

Side event
50th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission
Development of the System of National Accounts

8:15 – 9:30am, Wednesday, 6 March 2019

Conference Room B, UNHQ, New York

Organized by:

Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts

The forty-ninth session of the Commission marked 10 years since the adoption of the 2008 SNA as the international statistical standard for the compilation of national accounts. That event called not only for celebration but also for reflection on the progress made with the implementation of the 2008 SNA at the country level; and on whether the 2008 SNA remains relevant for measuring new developments in the economy such as digitalization and globalization as well as the new socioeconomic phenomena relevant for national and international policy frameworks, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Since the adoption of the 2008 SNA, the focus on the SNA research agenda has been on issues related to the practical implementation, clarification and interpretation of the SNA. However, it is inevitable that the 2008 SNA will need to be updated at some point in the future to ensure its relevance. It is therefore important to advance the research agenda of the 2008 SNA through broad consultation among key stakeholders, such as statisticians, policymakers and representatives of academia; data users; and accounting standard boards.

The fragmentation of global production arrangements has led to new demands on the production processes of economic statistics. New aspects of intra and inter firm trade of intermediate goods and services have to be reflected to analyse bilateral trade asymmetries and cross-border governance and direct investment relationships between multinational enterprise groups. In view of these developments, statisticians are involved in international and national projects on data sharing and exchange for statistical purposes.

A stocktake of country practices found that 10 years on fully one quarter of countries have not yet implemented the 2008 SNA, have old benchmarks, or otherwise fall short of the minimum required standards for national accounts. This has occurred in an environment where considerable efforts have been devoted to statistical capacity development and where many resources to support national statistical offices have been developed.

The side event is organized by the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts to have a discussion on, the SNA research agenda to address globalization, digitalization and wellbeing and sustainability; how the exchange and sharing of economic data could facilitate the understanding of the activities of multinational enterprise groups and the reconciliation of bilateral asymmetries; and the development of a collaborative environment of trusted tools, methods, learning and partners for statistical capacity building in least developed, island, and fragile states to meet the minimum required standards for national accounts.

Agenda

Chair:

Ms. Mariana Kotzeva, Director General, Eurostat

Speakers:

SNA research agenda – Mr. Paul Schreyer, Deputy Chief Statistician, OECD

Exchange and sharing of economic data – Ms. Lidia Bratanova, Director Statistics Division, UNECE

SNA capacity building – Mr. Michael Smedes, Interregional Advisor on National Accounts, UNSD

Panel on country perspectives:

Mr. Yang Su Park – Director General of the Statistic Department, Bank of Korea

Mr. Gogita Todradze – Executive Director of GEOSTAT, Georgia