



Conclusions from OECD SDMX Experts Meeting, Paris 13th -14th Sept 2012

The OECD SDMX Experts Group met 13-14 2012 at OECD headquarters in Paris. The meeting was attended by 70 experts from the national statistics office of 20 member and key partner countries, as well as from 6 other international organisations and 4 commercial companies. Participation covered Europe, Asia, Australasia, North and South America.

This meeting of the Experts Group was the 6th since the inaugural event held in Paris in 2004. The goal of the Experts Group is to provide a forum for a network of IT specialists to present and discuss strategies for implementing SDMX-based data exchange mechanisms between international organisations and national agencies.

As a member of the SDMX sponsor group since the start of initiative in 2001, the OECD positions SDMX as a key element of its data collection and exchange strategy. The Statistics directorate promote the benefits of SDMX widely both throughout the organisation and among our member countries and together with the IT service provide assistance in the implementation of SDMX exchange programs.

The Experts Group is coordinated and aligned with other international bodies dealing with related topics such as the SDMX secretariat and sponsors group, the SDMX Statistical and Technical Working Groups, the High-level Group on Business Architecture for Statistics (HLG-BAS) and the joint ECE/Eurostat/OECD meetings on Management of Statistical Information Systems (MSIS). All these groups see SDMX as a key component in the “industrialization” of statistical processes.

The meeting was well attended and provided an important opportunity to gauge progress in the implementation of SDMX data exchange programs between the OECD and National Statistical agencies, other International Organisations and commercial countries. Overall a marked increase was noted in SDMX activity being carried out in member countries and elsewhere.

The meeting [agenda](#) gave opportunities for participants to describe progress in initiatives for implementing SDMX in several constituencies of the global SDMX community. This gave an indication of progress from a number of different perspectives which are described below.

National Statistical Agencies

Member countries and Key Partner national statistical agencies presented progress of current SDMX exchange programs. These reports were of great interest as they represent a real measure of progress in the uptake of SDMX among national statistical agencies.

Statistics Korea and the Brazilian agency **IBGE** described encouraging progress in their pilot projects to transmit Short-Term Economic Statistics (STES) data via SDMX, and both noted that they were using this exercise as a catalyst to promote further such exchanges throughout their organisations and with other agencies.



ISTAT showed how SDMX is being used in several parts of the Generic Statistical Process Model (GSBPM) as part of a wide ranging strategy of SDMX implementation within the organization.

The **Switzerland Office Fédéral de la Statistique** case-study presented a metadata-based toolbox which will be made available for sharing via the SDMX Toolbox.

The presentation of recent developments in Mexico's SDMX implementation by **INEGI** showed that they continue to be very advanced in the use of SDMX via a number of ambitious initiatives in data collection, publication and dissemination. SDMX is very much a "live" project in INEGI and the project's success has been helped by strong institutional support throughout Mexico's highly decentralized system.

Rosstat described the status of implementation of the SDMX standard by the Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation which was another example of using SDMX to help integration within in a decentralised system – in this case 64 state bodies are making data available as SDMX via a single portal (UNISIS).

SDMX Sponsors

From the SDMX Sponsors group the **Bank of International Settlements** (BIS) presented their work in building an SDMX data portal in the "cloud". This software is freely available and has already been implemented in 14 Central Banks.

Eurostat updated the group on progress on establishing Global Data Structure Definitions (DSDs) in a number of domains (Fisheries, Balance of Payments, National Accounts, Research & Development, Education, Health and External Trade, EU). The importance of setting up these DSDs was noted as well as the role the Global Registry will play in making this information easily available.

Eurostat also described work in progress on the SDMX Reference Infrastructure project (SDMX-RI). SDMX-RI is a set of reusable building blocks that allow statistical offices to make their data available via SDMX. This is seen as a key instrument for enabling SDMX exchanges and has been widely adopted with other implementations underway or planned.

The **OECD** IT department presented work on implementing SDMX throughout the Statistical Information System (SIS) covering data capture and dissemination. Parts of the development work are shared by other members of the collaboration community, and of particular note is the work being undertaken by ISTAT to integrate SDMX-RI with the OECD.stat data warehouse system as a means of mapping OECD data to Global DSDs.

The Statistics Directorate described progress on the SDMX data exchange pilot program using Short-term economic statistics. OECD member countries were invited to participate in this exercise in 2011 and more than 20 countries are now participating in this exercise. It was noted that such implementation requires significant investment in resources from national agencies and the



difficulties were recognized in the context of the current financial crisis. The case study outlined progress and the various challenges faced by both the OECD and the national offices.

Developing countries

SDMX implementation in developing countries was shown in the presentation by **DevInfo** who have been working with **UNSD** to deploy a system whereby development data is transmitted in SDMX. This project demonstrated an interesting counterpoint to the SDMX-RI approach.

SDMX Secretariat

The SDMX Secretariat representative from Eurostat presented the draft proposal for governance of commonly used SDMX artifacts. This reiterated the need for governance within the SDMX community and outlined the proposed governance structure. Feedback on the proposal was *requested*.

Commercial companies

The Experts group was pleased to have representations from 4 commercial companies which is a positive indicator of the increased uptake of SDMX in this sector.

Sungard showed how SDMX has been integrated into its FAME Statistical Data Exchange Platform and described how the SDMX data model can underpin statistical production processes.

Space-Time Research described how a number of tools in its SuperStar suite allow for off-the-shelf desktop SDMX production.

Both **Metadata Technology** and **Business Intelligence Accelerator GmbH** (BIA) presented Excel-based interfaces for presenting SDMX. Metadata Technology demonstrated how its Fusion Grid product could be connected to any registry and be used as a global data viewer. BIA also showed how SDMX can be used within a Business Intelligence system

SDMX Technical Working Group and Statistical Working Group

A session of the meeting was devoted to reports from the SDMX Technical Standards Group (TWG) and Statistical Working Group (SWG). These two groups were established after the SDMX Global conference in 2011 with the aim of increasing and formalising the participation of the SDMX User Community (statistical offices, central banks and other national and international organisations) in the management and development of the SDMX Technical Standards and the SDMX Content oriented Guidelines.

This session provided an update on the very important work currently underway in defining global DSDs for BoP and National Accounts, and also the key task, highlighted at the last Global Conference, of establishing an SDMX Global Registry.

High-Level Group on the Business Architecture of Statistics



The High-Level Group on the Business Architecture of Statistics (HLG-BAS) was represented by the participant from the **Australian Bureau of Statistics** and covered the Generic Statistics Information Model (GSIM), SDMX and the standards-based modernization of official statistics. This looked at the role of SDMX in the wider world of statistical processing along with a number of other standards, and described how such standards are being used to “industrialise” the process as the statistical community seeks to modernise in the face of new challenges from unofficial data sources.

Next Meeting

Statistics Korea kindly offered to host the 2014 SDMX Experts meeting.