

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

Statistics Department

Current Account Task Team: Terms of Reference

I. MANDATE AND OPERATIONS

1.1 Mandate

The Current Account Task Team (CATT)¹ is one of the four Task Teams² (TTs) established by the IMF's Committee on Balance of Payments Statistics (the Committee) to contribute to the work related to revising the IMF's *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Manual, sixth edition (BPM6)*. CATT will provide technical inputs and make recommendations on current account issues within the framework of the revision. To ensure overall consistency and no duplication of work, CATT will work closely with the Balance of Payments Task Team (BPTT) which is responsible for sending CATT's Guidance Notes to the Committee for final endorsement. BPTT should ensure coordination with ongoing work in other statistical domains, most notably in the area of National Accounts.

The *BPM6* update process has a five-year timeline, ending in March 2025. Much like the other topical TTs, CATT will be operational mostly throughout the Phase I of the update process (March 2020–March 2022). Its mandate will include addressing the current account issues drawn from the Committee's research agenda and proposing documented solutions for discussion by the Committee. The key issues to be addressed by CATT are presented in the Compendium of Issues adjoining this terms of reference. CATT may also be consulted during Phase II (drafting of *BPM7* chapters) on an as-needed basis, should any significant issues arise during the worldwide consultation process overseen by BPTT.

1.2 Operational Framework

Composition: the IMF and Eurostat will co-chair the CATT, with both agencies also providing secretarial support. In addition, the group comprises a limited number of members, representing selected IMF member countries and international organizations, including national accounts and government finance experts, as well as from the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board (IPSASB). The selection considers both the depth of expertise and background required to address the issues identified, as well as a geographical balance, including to represent the views of Fund members across varying degrees of

¹ The membership of CATT is presented in Annex I.

² The three other TTs are the Balance of Payments (BPTT), the Direct Investment (DITT), and the Financial and Payments Systems (FITT). BPTT plays an overseeing role.

statistical capacity. Members of the CATT will work on a voluntary basis and shall not be remunerated by the IMF.

Communication: the working language of CATT is English, without any translation of documents or interpretation at meetings and videoconferences. CATT will work primarily through electronic means, while the co-chairs may convene one or more physical meetings to come to conclusions. To facilitate electronic communication between CATT members, the IMF will provide the requisite support by facilitating virtual meetings and using appropriate technologies for document flow and management. An IMF-hosted dedicated webpage will be accommodating relevant postings, including the terms of reference, the issues to be covered, as well as the ensuing Guidance Notes. CATTs’ secretariat will be responsible for managing the webpage content.

II. GUIDANCE NOTES, WORKING PROCEDURES, AND REPORTING

In addition to the list of topics identified in the Compendium of Issues, CATT may consider, as appropriate, other current account issues raised by its members and by the other TTs relevant for the BPM update. Research issues labeled as high priority should be the core of the work of the group. It is intended that after **June 2022** no new issues will be considered for inclusion in the new manual. This cutoff date is necessary to accommodate the broad process of review and consultation that will take place before the manual is finalized by the end of 2024.

2.1 Guidance Notes

For the proposed current account areas of research, CATT will undertake detailed investigations, whose outcomes will be documented in the form of a “Guidance Note” for each item/concept under its purview. Guidance Notes will comprise two sections—the first detailing the issue and the second explaining the recommendations—that are presented according to a standard format, as described in Annex II. Additional background documentation may also be considered/attached.

Guidance Notes will be discussed by written consultations or videoconferencing. Once a final conclusion is reached, the recommendations will be summarized in the second section of the Guidance Note and presented to BPTT for initial review; those that may impact the *2008 System of National Accounts (2008 SNA)* will also be sent to the AEG for initial review. The draft Guidance Note is then made publicly available for wider consultation—including with national compilers, such that they can test the practicality of the proposals.

The revised Guidance Note will undergo a second round review by BPTT³ only if there are significant changes to the draft version before being presented to the Committee for endorsement (those that may impact the *2008 SNA* will also be resent to the AEG for a second review before being presented to the Committee and ISWGNA).

The key working procedures and review processes for Guidance Notes are outlined in Figure 1 and detailed in Table 1.

2.2 Working Procedures

CATT will strive to reach a consensus in its outcomes. Should there be different opinions on a subject matter, the minority dissenting opinions will be properly documented in the Guidance Notes (for instance, via footnotes). Decisions on the acceptance of CATT recommendations reside with the Committee, in close consultation with the ISWGNA on those recommendations that impact the SNA.

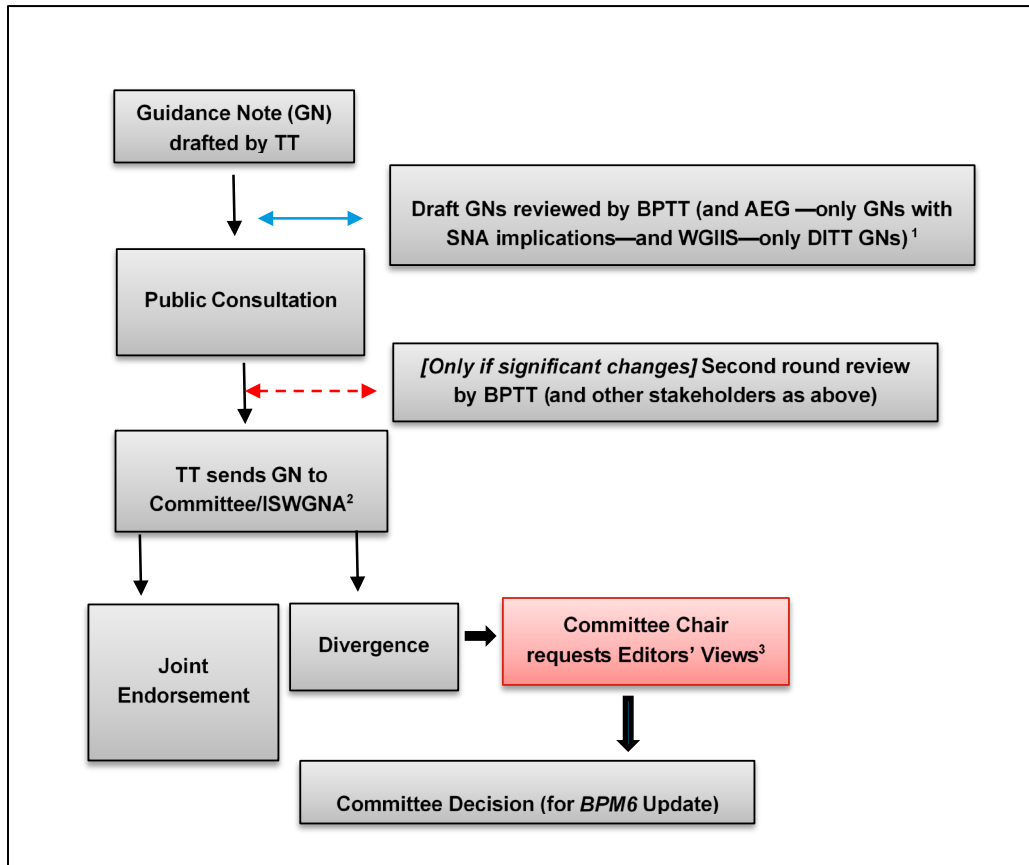
2.3 Reporting

In undertaking its responsibilities, CATT will liaise with related BOP/SNA TTs⁴ and will report its findings to the BPTT, as necessary, to avoid duplication of efforts on common topics of interest. While submission of the Guidance Notes to BPTT and the Committee may take place as soon as any recommendations are ready, through its Chairs, CATT will submit periodic reports to the Committee. Key among these are progress reports to the Committee's annual meeting (usually in October), which will include both the outcomes and recommendations on the issues considered through the Guidance Notes. Final decisions on endorsing CATT's conclusions and proposals reside with the Committee in close consultation with the ISWGNA on issues of common interest.

³ BPTT plays an oversight role for other BPM TTs and a coordinating role with the Joint TTs (and the SNA TTs). It reviews the draft Guidance Notes primarily for overall consistency by ensuring the proposals have considered related proposals/discussions of other TTs including SNA TTs.

⁴ CATT will coordinate its work in particular with the Task Force on International Trade Statistics and the OECD Working Party on International Trade in Goods and Services.

Figure 1. Life Cycle/Governance of TT Guidance Notes



1. In its oversight/coordinating role, BPTT reviews primarily for overall consistency of the proposals. First review by AEG of GNs required only for those of: (i) joint groups (FITT, IETT, IFTT, IPTT); and (ii) GNs of BPTT, CATT and DITT if issue impacts SNA.
2. BPTT and other BPM TTs send to ISWGNA only those GNs that impact the SNA, while joint TTs send their GNs to both the Committee and the ISWGNA.
3. For GN of Joint TTs, Chairs of both the Committee and the ISWGNA make the request. The Committee may also utilize this option if it has reservations about the TT's proposals.

Table 1. Approval Process for Guidance Notes by Task Team

BPTT Guidance Note		Other TT Guidance Note		Joint TT Guidance Note
Both sections of Guidance Note (GN) are drafted and discussed and agreed by TT				
Draft GN is sent to AEG if GN topic impacts the SNA.		Draft GN is sent to BPTT (and to AEG if GN topic impacts the SNA).		Draft GN is sent to AEG and BPTT (and to WGIIS for GNs produced by DITT).
GN is posted for public comment				
TT finalizes GN taking account of public comments. If changes are significant, the following second round review step below applies.				
Revised GN is sent to BPTT and AEG if GN topic impacts the SNA (and to WGIIS for GNs produced by DITT).				Revised GN is sent to AEG and BPTT (to WGIIS for GNs produced by DITT)
Sent to Committee (and to ISWGNA if it impacts the SNA).		BPTT transmits to Committee (and AEG sends to ISWGNA if it impacts the SNA).		BPTT and AEG send to Committee and ISWGNA, respectively.
Committee/ISWGNA agrees	Divergence of views	Committee/ISWGNA agrees	Divergence of views	Endorsement of Joint TT recommendations reside with the Committee and the ISWGNA (using their respective procedures). If divergent views emerge, Committee and ISWGNA Chairs request SNA/BPM editors' views. If the editors' views also diverge, the Committee and the ISWGNA may consider adopting their respective positions, with transparent documentation of the points of departure.
	Committee's Chair requests SNA/BPM Update editors' views.		Committee's Chair requests SNA/BPM Update editors' views.	
Final endorsement of recommendations on the <i>BPM6</i> Update resides with the Committee; and should take account any new perspectives/considerations raised in the editors' views. Should the Committee have reservations about the TT's proposal, it may also seek the editors' views. In this regard, the Committee should also carefully consider retaining the status quo (i.e., no change) and placing the issue on a future research agenda.				Final endorsement of recommendations on the <i>BPM6</i> Update resides with the Committee; and should, in the absence of agreement with the ISWGNA, carefully consider retaining the status quo (i.e., no change) and placing the issue on a future research agenda.
If decision is to change/update the guidance in <i>BPM7</i> , this is reflected in the annotated outline and issue is closed.				

ANNEX I. CURRENT ACCOUNT TASK TEAM (CATT)

Co-Chairs:	Ms. Maria Borga (IMF STA) and Ms. Lena Frej-Ohlsson (Eurostat)
Secretariat:	Ms. Silvia Matei (IMF STA) and Mr. Robert Leisch (Eurostat)
Members (25):	
Argentina	Ms. Silvia Amiel
Botswana	Ms. Baby Mogapi
Brazil	Mr. Thiago Vieira
Canada	Mr. Denis Caron
Denmark	Mr. Casper Winther
Germany	Mr. Jens Walter
Italy	Mr. Andrea Carboni
Jamaica	Mr. Esmond McLean
Mexico	Mr. Gerardo Durand Alcántara
Moldova	Ms. Angela Gherman–Cernei
Morocco	Mr. Mounir Rhandi
Russia	Mr. Robert Pupynin
Thailand	Ms. Angsupalee Wacharakiat
USA	Ms. Patricia Abaroa
Eurostat	Ms. Laura Wahrig
OECD	Mr. Rodolfo Ostolaza
UNSD	Mr. Markie Muryawan
World Bank	Mr. Bedri Zymeri
IPSASB	Mr. Joao Fonseca
IMF	Ms. Kristy Howell (STA Balance of Payments) Mr. Malik Bani Hani (STA Balance of Payments) Mr. Kenneth Egesa (STA Balance of Payments) Mr. Borys Rolando Cotto Cobar (STA Balance of Payments) Mr. Thomas Alexander (STA Real Sector) Mr. David Stephen Bailey (STA Government Finance)

ANNEX II. STANDARD FRAMEWORK OF GUIDANCE NOTES

Title/name of the topic to be addressed

SECTION I: THE ISSUE

Background (not exceeding two pages)

- A clear statement of the issue (problem statement); and a quantitative size of the issue if known
- Current international standards for the treatment of the issue, including specific references to the manuals and paragraph or page numbers
- Concerns/shortcomings of the current treatment, if any (on practical as well as methodological grounds)

Issues for Discussion (not exceeding two pages, excluding annexes)

- Possible alternative treatments/options (clearly distinguishing between those which would require a change in the core framework/concepts from those which would be developed outside the framework)
- Questions/points for discussion

Supplementary Information (in annexes)

- Including references to other documentation

SECTION II: OUTCOMES (not exceeding two pages)

- Recommendation: either
 - (a) to revise: describe the proposed revision, rationale, and practical feasibility; or
 - (b) not to revise: provide arguments in support of the position
- Rejected alternatives, setting out reasons for rejection
- Identify changes required to the current statistical standards
- If relevant, identify in an annex all chapters/paragraphs in the current statistical standards which would need to be updated (with suggested text) to introduce/retain/ensure consistency across statistical domains