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Country Practices in Reporting Balance of Payments Data to the Fund

Prepared by the Statistics Department
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The publication of the fifth edition of the *Balance of Payments Manual (BPM5)* in September 1993 introduced a substantially revised system of compilation for balance of payments accounts. In December 1994 the Fund's Statistics Department mailed individual country data recast in the structure of the new edition of the *Manual* to all countries which had reported balance of payments data in the past. The country authorities were asked to review this recasting of their data and to begin reporting data in *BPM5* format.

Balance of payments data in *BPM5* format were published for the first time in the 1995 issue of the *Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook (BOPSY)*. Data for the international investment position were published for the first time in the 1996 issue.

The attached table provides information on the current reporting practices of countries providing balance of payments data to the Fund to show which countries now report in *BPM5* format and the method of reporting. The table shows that 130 countries now report in *BPM5* format, which compares with 102 a year ago. On the method of reporting, it may be noted that many countries send data both in electronic format and in hardcopy as a backup. However, the table is intended to show only the highest level of reporting; i.e., whether data are sent electronically by Edifact, if not, whether electronically by spreadsheet, and, in both cases, whether data are sent by e-mail. The general picture is that there is little change on last year in the number of countries sending data by Edifact (up from 7 to 9), a substantial increase in the number of countries sending data by spreadsheet (up from 35 to 73), and a greatly increased use of e-mail (up from 16 to 29).

The table also shows that there was no change in the number of countries sending international investment position data (36) although an attempt is being made to persuade countries to send international investment position data even if they are not complete.