

A. Summary of good practices (Chapter 20)

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20.2. It is good practice for countries continue their efforts in the implementation of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics of the United Nations, according to which the dissemination of data and metadata compiled within the statistical framework for describing the international supply of services should be carried out with great care and attention to the needs of users while, at the same time, ensuring adequate confidentiality of data providers. In particular, compilers should ensure the equal treatment of all users, adequate user access and the provision of advance release schedules, and pay due attention to metadata dissemination. It is good practice to discuss and agree with major user groups on the adequate balance between timeliness and reliability and accuracy. It is also good practice to develop a well-designed and transparent revision policy that is well publicized, and coordinated with other areas of statistics.

20.3. More specifically, it is advised that compilers ensure consistency between disseminated data sets covering services transactions between residents and non-residents, FATS and additional indicators on the international supply of services, and that they coordinate the dissemination of trade in services statistics with the dissemination of BOP statistics. It is further advised to disseminate preliminary estimates of available or priority aggregates on services transactions between residents and non-residents monthly, with the main aggregates (by main EBOPS 2010 categories and by main trading partners) disseminated on a quarterly basis and the full detailed data sets on an annual basis. In particular, it is good practice for the value data on services transactions between residents and non-residents be broken down by (a) direction of trade flows (exports and imports), (b) EBOPS 2010, by the 12 first-level categories, at a minimum, but preferably by all relevant subcategories, (c) trading partners, (d) enterprise characteristics (if available) and (e) modes of supply, if such data are compiled or if an allocation is performed following the recommended procedures contained in chapter 14 of the present *Guide*.

20.4. For FATS, the selection of variables to be disseminated is dependent on the quality assessment of the compiled variables and the information needs of the country. However, efforts should be made to disseminate the variables identified in MSITS 2010 and elaborated in chapter 15 of the present *Guide*. It is advised that dissemination of the following annual data be treated as a matter of priority: (a) sales (turnover) and/or output, (b) employment and (c) number of enterprises. It is advised that the data be broken down by (a) the direction of investment (outward and inward FATS), (b) activity (and if possible, for output or sales (turnover) by product, or at a minimum, a disaggregation into total goods and total services for each activity) and (c) partner (economy of affiliate operations for outward and economy of ultimate controlling institutional unit (UCI) for inward). Moreover, if possible, data on sales (turnover)/output that are rendered to residents of the economy of the affiliate should be separately identified.

20.5. It is good practice to regularly (i.e., on an annual basis) disseminate statistics on service transactions between residents and non-residents, FATS sales (turnover)/output data and selected additional indicators on the international supply of services in a common report, presenting the international supply of services broken down by mode, if possible. For non-monetary indicators, in particular on the movements and stocks of persons covered by modes 2 and 4, as a minimum requirement, countries are advised to disseminate the full detailed data sets on an annual basis, using the breakdowns as suggested in chapter 16. It would also be desirable to disseminate main aggregates on a quarterly basis.

20.6. In terms of maintaining statistical confidentiality, compilers should strive for the full coverage of all flows and stock data that are in the scope of trade in services statistics, while applying appropriate methods to keep, as relevant, certain information confidential.

20.7. The present *Guide* stresses that the provision of microdata (or data about a data provider, including an individual person, household, business or other entity) should be consistent with legal and other necessary arrangements that ensure that confidentiality is protected and that procedures for access to microdata should be transparent and publicly available.

20.8. It is good practice to adopt several formats and means of dissemination to ensure that data and metadata are delivered efficiently to all user groups. In that connection, it is advised to make the most use of electronic databases for the following reasons: (a) to allow free and equal access to all users to any data record considered part of the official trade in services statistics, (b) to store and deliver to users extensive metadata and a broad knowledge base and (c) to allow users to make queries easily with a user-friendly interface throughout the database and to download query results in the most commonly used electronic data formats. It is also recommended that statistical agencies consider the application of SDMX standards in the dissemination of data and its accompanying metadata in order to ensure consistency and coherence.

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