



A Proposal for Maintaining and Updating International Macroeconomic Statistical Standards

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Task Team Members

- *In the ISWGNA report to the 55th UNSC, there was the proposal for the establishment of a task team “to investigate the approach for updating macroeconomic statistics standards” (para 38 [E/CN.3/2024/8](#)).*
- *The Task team brought together the Chairs and Secretariats of the following groups:*

ISWGNA – Catherine Van Rompaey and Herman Smith

UNCEEA – André Loranger and Ilaria Di Matteo

UNCEISC – Andrew Hancock and Julian Chow

GFSAC – Steffi Schuster

BOPCOM – Fabienne Fortanier

MFSMCG – Artak Harutyunyan

ISWGPS - David Brackfield

IWGPS - Vanda Guerreiro

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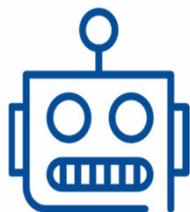
Outline

- Brief refresher on the history of this work.
- Brief refresher on the motivation and the proposed recommendations.
- Summary of comments and questions for BOPCOM

History – A Proposal for Maintaining and Updating International Macroeconomic Statistical Standards

- Idea of a more agile update process and coordinated research agenda was first proposed in the 2021 ISWGNA Report to the UN Statistical Commission.
- Presentation UN Network of Economic Statisticians February 2023
- A Task team for Future Updates of International Macroeconomic Statistical Standards (IMSS) was launched in 2023.
- Presentations at various AEG, BOPCOM, GFSAC, UNCEEA meetings 2023–2025
- The proposal builds on the SNA/BPM update experience.

Motivation – What are we hoping to achieve?



Maintain
Relevance



Consistency /
Coordination
(content and timing)



Efficiency

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Overview of the Consultation

- Discussions start in 2023 at the UNSC, Network of Economic Statisticians
- Report was presented at meetings of the AEG, BOPCOM, GFSAC, UNCEEA and the OECD WP meetings.
- Latest round of consultation took place this summer soliciting feedback from BOPCOM, GFSAC, AEG, UNCEEA, UNCEISC.
- Recent feedback indicated broad support for improved coordination and agility
- Key areas requiring clarification:
 1. Establishment of the Task Team
 2. Definition and scope of ISS
 3. Recommendation 3 (Task Team to review structure of International Macroeconomic Statistical Standards)
 4. Governance
 5. Terminology and Editorial Improvements

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Feedback: Definition and Scope of ISS

Main Comments:

- Term ISS perceived as too broad; may imply coverage of all statistical domains (social, demographic, etc.).
- Confusion between Manuals and Standards.
- Need for clearer hierarchy of standards vs. guidance vs. applications.
- Uncertain whether the term needs to be official adopted.

Possible changes based on comments:

- Change term to IMSS and adapt definition to refer to International macroeconomic statistical standards.
- Clarify that macroeconomic statistical standards refer to BOPCOM, GFS, SNA, MFS, SEEA-CF, SEEA-EA, COFOG, COISIC, and CPC.

Feedback: Recommendation 3

Main Comments

- Some interpreted Recommendation 3 as reopening conceptual content of the SNA/BPM and establishing a permanent task team / group responsible for governing the content of the all the international statistical standards (some sort of “mega-bureaucracy”).

Possible changes based on comments

- Clarify that recommendation 3 concerns structure only, not content.
- Clearly indicate that the proposal is to establish a **temporary** task team to review the structure of the *BPM7/SNA 2025* and propose how the content could be classified into that part standard, that part guidance, and that part application. Indicate that the work of this group could also be used to help inform the structure of the GFS, MFS and SEEA.
- The assumption is that the governance of guidance and applications could be different (and reduced) from that of standards.
- Clarify that the motivation for this proposed recommendation is that by decoupling these elements it could help will improve the efficiency of future update processes and provide clarity to countries on what should be implemented.

Feedback: Coordinating Group / Mechanism

Comments

- Some viewed the ISS joint research program coordination group as adding bureaucracy and governance.
- Questions about authority, costs, and overlap with existing bodies.
- Requests for clearer articulation of country benefits.

Possible changes based on comments:

- Clarify that there are no new decision-making structures; existing governance retained.
- Change term from ISS Coordination Group to ISS Coordination meetings as Group conveys the perception of governance.
- Clarify the benefits and the role of National Statistical Organizations is identification of the issues, priority setting and addressing the issues and note the review of the terms of reference of the ISWGNA that is taking place.
- Clarify how research projects will be assigned to a given statistical domain(s) (including to joint task teams) and how the determination of who will take the “lead” on a particular project will be determined.

Feedback: Terminology and Presentation

Comments

- Inconsistencies in terminology (e.g., guidance note, discussion note, notice of decision).
- Calls for flowcharts and visuals to illustrate the process.
- Minor editorial and structural suggestions.

Possible changes based on comments:

- Address inconsistencies in terminology.
- Add flowchart of the update process and glossary of key terms.
- Strengthen explanation of experimentation period and implementation strategy.
- Include concise executive summary in the final version.

Feedback: Joint Research Agenda

Comments

- Broad support for a joint research agenda.
- Some suggested it is not needed as coordination is happening organically.
- Several individuals suggested clarification of the proposed update process and a few requested a flowchart and visuals to better communicate the proposed process.

Possible changes based on comments

- Change terminology from a joint research agenda to a coordinated IMSS research agenda.
- Provide flowcharts and other visuals to better articulate the process.
- Clarify how the proposed structure could reduce the workload burden (e.g., through the joint task teams) on the statistical system and ensure consistency across manuals.
- Indicate how country input is taken into consideration regarding the management of the research agenda and the prioritization of the projects.

Other Themes

- Timing & workload: Concerns about frequency of updates; additional workload associated with experimentation, clarify that 10-year cycle is indicative and flexible.
- Capacity constraints: Recognize limited resources in many NSOs; propose tiered implementation model.
- Branding & communication: Consider communication strategy to highlight benefits to countries.

Path Forward

1. Following feedback session with all governing bodies, and discussion in task team, incorporate clarifications and visuals in revised note.
2. Present refined proposal to governing bodies for a second review.
3. Update the UNSC on the program of this work at the 2026 UNSC.
4. Target Global consultation for spring 2026.
5. Update note based on global consultation and submit to governing bodies for consideration to submit to UNSC and IMF Chief Statistician in spring 2027.

Questions

1. What are BOPCOM member's views on the proposed updates to reflect the comments received from the AEG, BOPCOM, GFSAC, MFS, UNCEEA, UNIECS consultation.
 - Objective of the Note – harmonize the update process and develop a joint research agenda to make the statistical system more agile and coordinated.
 - Name and Scope of the Standards – should we use macro standard to delineate all the standards in scope? Or macro economic standards or ISS?
 - Establishing Joint Task Teams – give examples of SNA-BPM and SEEA GFS, with a lead agency/agencies addressing the issues. This does not mean that the recommendations will have to be exactly the same, but they will at least speak to each other and clearly explain deviations/extensions.
 - Role of NSOs – actually more broadly national authorities in identifying and prioritizing research projects.
2. What are BOPCOM member views regarding the timeline to complete this work?