of payments data collection system in Albania. The general tendency to cut mission budgets within his institution was recalled.

20. The Central Bank of Brazil representative noted that a similar cooperation project was taking place between his institution and Surinam for BOP and was working well.

21. The Central Bank of Japan representative noted that her institution was often sending experts for regional seminars in the Asian region. Bilateral requests are also often accepted but there is an issue now with the lack of resources for the BPM6 implementation. Annual bilateral meetings with China's SAFE and with institutions responsible for BOP were cited as well as meetings with institutions like the Bank of Russia.

22. The USBEA representative reported a similar experience related to assistance in that meetings with country delegations visiting BEA are organized on a bilateral basis and cover topics suggested by the visiting delegations. He noted that BEA could provide assistance as appropriate, but its involvement would depend on resource constraints, particularly if travel was involved.

6. Harmonizing Trade in Services data across International Organisations databases (OECD,WTO).

23. WTO introduced the paper, which was jointly prepared with OECD, noting that this initiative is a follow-up to the March 2011 meeting of TFSITS. The two organizations were asked to take the lead in drawing up proposals to improve transparency in what is published by each agency as well as

the consistency of international organization's trade in services databases. The paper draws on recent work of the Task Force on comparisons of data across international databases following a common taxonomy. These comparisons highlighted some large differences and the need for international organizations to cooperate more closely to reduce these differences to the extent possible. The data collection system (either primary or secondary) of International Organizations is described. The actions taken to address the issues arising from multiple organizations collecting data on trade in services are presented. These actions include the maintenance by UNSD of a table, "the Matrix," that summarizes the status of the data collection performed by the International Organizations and displays links to databases, update timetables, availability of metadata etc. Second, the paper shows that increased cooperation and coordination of data collection and publication between international data collectors would improve the situation and proposes that all international databases should refer to the UNSD table so that users are informed about the differences between the data sources available to them. Third, it is proposed that the comparison exercise should be continued. Fourth, the paper outlines the benefits of better cooperation and sharing of work for the collection of data, metadata and methodology. Finally, in particular to reduce the reporting burden on countries, international organizations should limit (streamline) the countries' responsibilities for submitting data. To do so countries could submit their data files (and metadata), using SDMX if possible, through the use of a central repository. Access to this central repository should be made available to all relevant international/Supranational organizations. The Task Force on Statistics of International Trade in Services would coordinate these efforts.

24. The Bundesbank representative confirmed that different data were shown in different international organizations datasets. She referred to the new EU scoreboard initiative, which intends to maintain a variety of economic indicators (involving the current account) and will be based on long time series. This will lead to the need of extensive revisions in different databases to make sure that the same information is used in the political discussions. Some comparisons with the IMF database showed that IMF has longer time series in its database but that these time series were not always consistent over time as they were not updated with the latest data. She flagged that on the other hand, there was a good experience with the annual trade in services OECD-Eurostat common questionnaire and that data following the national concept would be sent to Eurostat so there would be no inconsistency any more between the national data and the data used in the OECD publications.

25. Eurostat noted the difficulty of maintaining the consistency between quarterly and annual data when different institutions are providing the data. In some cases it happens that different institutions do not have the same revision policies, methodology and the same confidentiality rules applied on quarterly data and on annual data. She mentioned the need to improve the communication with IMF as regards trade in services (mainly for back data) and noted that following the new production cycle EU revised data had been received and countries had been very cooperative in this exercise.

26. The US BEA representative informed the Task Force that the most detailed annual data on US trade in services, which BEA releases in October each year, become inconsistent with revised quarterly and annual data that BEA releases in June each year as part of its annual revision of the US international transactions (BoP) accounts. He added that BEA is currently modernizing its statistical production IT system. The resulting system will be more robust and could allow BEA to reduce the period of time the two sets of services data are out of sync.

27. UNSD underlined its willingness to cooperate in the work leading to the harmonization of trade in services data and gave some language suggestions to the authors (i.e. last part of paragraph 36 should be removed). Priorities were: to include some practical example under paragraph 13; to put the focus on the harmonization of annual TIS data; and to work on the harmonization of exchange rates.

28. IMF flagged the importance of metadata along with the data and agreed that providing a link to the UNSD Matrix would be useful for users. It was advised in paragraph 21 to remove the sentence before the last (“no IO...”). The support of SDMX was emphasized as well as the willingness to cooperate in case any issues arise.

29. The Chair suggested some members of the Task Force could visit the IMF in order to discuss and deal with some of the identified differences in time series before the next meeting of the Task Force taking place in March in New York. The suggestion was very much welcomed by the IMF delegate.

30. The Banca d’Italia representative questioned the TF about the central repository, noting that it was a very good solution and suggesting more elaboration on the type of information to be included in the repository and about which organization would be hosting it. UNCTAD noted that data work will be shared and releases will be synchronized with WTO. WTO noted that metadata were as important as data and flagged a risk that new metadata sometimes overwrites the old resulting in loss of metadata history (e.g., identification of breaks in series), which could adversely affect user comprehension of the series under consideration. This historical perspective should be kept in published metadata. It was stressed that examples of taxonomies were already presented in the EDG. OECD noted its intention to merge its trade in services by category and partner country databases to facilitate users’ understanding of the data presented.

31. The Task Force welcomed the proposal jointly presented by WTO and OECD. The harmonization exercise should focus on annual data and Task Force members would share information on the exchange rates used. The authors would revise the paper along the lines proposed. It was recognized that metadata are a central part of the comparison exercise. IO would explore the possibility of linking to the UNSD matrix in the metadata provided with their databases. The new scoreboard exercise led by the EU Commission is likely to highlight more differences between long time series available across International organizations. Some Task Force representatives would go to IMF in March 2012 to discuss this project with relevant staff. The Task

Force will continue promoting SDMX, which is an initiative likely to help partly solving some of the inconsistencies, but recognized that it will not solve all issues identified in the paper. Authors will elaborate on the information that should be included in the repository in terms of data and metadata and on which organisation should host this repository. The existing and future taxonomies would be stored on the Task Force EDG.

7. The implementation and compilation guidance process

a. Setting the stage of the TF discussions regarding Compilation Guidance work.

32. The Chair introduced the discussions by recapitulating the different steps of the Task Force's discussions regarding compilation guidance since the March 2010 meeting in Beirut. Recent positive developments in the cooperation with IMF, (following the presentation of the last Task Force report to the BOPCOM at the October 2011 Moscow meeting) were underlined, in particular that the service chapter and the insurance annex of the BPM6 Compilation Guide had been shared with the Task Force before its present meeting. It was noted that this positive development, as well as the conclusions on the Task Force discussions regarding technical assistance, would need to be reflected in the draft report to UNSC. With respect to the expert group (see section b below), the list of countries that could possibly provide a representative to serve on an expert group responsible for the TIS compilation guide—initially proposed by UNSD and commented on by the Task Force in June 2011—was presented to the group. The Central Bank of Brazil advised to also consider the Central Bank of Russia, given their expertise in ITRS. OECD confirmed the potential interest of the Bank of Russia to be involved in this work. Uganda was also proposed given their expertise in this field.

33. UNSD noted there had been an issue with the IO logos on the MSITS 2010 cover but that this issue had been resolved and all international organizations logos would be on the cover of MSITS 2010. However, co-authorship between all organizations was still being discussed by the respective legal departments with an expressed preference of the legal department of the United Nations for a sole United Nations copyright given that the Task Force works under a mandate provided by the UN Statistical Commission (UNSC). This mandate also means that the development of the manual follows the inter-governmental process involving all UN member states and that UNSC adopts the Manual and decides in the last instance what will and what will not be part of the Manual. MSITS 2010 remains available in electronic format. Translation of MSITS 2010 in the other official languages will also become publicly available on the Task Force website. The printed version will become available after the legal issues are resolved.

34. The Central Bank of Brazil representative referring to the Luxembourg Remittances Guide noted that the guidance on compilation using different data sources different data sources had been assigned to different groups of countries according to their expertise. This procedure maximized the comparative advantages of different and relatively small groups.

35. The UNSD then clarified that the role of the expert group would be to review chapters drafted by consultants. NSOs were not expected to draft the chapters. UNSD would act as the secretariat for the expert group in close cooperation with OECD and WTO as this project is expected to involve a lot of work.

36. Some names of national experts in the area of FATS and BOP were then mentioned. If deemed necessary for the drafting, those could be paired with national experts, members of the group who would have expertise in a specific field. UNSD would contact consultants and national agencies.

37. The Task Force agreed that the UNSD should contact consultants for drafting FATS and EBOPS parts of the MSITS 2010 Trade in Services Compilers Manual. National experts could possibly be paired with these consultants.

b. Draft Report of the TF to the UNSC and Terms of References of the Expert Group (UNSD).

38. The UNSD introduced the draft report to the Statistical Commission explaining that the draft had already been going back and forth to the OECD.

39. The Central Bank of Brazil representative noted the word “guide” should appear somewhere and suggested to name it “Trade in Services Guide for Compilers”. UNSD flagged that the name should not be too similar to that of the BPM6 Compilation Guide. The Central Bank of Brazil representative replied that the similarity would help draw attention to the manual and to bring it to the forefront as a major tool for compilation guidance, as was the case with the Remittances Guide. Regarding the name of the expert group, WTO and the Bundesbank representative were in favor of keeping the name “Expert Group *on Compilation* of Statistics of International Trade in Services” to clearly identify the role of the group and also to differentiate it clearly from the Task Force, or previous OECD-Eurostat Expert Group on Statistics of International Trade in Services.

40. The Banca d’Italia representative flagged the need to revise the paragraph 6 on page 8 dealing with the role of national experts noting that the “main purpose of the Compilers Manual should be to take into account *developing* countries needs especially to establish and maintain relevant and reliable data collection and compilation systems.” He underlined that, even if the emphasis on the need to assist the developing countries was appropriate, referring only to them would imply a too strong constraint, preventing to deal with relatively “sophisticated” data collection systems; it was therefore suggested to mention also a reference to “developed” countries. He also noted that at the end of paragraph 10, the final deadline for the work of the compilers guide should be inserted “i.e. the task of EG-SITS will be completed with the delivery of the Compilers Manual expected by the end of 2013.”. In

paragraph 15 (a) “circulating” should replace “making available”. WTO suggested to delete the end of paragraph 15 (a) “and providing technical assistance to developing countries”.

41. The Task Force approved the draft report to the UNSC, provided suggestions made would be reflected in the draft within 2 weeks. It should be explicitly mentioned in the name that the expert group will deal with compilation issues i.e. the name should be “Expert Group on Compilation of Statistics of International Trade in Services”. UNSD should circulate the draft invitation letter among the Task Force members for comments within two weeks. Formal invitations will be sent to members of the expert groups over the next month.

c. Revised outline of the annotated MSITS Compilation Guidance (OECD-UNSD)

42. UNSD introduced the revised outline and the Banca d’Italia representative provided a number of suggestions including to remove statistical business registers. Among the suggestions were: the title of section 2 “data sources” should be changed to “data collection”; on page 3, “survey of the banking sector” should be replaced by “survey of financial sector”; the word “annual” should be removed on page 3 from Comprehensive annual survey; In “consolidated Quarterly Survey for Foreign Direct Investment,” FATS should be mentioned; In section 2.6 “models and estimates,” it was suggested to remove input output models and replace by other types of modeling (like CIF/FOB adjustments, extrapolations, imputations, forecasting etc); It was noted that too many generic concepts were mentioned in Chapter 1 and that chapter 5 and 6 could possibly be merged.

43. WTO noted its disagreement of discussing trade indicators in a compilation guide as it has previously been agreed that trade indicators should be shown in a product about use of trade in services statistics; the OECD confirmed. The GATS negotiations list should be referred to as W120. A sub section e) on residents-nonresidents transactions by modes of supply should be included in Section 3.4 “Compiling the EBOPS components” and in section 3.6 the text “with some WTO sector analyses” should be removed. The Central Bank of Brazil representative noted that data dissemination is an important chapter that should be kept; The Banca d’Italia representative noted regarding section 3.5 “Compiling FATS statistics” that in this case, it is not always worthy separating collection and compilation. On section 6.1, it was noted that OECD was doing work on trade price measurement and that the Manual on Services Production Price Indexes was currently being jointly drafted by the OECD and Eurostat; there was a suggestion for an INSEE national expert to be specifically involved in this work.

44. As a conclusion, the Task Force expressed appreciation on the revised and annotated draft outline, and made a number of suggestions that will be incorporated over the next week. This draft would be elaborated further up to the next March meeting.

d. BPM6 Compilation Guidance process – Chapters on services (IMF).

45. The IMF representative introduced the BPM6 Compilation Guide (BPM6 CG), noting it would hold 17 chapters and 7 appendices. The Services chapter and the Annex on insurance services were shared with the TF. The Service chapter, partially completed and which was initially made available at the BOPCOM meeting last October, would cover data sources and compilation techniques for all services except insurance and FISIM for which appendices are being prepared. For travel, IMF benefitted from the UNWTO experience. The item “other services” including construction, intellectual property and R&D remains to be developed. To assist compilers, the BPM6 CG will have particular emphasis on some borderline cases: payment for services versus compensation of employees, taxes versus services, charges for the use of intellectual property versus income or capital account transactions, construction services versus foreign direct investment, manufacturing services on physical inputs owned by others versus trade in goods. A chapter is dedicated to ITRS and another to enterprise surveys. Once ready, the draft chapters will be published on a public link on the IMF website, where they will be available for worldwide comment (several chapters have been already posted at <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/bop/2007/bop6comp.htm>). Before the 2012 BOPCOM meeting, the full draft of the Compilation Guide is expected to be available, and there will be a pre-publication on the IMF website in 2012.

46. WTO noted the interest of the Task Force in the borderline cases and welcomed the possibility of sharing these with the group whenever possible. The Bundesbank representative expressed appreciation for the quality of the insurance annex as compared to the current Service chapter.

47. The Task Force expressed appreciation to the IMF for sharing both the service chapter and the insurance annex, and underlined the quality of the annex. The TF confirmed that maximum use of material prepared by IMF will be harmonized and referred to by the TF in the Trade in Services Compilers Guide. Task Force comments on the chapter and annex should be sent within 2 weeks to the Chair who would consolidate and forward to the IMF.

e. Report from the Meeting of the 2nd Travel Workshop (Eurostat)

48. The Eurostat representative informed the Task Force about the discussions that took place during the travel workshop (22 -23 September 2011, Reykjavik), which was deemed as very useful. These included the use of credit card data, the Guidelines for travel statistics as well as packaged tours and integration and harmonization of statistics which implies strong cooperation with tourism statisticians. Asymmetries were also discussed and will be extended on physical indicators. Eurostat

stressed the importance of a close co-ordination between the Taskforce and the Travel Workshop concerning the chapters on travel in the compilation guide as well in the BPM6 compilation guide. As the group was in favor to develop a best practices manual for travel statistics there were some fears according to the duplication of work. Eurostat on behalf of the Travel workshop will act as a coordinative body.

8. Revision of concordance annexes to the Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services (MSITS)

a. EBOPS 2010 and CPC version 2 (UNSD) TFSITS

49. UNSD reported on the extensive discussions with IMF, OECD, and WTO on a number of issues on the correspondence that were solved. It was noted that if other issues would come out, those would be circulated to the Task Force for discussion. The correspondence might not be completely final but was deemed to be useful in its current status and had therefore been published on the Task Force web site. A column with comments had been added in the correspondence where there was only partial correspondence.

50. WTO reminded the Task Force that it had been previously agreed that the correspondences would be living documents and that comments would still be welcomed after publication on the web. This should be clearly indicated on the web site. It was noted that some work remained to be done especially on complementary groupings.

b. EBOPS 2010 and GNS/W/120 (WTO) TFSITS

51. WTO presented the revised draft correspondences noting that there were still a number of open questions linked to the future refinement of the EBOPS-CPC correspondence table and that some issues needed to be discussed with WTO services experts.

c. EBOPS 2010 and ICFA (Eurostat) TFSITS

52. Eurostat explained to the Task Force that, due to recent movements in staff, no progress had been made prior to the Task Force meeting with this correspondence. It was noted that some progress will be expected after the meeting using both the EBOPS 2010 - CPC rev. 2 and the CPC rev.2 and ISIC rev.4 that are available online. Some progress on this task was expected by the end of 2011. Eurostat flagged that in any communication with its institution, more colleagues should be put in copy to ensure better organization.

d. EBOPS 2010 and BPM6 (IMF) TFSITS

53. The IMF representative noted that the objective is to have the BPM6 BOP DSD finalized prior to the dissemination of BPM6-based data (scheduled for the August 2012 issue of the International Financial Statistics). It was indicated that the draft EBOPS coding had been presented to the

Working Party on Trade in Goods and Services (WPTGS) the preceding day and that delegates had been given three weeks to comment. The next DSD draft would be given to the Task Force members to comment.

54. The Chair noted that the intention of this agenda item was to have a correspondence between the BPM6 coding and the more disaggregated EBOPS 2010 coding. As the more disaggregated EBOPS items (not included in BPM6) were highlighted in the WPTGS document, it could be useful to have the final version of it on the Task Force website.

9. Status of the data collection - Databases on Statistics on International Trade in Services (UNSD, OECD, Eurostat)

a. UNSD report.

55. UNSD reported that following the latest data collection cycle, data were received directly from 85 countries (non OECD), and other countries were then sourced from Eurostat and OECD, as well as IMF, for a total of 170 countries. The list of direct reporters would be put on the web site. Following a question on any new country reporting trade in services by partner country (in particular outside the OECD/EU area), the UNSD delegate noted that he would check back home and report to the Task Force.

b. OECD report.

56. OECD informed the group about the status of its data collection, which is now updated on a rolling basis, so data for 2010 (most of the time preliminary) were available for most countries. A fuller use of Eurostat data had been made during the last collection cycle whereas in the previous cycle, national data had been used to supplement Eurostat data. It was noted that Eurostat data had been less confidentialised but there were still some issues on that matter for a couple of countries. Regarding Israel, some inconsistencies had been detected with IMF thanks to the taxonomy exercise. These inconsistencies had been clarified with Israel, and Israel confirmed that the data provided to OECD were accurate and that the IMF data would be corrected with the next data provision. As a result of the taxonomy exercise with US data, a finer breakdown of US Travel data were collected. OECD plans in early 2012 to start merging its two databases, TIS and TISP.

c. Eurostat report.

57. Eurostat informed the group that the revised figures for 2010 would be published on the 25th of November. Aggregates would be revised for 2008 and 2009. It was noted that there were no inconsistencies between datasets published at the total level and that EU/Euro area aggregates would be calculated also for the breakdown of the following items: Postal and Courier services, Information services, Other personal, cultural and recreational services. WTO welcomed the fact that new EU

aggregates could be calculated for these services categories, however outlined that it was unfortunate that courier services and postal services as separate items had been withdrawn from the future Eurostat ITS request. The good cooperation between Eurostat, UNSD and OECD was underlined and thanks to this good cooperation some inconsistencies have already been solved. The TF was informed that the UNSD would visit Eurostat at the end of November to exchange information on data treatment practices, on cooperation for data exchange etc. Also, since June a validation tool “EBB (Edit Building Block) developed for BOP (FDI and ITS) has been provided to countries that had volunteered for testing it. This tool was developed to help Member states check the quality of their data together with the correct format of their datasets before sending their results to Eurostat. Positive feedback on the tool from Italy had already been received. Eurostat stressed that the tool is still under testing.

10. Promoting the MSITS 2010 and organizing TF work

a. TFSITS Website (UNSD) TFSITS

UNSD noted that the website was about to be updated, some checks would be run and Task Force members would be informed.

11. Any Other Business

58. There was no other business

12. Date and location of next TF meeting

59. The next Task Force meeting was likely to take place in New York City, 27th March for the TF plus a 3-day meeting of the Expert Group (28th -29th -30th). A Task Force delegation could visit the IMF on Monday the 26th. A priori no Task Force meeting on IMTS was planned so there would be no joint meeting.