

**SDMX Expert Group Meeting**  
**January 25, 2021**

**Opening Remarks by Louis Marc Ducharme**

I am Louis Marc Ducharme, the Chief Statistician and Data Officer and the director of the Statistics Department at the IMF.

It is my privilege to welcome you to the SDMX Expert Group Meeting. As many of you know, SDMX is a global standard sponsored by seven international organizations to facilitate the exchange of data and metadata in the international statistical community.

This is the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of this Meeting, a bi-annual event that gathers SDMX experts from national statistical organizations, central banks, international agencies, and the private sector from around the world. Over time, the Expert Group meeting has become the international forum for discussing and promoting a multilateral vision for the exchange of statistical data and metadata between countries and international organizations. The objective of the Meeting is to identify good practices, share lessons learned, and advance the standard to adapt to new technological opportunities and evolving needs.

For the first time, the IMF has the honor to host this event. In the past few months, my team in the Statistics Department, in collaboration with colleagues from other sponsor organizations, put a lot of effort into preparing an agenda that covers a wide range of topics and practical aspects that are relevant for an increasingly broad range of SDMX adopters.

It is also the first time that this Meeting is conducted virtually, given the impossibility to meet physically due to the pandemic. The program was adapted to a virtual format, with half-day sessions to accommodate participants from across the globe and shorter presentations. All sessions will be streamed live through WebEx. Furthermore, sessions will be recorded and available for future use. This will allow those of you who cannot stay the whole time, or those of you connecting from distant time zones, to watch the event at a convenient time.

Finally, it is the first time that the Meeting is open to the public. Taking advantage of the virtual format, we invited the global statistical community and beyond to join this event and follow the technical discussions around the standard. The response was extraordinary, with almost 600 participants from 92 countries registered on the conference website, a record-breaking number for SDMX events. We are excited to see not only statistical agencies and central banks represented, which are key partners of the SDMX initiative, but also new players from the private sector, which we hope will help us broaden the scope and usability of the standard.

I invite all of you to take advantage of this opportunity to learn more about the technical aspects of SDMX. The program includes 38 speakers from 18 national and international

organizations. Today you will learn more about the evolution of the standard, SDMX 3.0, with a presentation of the new features currently under development under the guidance of the SDMX Technical Working Group. In the next days, you will learn about the different approaches to model data and metadata using SDMX; the tools and platforms developed, including how SDMX can be integrated with big data tools; the experience and challenges in exchanging referential metadata; and finally how SDMX can be integrated in the business architecture of a data-producing agency. Finally, you should not miss the closing session on Thursday, which will include a panel discussion on the key takeaways from this meeting.

The virtual event you are joining today is one of the many daily reminders of how the pandemic is affecting our society. The pandemic has further highlighted the importance of collecting, sharing, and disseminating data using machine-to-machine transmissions for a faster and more efficient exchange between data producers and the public. The SDMX standard is up to this challenge and is flexible enough to adapt to a wide range of statistical data, from economic time series to microdata, from the Sustainable Development Goals to geospatial information. I encourage all participants joining this event to reflect on the existing and new opportunities offered by SDMX, and how the standard can help make your data more impactful for policymaking. The IMF and the other Sponsor agencies stand ready to assist you in these efforts to implement or further develop SDMX in your organizations.

I would like to thank all the speakers for their contributions to this event. I hope that the presentations and follow-up discussions after this meeting will encourage more and more organizations to exchange views and share best practices in using SDMX for statistical data and metadata.

I also would like to express my deepest appreciation to the organizing committee for the excellent organization of this event during these challenging times.

Please follow us on Twitter using the hashtag #SDMX2021 and feel free to send your comments, questions and suggestions in the WebEx Chat box, or by email to the conference mailbox, [SDMX@imf.org](mailto:SDMX@imf.org).

Now, it is my pleasure to invite Bruno Tissot, Head of Statistics and Research Support of the Bank for International Settlement, to deliver strategic remarks about SDMX 3.0, the new version of the standard which will be presented today.

Thank you everyone for being here with us today. I wish you all a very successful meeting!