The Statistics Newsletter

for the extended OECD Statistical Network

Paris 21: Towards a New Commitment on Statistical Development

Stiglitz-Sen Commission

Report on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress

UNSD's role in coordinating a global statistical response to the economic and financial crisis

VOORBURG GROUP ON SERVICE STATISTICS
Upate from 2009 meeting in Oslo, Norway

STATISTICS NETHERLANDS
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STATISTICS NEW ZEALAND
Measuring Progress Using a Sustainable Development Approach

OECD

WELCOME...

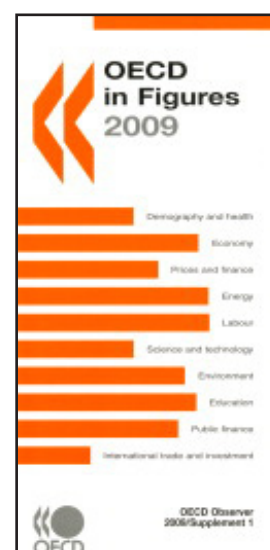# TO A NEW EDITION OF THE STATISTICS NEWSLETTER

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OECD in Figures 2009

OECD in Figures is an original, simple to use, pocket data book. As ever, this 2009 edition contains key data on the OECD-wide economy, society and the environment. There are comparable tables on the entire spectrum of the organisation's work, from national income and industry through employment and research to banking and public finances. Our customary OECD in Graphs section highlights key challenges such as public debt, joblessness and climate change.

As with all OECD data, it is compiled and checked by our experts, so that decision-makers in government, research and business know they can rely on it.

REPORT ON THE MEASUREMENT OF ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

Now available at www.stiglitz-sen-fitoussi.fr/documents/rapport_anglais.pdf

The report was presented on Monday 14 September at La Sorbonne in the presence of President Sarkozy. The President, in acknowledging the importance of the report, stated that France will ensure that this is on the agendas of all international meetings which have for objective the creation of a new economic order, while the French Minister of Finance mandated INSEE and the OECD for the concrete follow-up.

The OECD Secretary-General, who participated in the final round-table discussion at La Sorbonne, confirmed that the OECD will establish an institutional process for priority-setting, produce some of the measures and instruments advocated by the Commission, and use these measures in policy-formulation. What follows is an overview of the 'Executive Summary' from the report.

Introduction

In February 2008, the President of the French Republic, Nicholas Sarkozy, asked Joseph Stiglitz (President of the Commission), Amartya Sen (Advisor) and Jean Paul Fitoussi (Coordinator) to create a Commission, subsequently called "The Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress" (CMEPSP). The Commission's aim was to identify the limits of GDP as an indicator of economic performance and social progress, including the problems with its measurement; to consider what additional information might be required for the production of more relevant indicators of social progress; to assess the feasibility of alternative measurement tools, and to discuss how to present the statistical information in an appropriate way.

In effect, statistical indicators are important for designing and assessing policies aiming at advancing the progress of society, as well as for assessing and influencing the functioning of economic markets. Their role has increased significantly over the last two decades. This reflects improvements in the level of education in the population, increases in the complexity of modern economies and the widespread use of information technology. In the "information society", access to data, including statistical data, is much easier. More and more people look at statistics to be better informed or to make decisions. To respond to the growing demand for information, the supply of statistics has also increased considerably, covering new domains and phenomena.

What we measure affects what we do; and if our measurements are flawed, decisions may be distorted. Choices between promoting GDP and protecting the environment may be false choices, once environmental degradation is appropriately included in our measurement of economic performance. So too, we often draw inferences about what are good policies by looking at what policies have promoted economic growth; but if our metrics of performance are flawed, so too may be the inferences that we draw.

However, there often seems to be a marked distance between standard measures of important socio economic variables like economic growth, inflation, unemployment, etc. and widespread perceptions. The standard measures may suggest, for instance that there is less inflation or more growth than individuals perceive to be the case, and the gap is so large and so universal that it cannot be explained by reference to money illusion or to human psychology. In some countries, this gap has undermined confidence in official statistics (for example, in France and in the United Kingdom only one third of citizens trust official figures, and these countries are not exceptions),

with a clear impact on the way in which public discourse about the conditions of the economy and necessary policies takes place.

There may be several explanations for the gap between the statistical measurement of socio-economic phenomena and citizen perception of the same phenomena:

- The statistical concepts may be correct, but the measurement process may be imperfect.

- In many cases, there are debates about what are the right concepts, and the appropriate use of different concepts.

- When there are large changes in inequality (more generally a change in income distribution) gross domestic product (GDP) or any other aggregate computed per capita may not provide an accurate assessment of the situation in which most people find themselves.

- The commonly used statistics may not be capturing some phenomena, which have an increasing impact on the well-being of citizens.

- The way in which statistical figures are reported or used may provide a distorted view of the trends of economic phenomena.

Why is the report important?

Between the time that the Commission began working on the report and the completion, the economic context radically changed. We are now living one of the worst financial, economic and social crises in post-war history. The reforms in measurement recommended by the Commission would be highly desirable, even if we had not had the crisis. But some members of the Commission believe that the crisis

provides heightened urgency to these reforms. They believe that one of the reasons why the crisis took many by surprise is that our measurement system failed us and/or market participants and government officials were not focusing on the right set of statistical indicators.

In their view, neither the private nor the public accounting systems were able to deliver an early warning, and did not alert us that the seemingly bright growth performance of the world economy between 2004 and 2007 may have been achieved at the expense of future growth. It is also clear that some of the performance was a "mirage", profits that were based on prices that had been inflated by a bubble. It is perhaps going too far to hope that had we had a better measurement system, one that would have signalled problems ahead, so governments might have taken early measures to avoid or at least to mitigate the present turmoil. But perhaps had there been more awareness of the limitations of standard metrics, like GDP, there would have been less euphoria over economic performance in the years prior to the crisis; metrics which incorporated assessments of sustainability (e.g. increasing indebtedness) would have provided a more cautious view of economic performance. But many countries lack a timely and complete set of wealth accounts – the 'balance sheets' of the economy – that could give a comprehensive picture of assets, debts and liabilities of the main actors in the economy.

We are also facing a looming environmental crisis, especially associated with global warming. Market prices are distorted by the fact that there is no charge imposed on carbon emissions; and no account is made of the cost of these emissions in standard national income accounts. Clearly, measures of economic performance that reflected these environmental costs might look markedly different from standard measures.

If the view expressed in the report is not necessarily shared by all members of the Commission, the whole Commission is convinced that the crisis is teaching us a very important lesson: those attempting to guide the economy and our societies are like pilots trying to steer a course without a reliable compass. The decisions they (and we as individual citizens) make depend on what we measure, how good our measurements are and how well our measures are understood. We are almost blind when the metrics on which action is based are ill-designed or when they are not well understood. For many purposes, we need better metrics. Fortunately, research in recent years has enabled us to improve our metrics, and it is time to incorporate in our measurement systems some of these advances. There is also consensus among the Commission members that better measures may enable us to steer our economies better through and out of crises.

The Commission notes the important progress in statistical measurement that has occurred in recent years, and urges continued efforts to improve our statistical database and the indicators that are constructed from this database.

By whom has the report been written?

The report was written by economists and social scientists. The members of the Commission represent a broad range of specialisations, from national accounting to the economics of climate change. The members have conducted research on social capital, happiness, and health and mental well-being. They share the belief that it is important to build bridges between different communities – between the producers and users of statistical information, whatever their discipline – that have become increasingly distant in recent years. Commission members see their expertise as a complement to reports on similar topics that were written from a different perspective, for instance by scientists on climate change or by psychologists on mental health.

Towards better measures of economic performance in a complex economy

Before going beyond GDP and tackling the more difficult task of measuring well-being, it is worth asking where existing measures of economic performance need improving. Measuring production – a variable which among other things determines the level of employment – is essential for the monitoring of economic activity. The first main message of the report is that time has come to adapt our system of measurement of economic activity to better reflect the structural changes which have

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CALL FOR PAPERS

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
on
INDICATORS AND SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Vienna University of Technology, Vienna, Austria
24-26 February 2010

Aim:
The conference takes place in the Year of Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion initiated by the European Union. The objective of this conference is to offer a forum for new developments and applications of estimating poverty and social exclusion, income indicators and the analysis of the quality of those indicators.

Conference Website: www.statistik.tuwien.ac.at/ameli/

characterized the evolution of modern economies. In effect, the growing share of services and the production of increasingly complex products make the measurement of output and economic performance more difficult than in the past.

Governments play an important part in today's economies. They provide services of a "collective" nature, such as security, and of a more "individual" nature, such as medical services and education. The mix between private and public provision of individual services varies significantly across countries and over time. Beyond the contribution of collective services to citizens' living standards, individual services, particularly education, medical services, public housing or public sports facilities, are almost certainly valued positively by citizens. These services tend to be large in scale, and have increased considerably since World War II, but, in many cases, they remain badly measured. Traditionally, measures have been based on the inputs used to produce these services (such as the number of doctors) rather than on the actual outputs produced (such as the number of particular medical treatments). Making adjustments for quality changes is even more difficult. Because outputs are taken to move in tandem with inputs productivity change in the provision of these services is ignored. It follows that if there is positive (negative) productivity change in the public sector, our measures under (over)- estimate economic growth and real income. For a satisfactory measure of economic performance and living standards it is thus important to come to grips with measuring government output. (In our present, admittedly flawed, system of measurement based on expenditures, government output represents around 20% of GDP in many OECD countries and total government expenditure more than 40% for the OECD countries.)

From production to well-being

Recommendation 1: When evaluating material well-being, look at income and consumption rather than production.

Recommendation 2: Emphasise the household perspective.

Recommendation 3: Consider income and consumption jointly with wealth.

Recommendation 4: Give more prominence to the distribution of income, consumption and wealth. Recommendation 5: Broaden income measures to non-market activities.

Objective and subjective dimensions of well-being are both important

Recommendation 6: Quality of life depends on people's objective conditions and capabilities. Steps should be taken to improve measures of people's health, education, personal activities and environmental conditions. In particular, substantial effort should be devoted to developing and implementing robust, reliable measures of social connections, political voice, and insecurity that can be shown to predict life satisfaction.

Recommendation 7: Quality-of-life indicators in all the dimensions covered should assess inequalities in a comprehensive way.

Recommendation 8: Surveys should be designed to assess the links between various quality of-life domains for each person, and this information should be used when designing policies in various fields.

Recommendation 9: Statistical offices should provide the information needed to aggregate across quality-of-life dimensions, allowing the construction of different indexes.

Recommendation 10: Measures of both objective and subjective well-being provide key information about people's quality of life. Statistical offices should incorporate questions to capture people's life evaluations, hedonic experiences and priorities in their own survey.

Use a pragmatic approach towards measuring sustainability

Recommendation 11: Sustainability assessment requires a well-identified dashboard of indicators. The distinctive feature of the components of this dashboard should be that they are interpretable as variations of some underlying "stocks". A monetary index of sustainability has its place in such a dashboard but, under the current state of the art, it should remain essentially focused on economic aspects of sustainability.

Physical indicators for environmental pressures

Recommendation 12: The environmental aspects of sustainability deserve a separate follow-up based on a well-chosen set of physical indicators. In particular there is a need for a clear indicator of our proximity to dangerous levels of environmental damage (such as associated with climate change or the depletion of fishing stocks).

What is next?

The Commission regards its report as opening a discussion rather than closing it. The report hints at issues that ought to be addressed in the context of more comprehensive research efforts. Other bodies, at the national and international level, should discuss the recommendations, identify their limits, and see how best they can contribute to this broad agenda, each from its own perspective.

The Commission believes that a global debate around the issues and recommendations raised provides an important venue for a discussion of societal values, for what we, as a society, care about, and whether we are really striving for what is important.

At the national level, round-tables should be established, with the involvement of stakeholders, to identify and prioritise those indicators that carry potential for a shared view of how social progress is happening and how it can be sustained over time.

The Commission hopes that the Report will provide the impetus not only for this broader discussion, but for on-going research into the development of better metrics that will enable us to assess better economic performance and social progress.

PARIS 21

TOWARDS A NEW COMMITMENT ON STATISTICAL DEVELOPMENT

Eric Bensel, Development Co-operation Directorate

Ten years ago, the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21 — hosted within the OECD's Development Co-operation Directorate) was launched to promote a culture of evidence-based policymaking in developing countries. Tremendous progress has been made, but much still remains to be achieved.

To outline how the diverse contributions of stakeholders supporting statistical development can dovetail most effectively, the PARIS21 Partnership is organising its Consortium Meeting in Dakar, Senegal, from 16 to 18 November 2009. The event will bring together some 400 high-level participants — policy makers, statisticians, analysts, and civil society and private sector representatives from developing and developed countries, and multilateral organisations — to discuss statistical capacity building in developing countries.

The PARIS21 Partnership is honoured that the President of Senegal, His Excellency Maître Abdoulaye Wade, has agreed to deliver the opening speech.

As statistics are necessary to inform, design, implement, monitor and

evaluate development policy and, generally, to make sound economic, social, and life decisions, a country's development relies critically on its statistical system. Statistics help governments improve their policies and investments and be accountable to their parliaments and citizens for the delivery of development results. Statistical capacity building in developing countries increasingly takes shape through a National Strategy for the

Development of Statistics (NSDS), a comprehensive process which mobilises the support and input of all stakeholders: governments, civil society, co-operating partners, the international statistical community, and of course the national statistical system itself. Donor organisations and national governments must both commit to a sustained funding of national statistical systems to help under-resourced developing countries to respond to increasingly urgent data needs. This Consortium meeting will consider and outline the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, in the form of a Dakar Declaration on the Development of Statistics.

The event is being jointly organised by the Government of Senegal and PARIS21 and will be followed by the 5th African Symposium on Statistical Development. It will take place at the Hôtel Méridien Président in Dakar.

To learn more about the PARIS21 Consortium Meeting, we invite you to visit the website of the event under www.consortium-paris21.org.

SERVICE STATISTICS

VOORBURG GROUP MAKES GREAT RECENT PROGRESS, UPDATE FROM 2009 MEETING IN OSLO, NORWAY

Louis Marc Ducharme, Statistics Canada

The Voorburg Group on Service Statistics was created in 1986, in response to a request from the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC), for assistance in developing service statistics. The first meeting, hosted by the Netherlands Statistical Office (CBS) was held in January 1987 in Voorburg, from which the group derives its name. The latest meeting took place in Oslo, Norway in September 2009.

The purpose of the Group is to address issues related to the production of services statistics, including service product outputs and inputs, the estimation of the real product of service activities, price indices of service products and industries, and their implications for product and industry classification [Central Product Classification (CPC) and International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC)].

Over the years, the Voorburg Group has contributed to building up and sharing a considerable and growing body of knowledge on Service Sector Statistics. It has prompted international co-operation in the development of standards, such as the Central Product Classification (CPC) and assisted in resolving statistical and measurement challenges in the Service Sector. The development of the model survey for turnover in the service sector is a good example of the latter. It has also undertaken discussion on many other topics such as the information society, short-term indicators, and international trade in services to name only a few.

Ongoing Methodological Work Plan

In the context of the blooming of activities of the Group associated with the increased demands on its work agenda, the Voorburg Group in its 2005 strategic paper proposed a five year work plan focusing on its core business (classification, turnover and prices) and based on the implementation of a more structured approach in order to produce more concrete deliverables.

In acknowledging the parallel and equally important development of turnover (output measures), prices and classifications, the Group has made an explicit effort to better balance its agenda among these three areas. This new orientation was initially reflected in the 2006 meeting agenda and has continued since then, contributing to the great success of these meetings.

Beginning with the 2006, meeting, the Voorburg Group has implemented a Content Development Framework, which provides structure and standards to the development of new work. In a nut shell, the process consists first, of structured "country's mini-presentations" on prices and on turnover, which are then summarized the next year into "sector papers" where the three elements of price, turnover, and classification are combined into one body of knowledge. In this process, the Group has also added the "revisited sector papers" which build upon previously issued mini-presentations on prices (presented prior to 2006), and completing them with issues related to turnover and classification to the level of a "sector paper". This allows the Group to leverage past work very effectively with a minimum investment. In addition, the group has developed living, dynamic documents including a Glossary, a General Methodology Paper, and a paper outlining key issues in the development of services statistics from a National Accounting perspective. This new work plan has led to an improved process by which knowledge is created, communicated

and shared and by which best practices are adopted in the development of coherent, reliable and internationally comparable statistics on Service Sector industries.

In addition to these new initiatives, the Bureau has been monitoring progress made by countries in the development of service statistics: In fact, many countries provide progress reports each year which are used to assess Voorburg Group country achievements in all areas and serve as part of the group's concrete deliverables. Progress reports have been produced for over 30 industries during the meetings from 2006 through 2009.

Highlights of the 2009 Meeting in Oslo, Norway

In 2009, the Group focused on the following:

* Mini-presentations – a series of mini-presentations covering Banking and Credit, Rail Transportation, and Water Transportation.
* Sector Papers – the Group finalized and adopted the Sector Paper (which summarized 2008's mini-presentations) for Wired, Wireless, and Other Telecommunications Activities.
* Revisited Sector papers – the Group finalized and adopted Revisited Sector Papers for the following: Air Transportation; Rental and Leasing Services; Employment Services; Investigation and Security Services; Advertising and Market Research Services and Public Opinion Polling; and Real Estate, Excluding Imputed Rents.
* Country Progress Reports – significant progress has been made by member countries in terms of Services Producer Price Index development and the development of statistics on turnover (receipts or output measures) for over 90 percent of the industries covered by the Group since 2006.

The Group made substantial progress in defining and documenting the measurement of all of these industries at the 2009 meeting. However, the service sector is difficult to measure and, especially, the quality component is very important and difficult to address. To this end, a number of industries covered in 2009 will be readdressed in 2010, with a special emphasis on aspects of measurement pertaining to quality (see "Quality Change Papers" below for coverage at the 2010 meeting).

Plans for the 2010 Meeting in Vienna, Austria

An ambitious agenda has been planned for the 2010 meeting. The Group plans to focus on the following:

* Mini-presentations – to be covered: Distributive Trades and Trade Margins, Cleaning and Facilities Services, Accommodation and Food Services, Research and Development, and Banking and Credit (with a Focus on Reference Rates and Negative Prices).
* Sector Papers – to be covered: Rail Transportation – Passenger, Rail Transportation – Freight, Water Transportation.
* Revisited Sector Papers – to be covered: Legal Services, Warehousing and Storage, and Courier Activities.
* "Quality Change" Papers – a new type of paper for 2010, to be covered: Air Transportation (with a focus on flexible options/tickets), Rental and Leasing (with a focus on asset value), and Advertising and Market Research (with a focus on audience size).

A complete database of all the papers and country progress presented to and discussed at Voorburg Group meetings since its inception are available on the Voorburg Group web site (www.voorburggroup.org). These papers have been organized in such a way that it makes it easy for data users to find and use information of interest, and future improvements to the website are planned for the coming year.

Information about the Voorburg Group is also available at the following websites:

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/citygroup/voorburg.htm (the United Nations Statistics Divisions web page on the Voorburg Group on Service Statistics)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voorburg_group (the Wikipedia entry for the Voorburg Group).

Points of contact:
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www.isid.ac.in/~pu/dec_09_conf.html

5th Annual Conference on Economic Growth and Development

16-18 December 2009

Indian Statistical Institute, New Delhi, India

wikiprogress.org

launches public beta on 30 October 2009

wikiprogress community...

OECD and partners seek broader quality of life indicators needed to measure the success of societies by opening the debate to all via **www.wikiprogress.org**.

Join in the conversation beginning on **30 October 2009** by contributing your articles and data on progress. **Let's measure what matters!**

wikiprogress asks...

- is a productive society necessarily a happy one?

- what does "progress" mean to the world's citizens?

- which environmental, social and economic indicators should be included in the measurment of quality of life?

- why is there a gap between the effects of current measures of well being and the real lives of citizens?

wikiprogress is...

- a global platform which seeks to invite all facets of society to the debate on progress.

- a place to share, discuss and create a collective intelligence around the measurement of societal well-being and the quality of life of citizens.

- the only site of its kind providing a unique statistical wiki whereby data can be uploaded, shared and discussed via an embedded tool which allows for dynamic and innovative graphs, maps and storytelling features.

- available on the internet @**www.wikiprogress.org** and in need of your contributions in its beta stage and beyond.

your **wiki**progress...

Call for articles! Be a part of the movement for healthier societies and go to **www.wikiprogress.org** to join the community, upload and edit articles, comment on the site, add your ideas and contact us.

The platform has been created, now the community needs you to share your ideas and contribute to the global movement for progress.

The statistical wiki is expected in late 2009.

STATISTICS NEW ZEALAND

MEASURING NEW ZEALAND'S PROGRESS USING A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

Rosie Fyfe, Statistics New Zealand

Background

In July 2009, Statistics New Zealand released its first official sustainable development indicator report titled *Measuring New Zealand's Progress Using a Sustainable Development Approach: 2008*. The report can be accessed at the following link: www.stats.govt.nz/sustainabledevelopment and presents an overarching view of New Zealand's environmental, economic, and social progress and whether that progress was consistent with sustainable development.

Measurement framework

Measuring New Zealand's Progress Using a Sustainable Development Approach is a response to demand for broader measures of progress. The report measures the concept of sustainable development using a set of indicators. The indicators were selected and interpreted according to a measurement framework adapted by Statistics New Zealand from the Swiss Federal Statistics Office "MONET" framework.

The concept of sustainable development is defined in the Statistics New Zealand measurement framework using an interpretation of the Brundtland definition of sustainable development. The definition used is as follows:

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development means ensuring that well-being is at least maintained over time. The principle of fairness within and between present and future generations should be taken into account in the use of environmental, economic, and social resources.

The Brundtland definition balances two sets of needs; those of the present and those of the future. A distinction is made in the measurement framework between the concept of current well-being, and the concept of sustainability, which is the ability to maintain the same level of well-being into the future.

The capital approach provides a way to measure sustainability. The capital approach measures whether stocks of produced human, natural and social capital are maintained over time and available for use by future generations. Statistics New Zealand used the recommendations of the *Working Group on Statistics for Sustainable Development* (WGSSD) to incorporate the capital approach into the framework. This international working group was convened by the OECD, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and Eurostat to ensure greater consistency and comparability in the measurement of sustainable development, with the capital approach as its starting point.

If the concept of sustainable development was narrowed to only measuring this sustainability aspect, then the capital approach would be sufficient. However, Statistics New Zealand has taken a broader approach to measuring sustainable development that includes long-term sustainability aspects, as well

Figure 1: Statistics New Zealand's framework for measuring sustainable development.
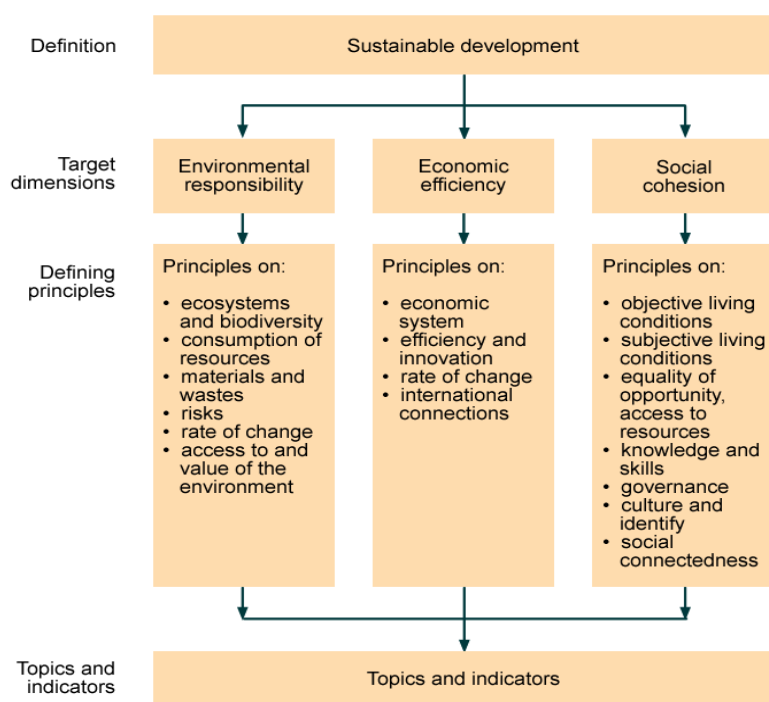
as measures of current well-being, efficiency and fairness. In public workshops that Statistics New Zealand conducted, this decision was validated by feedback from participants who felt that meeting current needs and fairness were important aspects of sustainable development as well as maintaining capital stocks.

An overview of the framework is provided in Figure 1 and further detail about the conceptual framework can be found in the report.

Public workshops

As part of the process for developing the measurement framework, Statistics New Zealand ran two public workshops.
There were three key objectives of the workshops:
1. to get input from a diverse group of participants;
2. to test the concepts and language of the framework on a broad audience to guide the writing of the text for the publication; and,
3. to increase the visibility of the project and help generate interest in the final report.

Statistics New Zealand partnered with a non-governmental organisation to organise and facilitate these workshops. This partnership resulted in a larger and more diverse group of participants, which included representatives from non-governmental organisations, school and university students, central and local government and businesses (large and small).

Overall, the feedback on the framework and discussion validated the view that sustainable development includes meeting needs and current well-being, as well as sustainability and maintaining options for future generations.

Results

This section provides a brief summary of the results of the key indicators to give a flavour of the findings in the report. The key indicators are grouped according to the four key questions.

How well do we live?

In answer to the question how well do we live, the report shows that New Zealanders' living standards are improving, with disposable incomes and health expectancy increasing. At the same time the rate of death from assault, representative of the extreme end of violent offences, has decreased.

How well are resources distributed?

The report shows that overall living standards have increased over the past 20 years. Progress has not been shared evenly over the period, however, with the difference in income between those on high incomes and those on low incomes widening. At the same time pay inequalities between ethnicities remain. However, inequality in access to early childhood education has reduced; a key indicator of potential well-being.

How efficiently are we using our resources?

The report highlights that the productivity of the labour force, and efficiency of energy use and greenhouse gas emissions has been increasing. This is a positive trend but must be taken in context. Although both consumer energy demand and net greenhouse gas emissions have risen more slowly than the growth in GDP, they are still rising.

What are we leaving behind for our children?

The report shows mixed results for this question and highlights that sustainable development is a delicate balancing act between economic, social and environmental aspects. For example, real net stock of total assets per person, a measure of New Zealand's wealth through productive assets and an indicator of economic resilience, has increased. Educational attainment of the adult population, an indirect measure of human capital, has also increased.

However, at the same time critical indicators of the health of the environment - water quality, biodiversity and net greenhouse gas emissions – have moved away from sustainable development. The proportion of Mäori speakers of te reo Mäori, an aspect of culture which is unique to New Zealand, has decreased slightly.

Feedback received

The report received substantial media coverage and we have received feedback from a range of users. One business organisation noted in their press release that "the report would be useful in helping to inform debate over many issues including environmental ones like energy efficiency and greenhouse gas emissions". They also noted that the data on natural resources, innovation, skills and other matters would be extremely useful for policymakers.

An independent think tank wrote about the report that "for democracy to work, New Zealand must have an informed public. Statistics New Zealand's latest report provides a set of indicators aimed at mirroring New Zealand's performance; allowing readers to not only understand where we have been in 2008, but providing a base for a joint conversation on where we are headed… We manage what we measure, and as such, Statistics New Zealand is leading the way by putting the spotlight on New Zealand's long-term future."

An engineering and environmental expertise firm commented that "many of our projects require us to place our clients within the wider economic, environmental and social context that they are operating in and this sort of information is very useful. It also helps to put an organisation's performance into a wider context...the fact that you have presented the material within an accepted international framework is also very helpful as many of our clients are part of larger businesses or have trading partners internationally."

For further information or comments: sustainabledevelopment@stats.govt.nz

STATISTICS NETHERLANDS

VISUAL TOOLS FOR STATISTICAL STORYTELLING

Floris van Ruth, Statistics Netherlands

Like many things, statistics need context for their full meaning to become clear. The new field of statistical storytelling tries to achieve this by grouping and structuring statistical indicators relevant for a certain theme or phenomenon. Storytelling sounds somewhat frivolous, but it is actually a profound method of communicating statistical information, and not easy to do well. Its essence is selecting and structuring statistical information, thus making connections visible and yielding a comprehensive picture of the central theme. At the same time, a shift in emphasis is occurring from reporting numbers to offering alternative presentations and analytical tools. This has been made feasible by the possibilities the internet offers for constructing interactive and dynamic applications. These are two mutually reinforcing developments. Statistical storytelling and coherent indicator sets give meaning to interactive applications and the applications allow for new methods of presentation. Dynamic and interactive options allow the users to explore the phenomenon and connections for themselves.

At Statistics Netherlands a program is underway to provide access to important statistics via interactive and graphical applications. These range from dynamic maps, via customisable graphs to somewhat more novel applications. This article discusses a number of graphical tools developed for the presentation and analysis of business cycle related statistics. Those already in production have recently been grouped in a business cycle fact sheet website, which has been created especially for monitoring the evolution of the current economic crisis. The visualisations currently published there focus on analysing the current state of the business cycle and conditions for Dutch exports. The first graphical tool developed by Statistics Netherlands to support the reporting on current economic conditions was

the Business Cycle Compass. It has now been succeeded by the more advanced Statistics Netherlands Business cycle tracer.

The Business Cycle Tracer is the central tool at Statistics Netherlands for analysing short- and medium-term economic developments. It has been especially constructed to give a timely indication of the current stance of the Dutch business cycle. It consists of a set of fifteen carefully selected and filtered macro-economic indicators, which are placed in a diagram according to their medium-term development (above or below trend) and their short-term development (increasing or decreasing). The diagram is in fact a graphical representation of the concept of the business cycle: each quadrant represents a distinct
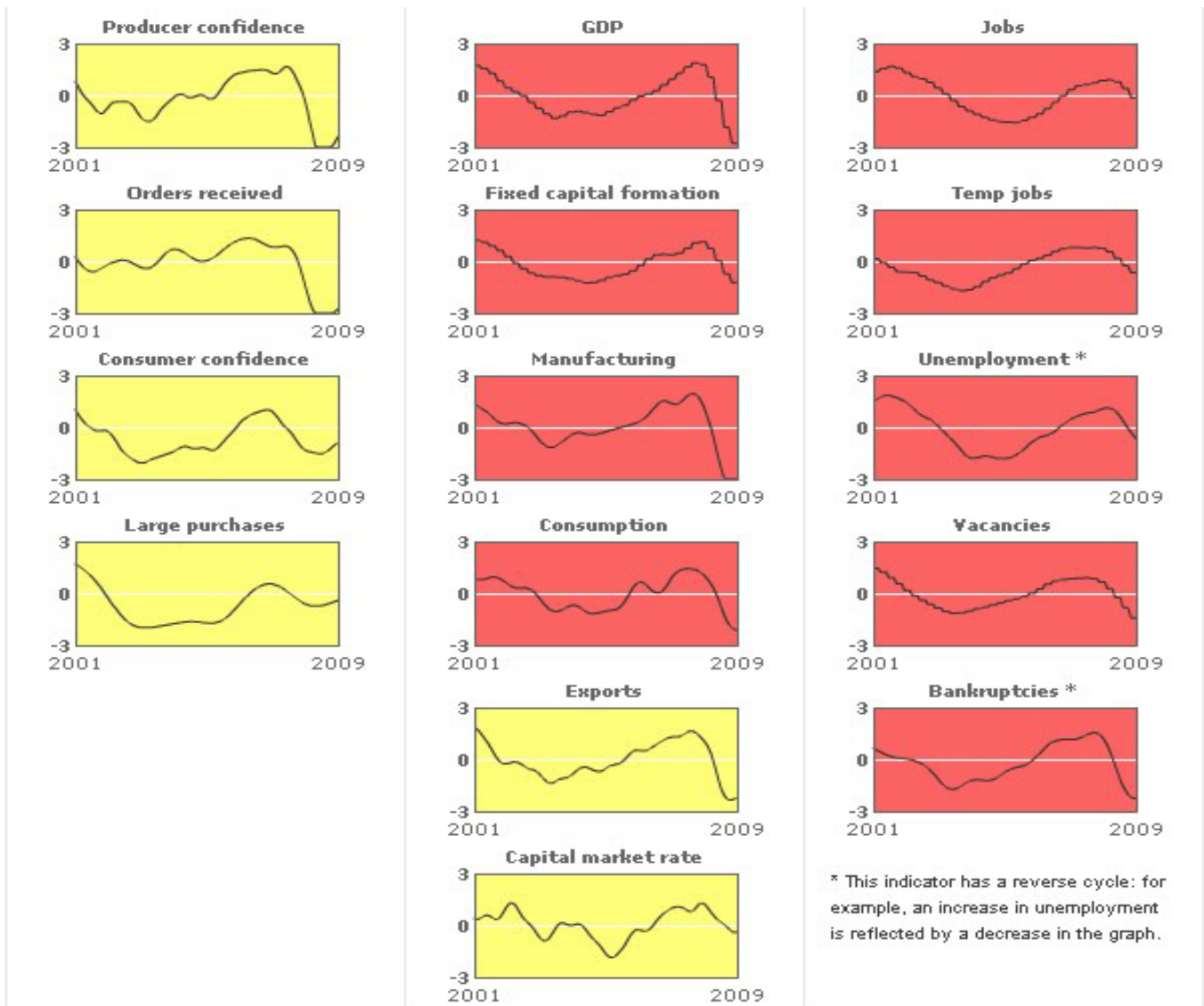
phase of the cycle. The location of the indicators in the diagram reflects their position in the cycle, and the whole reflects the current state of the Dutch business cycle. The dynamic properties of the tool allow the user to choose a point in the past, see the corresponding state of the Business Cycle Tracer and watch a replay of the evolution of the business cycle. This graphical representation and visual interpretation is often easier and quicker to understand than a table or even a textual analysis. At the same time, the structure of the diagram and the indicators selected transfer a lot of information concerning the business cycle process.

Here, the storytelling component comes into play. Not only does the composition of the Business Cycle Tracer show which indicators are

The Statistics Netherlands Business Cycle tracer for September 2009:
a transition from the recession quadrant (bottom left) to the upswing quadrant (bottom right) can be seen.
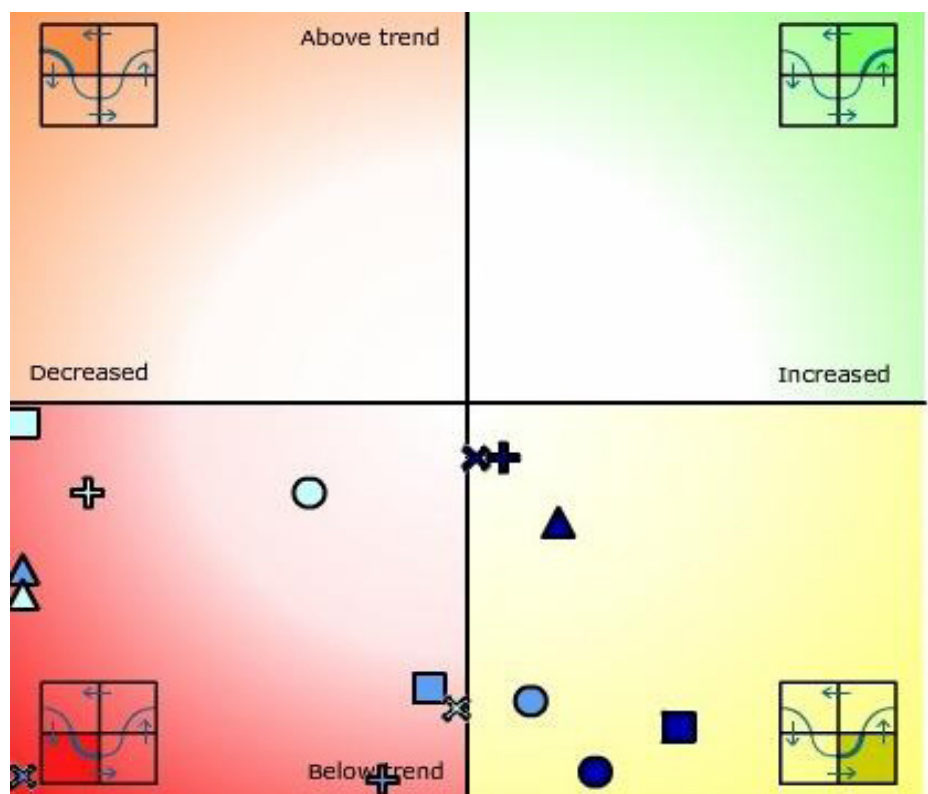
Business Cycle Dashboard; the cyclical development of the component indicators of the Business Cycle Tracer. The colour of the graph corresponds to the colour code of the relevant business cycle phase from the Tracer diagram. Indicators are grouped into sentiment indicators, economic indicators and labour market indicators.

* This indicator has a reverse cycle: for example, an increase in unemployment is reflected by a decrease in the graph.

important for analysing business cycle developments, but it also shows that different economic indicators have different relationships with the business cycle. This is made explicit in a recent addition to the Business Cycle Tracer, the Business Cycle Dashboard. This shows the cycles of the individual indicators jointly and in a structured fashion. The indicators are divided into three groups: sentiment, economic and labour market indicators. A simple colour code, corresponding to the colours of the business cycle phase in the Business Cycle Tracer, characterises the phase of each individual indicator. The differences in development of different types of indicators become visible at a glance. The interactive element of the Business Cycle Tracer allows users to analyse the behaviour of individual indicators compared to

the group as a whole and to other individual indicators. Thus, the existence of leading, coincident and lagging indicators is shown explicitly, as are connections among business cycle indicators themselves.

The next component of the business cycle fact sheet is more conventional. The Business Cycle Tracer indicator is the simple average of the component indicators of the Business Cycle Tracer. It represents the Dutch business cycle, and is therefore a coincident composite indicator. Though not visually exciting, this type of aggregate indicators can be very useful, as they are able to summarize the information present in potentially large and diverse sets of indicators. The resulting composite indicators tend to be easier to interpret than

a set of separate indicators, and they show the communality of the individual indicators.

The final component of the Business Cycle Fact Sheet is more innovative. It is the Export Radar, a visual tool for analysing export conditions. It consists of six economic indicators, all relevant for Dutch exports. Together, they show whether conditions are favourable or unfavourable for Dutch exports. Using the time function, it is also possible to see whether conditions have improved or deteriorated compared to the previous month or any earlier time period. Fundamental to this concept is the identification of factors which determine the development of the economic phenomenon to be tracked, in this case exports. For Dutch exports, the main factors are

The Business Cycle Tracer Indicator: the simple average of the component indicators of the Business Cycle Tracer. It reflects the stance of the Dutch business cycle and summarizes the information present in the individual business cycle indicators
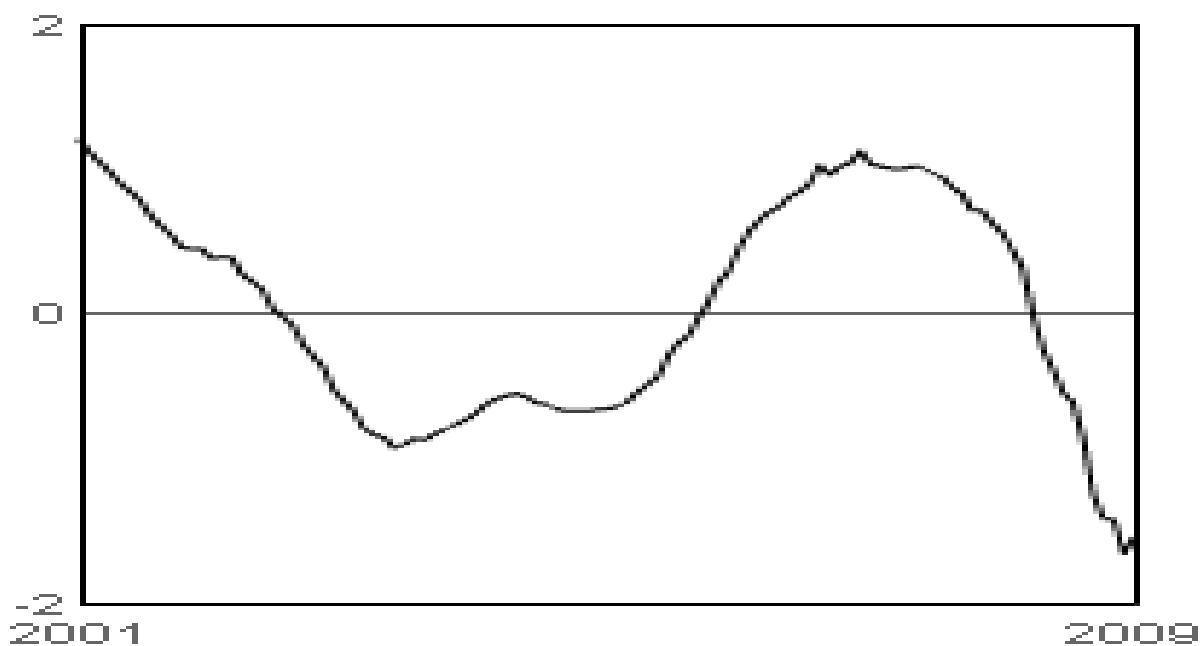
The Export Radar; a graphical representation of a structured indicator set reflecting conditions for Dutch exports
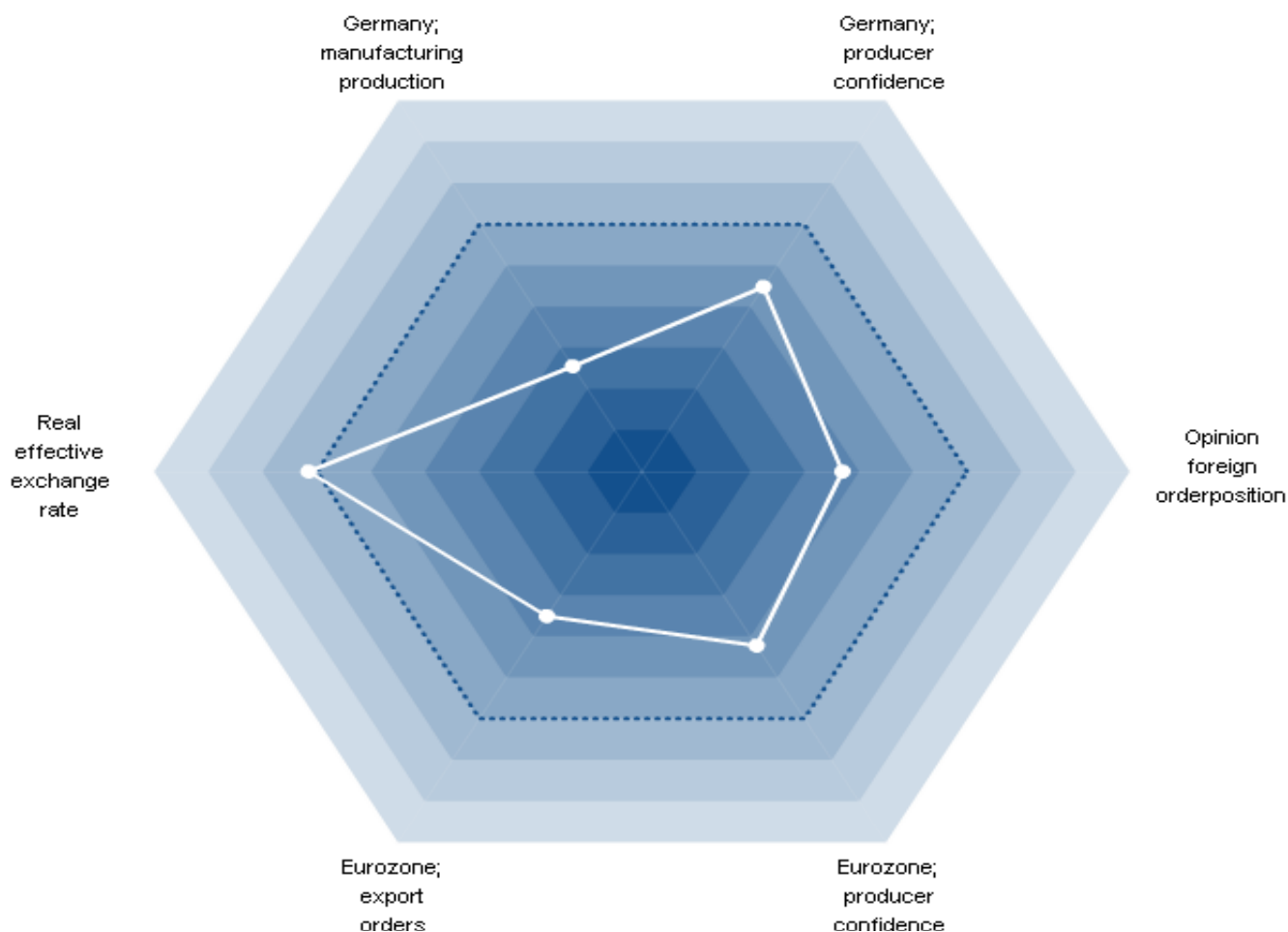
The Labour Market Tension Gauge; A graphic method for characterising the state of the Dutch Labour market, based on confronting indicators of supply and demand for additional labour
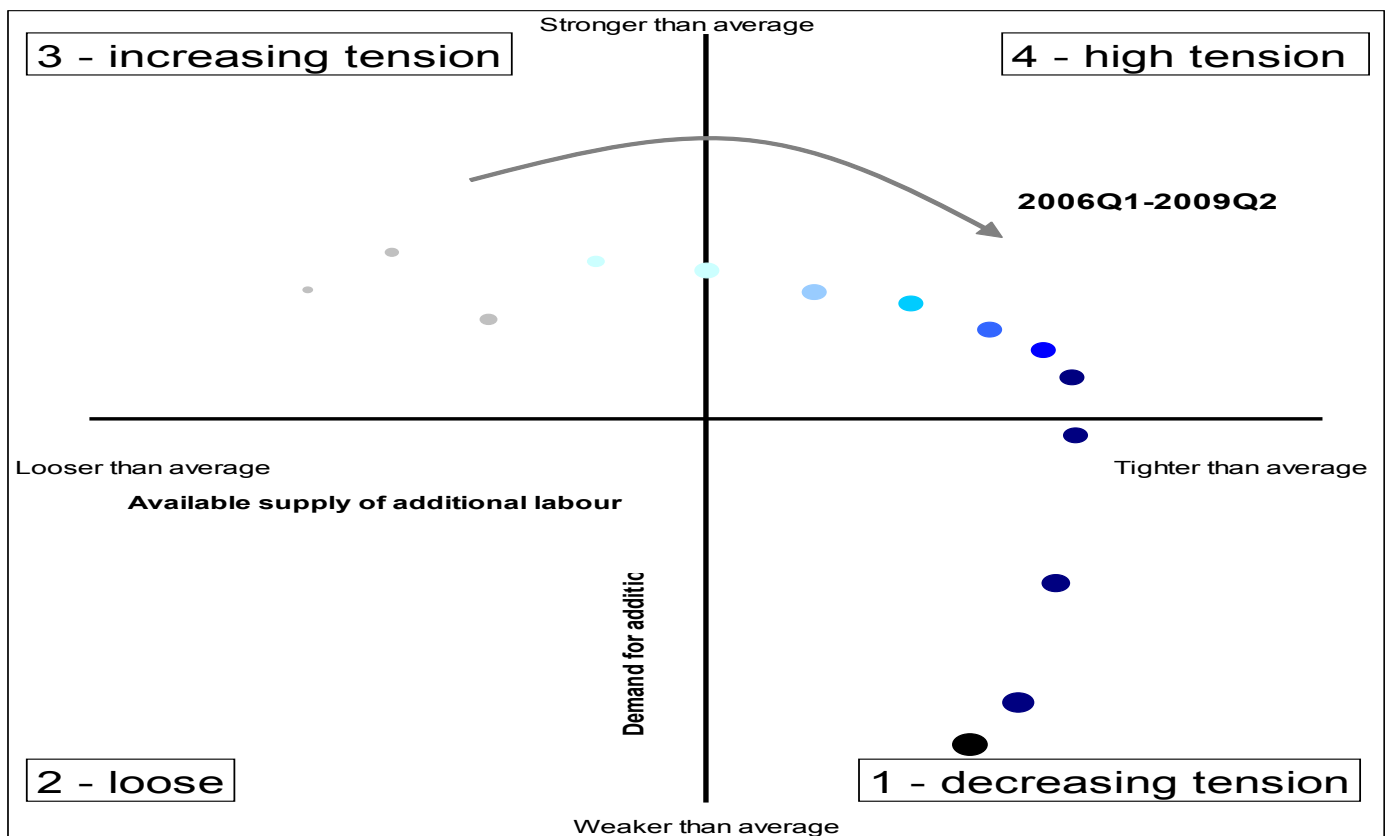
competitiveness and developments in the major markets, Germany and the rest of the Euro zone. The next step is to select the most relevant indicators representing developments in these factors. Thus, this Export Radar becomes an analytical tool. Its main function is to assist in analysing export development. It places export developments in context and assists in answering such questions as "why have exports grown/declined?". The graphical format makes interpretation easy and intuitive, a wider diagram means more favourable conditions. At the same time the Radar also has a strong statistical storytelling aspect: it shows how exports are related to other economic indicators, and which are the most relevant. Radar diagrams centring on household consumption and private sector investment are currently being developed as well.

The final statistical visualisation presented here is very experimental. The Labour Market Tension Gauge is still under development, and it takes the concept of indicator sets

and statistical visualisations one step further. It is a tool for analysing labour market developments, deriving global characterisation of the state of the labour market from selected relevant statistics. It is an example of how showing related statistical indicators in a structured fashion can yield information not present in the individual indicators. The vertical axis shows the intensity of demand for additional labour, the horizontal axis the relative tightness of labour supply. The construction results in four general states for the labour market, characterising its tension; 1. tight supply and strong demand (termed high-tension), 2. tight supply but weakening demand (decreasing tension), 3. ample supply and weak demand (loose), 4. ample supply and increasing demand (increasing tension). The crucial step is of course the construction of the indicators for labour supply and demand. This is where statistical and economic knowledge become relevant. The idea is that to fully characterise the situation on the labour market, both supply

and demand indicators are needed. A graphical representation does this much clearer and easier to interpret than a table containing the same statistics. Each quadrant of the diagram represents one of the four possible states of the labour market. For a non-expert user, this offers a relatively easy to understand characterisation of the labour market, and it shows that several types of statistics, and more importantly which ones, are needed for a meaningful analysis of the state of the labour market.

These examples have hopefully shown that visualisations can be powerful tools for communicating statistical information, especially when interactive options allow the users to explore the data and their interconnections themselves. The main message, however, is that presenting statistical indicators in a structured manner can greatly enhance their value, while at the same time transferring important knowledge, often latently present in statistical institutions, about economic structure and relationships.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRISIS

UNSD/DESA ROLE IN COORDINATING A GLOBAL STATISTICAL RESPONSE

Paul Cheung and Ivo Havinga, United Nations Statistics Division

While in recent quarters, the global economy seems to have moved away from the depth of the economic and financial recession and turmoil, these positive signals in the economy should not lead to complacency by the global statistical community. Rather, the recent global recession has made it clear that our community should remain focused and intensify its efforts in remedying the identified shortcomings of the global statistical system to monitor and analyse the interconnected global economy.

Ongoing collective efforts at the national, regional and international level should be coordinated to put in place an integrated monitoring and analytical system for crisis responsiveness to allow for an early assessment of the global vulnerabilities and exposure. Failing to realize this system could exacerbate the present socio-economic impact of the present crisis.

The United Nations Statistics Division/ Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNSD/DESA) at the fortieth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission in February 2009 called for swift and coordinated statistical initiatives by countries, regional and international organizations in response to the global crisis. These initiatives should focus on identifying and remedying data gaps to monitor the unprecedented financial and economic turmoil and improve the dissemination and communication on available relevant information. This would allow for timely and measured policy responses. This call for action followed extensive consultations with countries and international organizations during a series of high level meetings organized by UNSD/DESA such as the High Level Forum on the Long-Term Development of the SNA held at the World Bank in Washington DC, in November 2008, and the High Level Forum on Globalization and Global Crisis and an informal meeting on the Global Financial Crisis and the Role of the Official Statistics both held at the United Nations, New York in February 2009.

These statistical initiatives should also be understood as a response to the G20 Summit of 2 April, 2009 calling for "...the UN, working with other global institutions, to establish an effective mechanism to monitor the impact of the crisis on the poorest and most vulnerable". At the same time, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) at its April 2009 meeting in Paris decided to "… urgently establish an UN system-wide vulnerability monitoring and alert mechanism to track developments, and report on the political, economic, social and environmental dimensions of the crisis". Earlier, in February 2009, the High Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) had asked UNSD/DESA to act as the lead agency in developing an integrated monitoring and analysis system as part of the joint UN-system responses to the crisis. On behalf of the UN Secretary-General, the UN Deputy Secretary-General has initiated activities to establish an UN system-wide Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System (GIVAS) - consisting of a Global Impact and Vulnerability Data Platform and a series of Global Alert Products.

Throughout the series of meetings, the System of National Accounts 2008 (2008 SNA) was recognized as the overarching framework. The 2008 update of the 1993 SNA is considered a well suited framework in the present crisis. This is because it incorporates the measurement issues arising from the financial crises of the 1990s and the early part of this century. The extended scope of the 2008 SNA allows for the measurement and classification of present government and Central Bank interventions and the latest innovations in financial instruments and financial institutional sectors.

These meetings also reiterated that a lack of macroeconomic, sectoral and market information was not considered the cause of the recession. However, it was considered vital that statisticians take note of the data needs of policy makers and develop a work programme on three main fronts:

a. Data gaps that the crisis has revealed for those segments of the non-banking sector where the reporting of data is not well established; the financial accounts and balance sheets of the other sectors, particularly the non-financial corporations and household sectors; residential property prices and other market prices, rates and spreads; and issues relating the ultimate risk/ credit transfer instruments and large systemically important financial institutions.

b. The availability, periodicity and timeliness of high frequency statistics in accessible and analytically useful formats allowing their use in the early detection of turning points of financial and economic trends.

c. A public on-line website disseminating a set of economic and financial time series for a group of systemic countries, with links to relevant statistical websites.

Work is underway on all three statistical areas and is coordinated internationally by the Interagency Group on Economic and Financial Statistics, composed of Eurostat, the International Monetary Fund, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the United Nations and the World Bank (i.e. the members of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA)) complemented by the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) and the European Central Bank (ECB).

The UNSD/DESA programme of work for 2009 addressed the statistical framework of high frequency statistics and their international comparability, and the related analytical framework of indicators for crisis responsiveness in monitoring early warning and business cycle indicators. For this purpose, UNSD/ DESA and Eurostat jointly organized an International Seminar on Timeliness, Methodology, and Comparability of

Rapid Estimates of Economic Trends with the support of Statistics Canada as co-organizer and host of the seminar. The international seminar was held on 27 to 29 May 2009 in Ottawa.

The emergence over the past several years of consistent and transparent data initiatives, such as dissemination standards developed by Eurostat through its Principal European Economic Indicators (PEEI) and by the IMF through its Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) and General Data Dissemination Standard (GDDS), remain highly relevant. However, the speed and interconnectedness of the financial crisis underlines the importance of reviewing these data templates and their traditional statistical production approaches. These data templates could be rearranged to include a set of timely and higher frequency economic and financial indicators, at least for systemically important countries in more innovative ways. The speed at which the crisis developed highlighted the need for indicators that could support early warning efforts. This would entail, among other things, a new perspective in assessing the trade-off between timeliness and completeness, and a new look at the traditional statistical production model to meet the needs of today. In short, the statistical community should ensure the continued relevance of economic and financial statistics in timeliness and frequency, and in the evolution from first estimates to revised statistics.

An important outcome of the Ottawa international seminar was a proposed United Nations data template for economic and financial statistics. This template would have 12 major categories covering national accounts, production and turnover indicators, prices, labour market indicators, sectoral indicators for the external, financial, government, non- financial and household sector, financial and real estate market indicators, and economic sentiment and composite indicators.

The Ottawa seminar also agreed that the proposed data template should be assessed by the countries for its relevance and feasibility in terms of availability, periodicity and timeliness. Based on the global baseline assessment of the availability and comparability of the high frequency statistics at the

country level, it was suggested that the data template should be re-arranged in different tiers following a cross country analysis. Moreover, where possible, the high frequency statistics for individual countries should be complemented by time series of world and regional aggregates for those high frequency statistics which are sufficiently comparable.

Another key issue raised at the Ottawa seminar was the need to enter into dialogue with the user community on the question whether the data template meets their immediate analytical and policy needs. The dialogue with the user community is considered of paramount importance to ensure a proper alignment of the statistical, analytical and policy frameworks at national and international levels. The user perspective on the proposed data template will establish whether the data template meets the identified data gaps and their periodicity and timeliness requirements, and determine how to better disseminate data and prepare improved statistical narratives on the movement of the business cycle and trend developments.

The Ottawa seminar recommended that work should be initiated in developing a glossary of terms and definitions around high frequency statistics (covering terms like nowcast, forecast, flash, rapid and first estimate, etc.) to clarify the high frequency statistics framework and its compilation methodology. Moreover, the need was expressed to develop new manuals or update existing handbooks and guidelines on composite indicators, GDP flash estimates, and economic sentiment indicators (for business tendency and consumer confidence surveys) given their extensive use in tracing the business cycle.

As a way forward, the Ottawa seminar will be followed up with another international seminar at the end of 2009 with strong engagement from the user community. This second meeting of the series, the International Seminar on Early Warning and Business Cycle Indicators is scheduled from 14 to 16 December 2009 in Scheveningen, The Netherlands. It will be hosted by Statistics Netherlands and co-organized by UNSD, Eurostat and Statistics Netherlands.

This seminar will discuss the results

from the global assessment of the data template on availability, timeliness and comparability of high frequency and first estimates, the challenges in collecting early warning and business cycle indicators and the analytical usefulness of early warning and business cycle indicators in actually tracking economic developments. Moreover, the seminar will further elaborate on country practices in preparing first GDP estimates, composite indicators, sentiment surveys and their application in tracking the economic crisis. It is expected that the seminar will propose an analytical indicator template that can be derived from the Ottawa data template to complement basic country time series of high frequency statistics based on a comparison of existing analytical frameworks applied by the various international and regional organizations.

Apart from the international user community, senior representatives of the national statistical offices and their national counterparts in the Central Banks and Ministries of Finance are encouraged to attend this seminar to stimulate country-level initiatives in strengthening the compilation of high frequency statistics estimates following their joint assessment of priorities. Moreover, with the objective to improve the geographical coverage, scope and quality of the collection of early warning and business cycle indicators for the measurement of economic and financial vulnerability and tracking economic activity, this seminar will seek appropriate coverage of large systemic countries and appropriate regional representation. Based on these considerations, about 40 countries and 20 international and regional organizations are expected to attend. United Nations regional commissions have been invited given their role and responsibility in strengthening basic statistical infrastructure under the SNA implementation programme and their reporting requirements on economic and financial performance for their respective regions.

The outcomes of the two international seminars will be reported to the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2010 to present a global statistical strategy in advancing a system of early warning nd business cycle indicators at national and international level.

OECD World Forum
B U S A N , K O R E A 2 0 0 9

ORGANISATION
FOR ECONOMIC
CO-OPERATION
AND DEVELOPMENT
OECD

STATISTICS KOREA

3rd OECD World Forum
on
Statistics, Knowledge and Policy

The Forum will focus on issues related to "Charting Progress, Building Visions, Improving Life" held in Busan, Korea – 27th to 30th of October 2009. This Forum will address some crucial questions that today, in the current economic crisis, have become more important than ever. There will be over 40 sessions that consider how the world is progressing (and how to measure that progress), what does a focus on wellbeing and progress mean for policy making and how can we improve the ways in which evidence on progress promotes change.

"6 BILLION OTHERS" Yann Arthus-Bertrand launched the project "6 Billion Others", in 2003 following "The Earth from above". The concept is simple: go out and meet the 6 billion inhabitants of this planet, listen to their testimonies and share them with others. We are pleased to announce that "6 Billion Others" will be part of the 3rd OECD World Forum and will present a film focused on the question:"What does progress mean for us?".

Wikiprogress.org will be launched as a Public Beta, www.wikiprogress.org is a global platform which will seek to invite all facets of society in the debate on Progress. It aims to create a collective intelligence on the measurement of the quality of life of society's citizens. Wikiprogress.org will provide a unique statistical wiki whereby data can be uploaded, shared and discussed via an embedded tool which allows for dynamic and innovative graphs, maps and storytelling features. Join in the conversation beginning on 30 October 2009 and let's measure what matters!

Visit the website:
http://www.oecdworldforum2009.org

For questions please e-mail:
oecdforum@korea.kr

News in brief

Statistics New Zealand
Detailed Import and Export Data is now free

Accessing detailed import and export data is easier than ever before, thanks to Statistics New Zealand's release of the second stage of Infoshare. The online tool adds information on imported and exported goods to the vast array of free information already available on the web.

The addition of this import and export data makes Infoshare a valuable tool for exporters to gather information from an independent source.

"An exporter, for example, could use the data to monitor trends, market conditions and their own position within particular markets," says Kathy Connolly, Manager Business Indicators.

The Infoshare database contains a broad range of time-series data. This information can tell you how and where New Zealanders live, about our work, income, spending and recreation, and what we produce for export.

Examples of how businesses and other organisations could use Infoshare include:
- Businesses that provide products and services to the building industry can monitor the number of building consents issued in particular areas, so they can anticipate demand for their products.
- Tourism organisations can look at tourist numbers over time, to plan their services more effectively for seasonal fluctuations or to assess market share.
- Lawyers can use price index figures for inflation adjustment clauses in contracts.
- A regional council can use business statistics to plan and evaluate initiatives to attract business and industry to its region.

Statistics New Zealand updates Infoshare within five minutes of the official release of new information. This timeliness is especially important for users of economic data, such as GDP and CPI.

Infoshare also holds historical data, which allows users to evaluate trends or seasonal changes.

Visit:
www.stats.govt.nz/infoshare

Out soon

OECD Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard 2009

At a time when world economy is in the midst of the most severe economic downturn since the Great Depression, the OECD Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard 2009 provides the statistical information necessary to define a response to these global challenges.

This edition of the Scoreboard illustrates and analyses a wide set of indicators of science, technology, globalisation and industrial performance in OECD and major non OECD countries (notably Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). Indicators are organised around five issues: responding to the economic crisis, achieving sustainable growth, competing in the world economy, connecting to global research, and investing in the knowledge economy.

Health at a Glance 2009: OECD Indicators

This fifth edition of Health at a Glance provides the latest comparable data on different aspects of the performance of health systems in OECD countries. It provides striking evidence of large variations across countries in the costs, activities and results of health systems. Key indicators provide information on health status, the determinants of health, health care activities and health expenditure and financing in OECD countries.

Revenue Statistics 2009

This annual publication presents a unique set of detailed and internationally comparable tax data in a common format for all OECD countries from 1965 onwards. It also defines which government receipts should be regarded as taxes and classifies them. This edition includes a special feature on changes to the guidelines for attributing revenues to levels of government.

Recent publications

All OECD publications can be ordered on line at: www.oecd.org/bookshop

Central Government Debt: Statistical Yearbook 2009

Governments are major issuers of debt instruments in the global financial market. This volume provides quantitative information on central government debt instruments for the 30 OECD Member countries. Statistics are presented according to a comprehensive standard framework to allow cross-country comparison. Country notes provide information on debt issuance in each country as well as on the institutional and regulatory framework governing debt management policy and selling techniques.

OECD Employment Outlook 2009
Tackling the Jobs Crisis

This 2009 edition of the OECD Employment Outlook provides an annual assessment of labour market developments and prospects in member countries. This issue focuses on the jobs crisis in particular and looks at steps taken by governments to help workers and the unemployed. It recommends ways of preventing current high levels of unemployment becoming entrenched.

The first chapter looks at the jobs crisis itself, analysing the implications for employment and social policy. The second chapter looks at how industry, firm, and worker characteristics shape job and worker flows. The third chapter examines the problem of the working poor, now exacerbated by the crisis. And the fourth examines pathways on to and off of disability benefits, a growing problem in most OECD countries. As in previous editions, a comprehensive statistical annex provides the latest data.

OECD Benchmark Definition of Foreign Direct Investment 2008

Foreign direct investment (FDI) is a major driver of globalisation. As investment patterns of multinational enterprises become more and more complex, reliable and internationally comparable, FDI statistics are necessary for sound policy decision making. The OECD Benchmark Definition of Foreign Direct Investment sets the world standard for FDI statistics. It provides a single point of reference for statisticians and users on all aspect of FDI statistics, while remaining compatible with other internationally accepted statistical standards.

This edition introduces new analytical data breakdowns and statistical treatments that better reflect the realities of today's world economy. The revised Benchmark Definition provides methods for classifying different types of FDI (e.g., mergers and acquisitions, greenfield investments) and for identifying the ultimate investor. The new edition now addresses the uses of FDI statistics, including globalisation indicators, and provides a chapter relating to the statistics on the activities of multinational enterprises.

AGENDA

FORTHCOMING OECD MEETINGS

Date	Meeting
22-23 OCTOBER	Working Party on Indicators of Educational Systems (INES), Berlin, Germany
26 OCTOBER	Special meeting of the Committee on Statistics (CSTAT), Busan, Korea
27-30 OCTOBER	Third OECD World Forum on Charting Progress, Building Visions and Improving Life, Busan, Korea, www.oecdworldforum2009.org
2-6 NOVEMBER	Working Party on National Accounts (WPNA) and Working Party on Financial Statistics, Paris, France
17-19 NOVEMBER	Working Party No. 2 on Tax Policy Analysis and Tax Statistics, Paris, France
16-18 NOVEMBER	2nd meeting of the Working Party on International Trade in Goods and Trade in Services Statistics (WPTGS), Paris, France, www.oecd.org/std/its/wptgs2009
30 NOVEMBER	Working Party on Territorial Indicators - 19th Session, Paris, France
30 NOVEMBER	Task Force on Pension and Insurance Statistics, Insurance and Private Pensions Committee, Paris, France

Unless otherwise indicated attendance at OECD meetings and working parties is by invitation only.

OTHER STATISTICS MEETINGS

Date	Meeting
28-30 OCTOBER	Group of Experts on Population and Housing Censuses (Geneva, 28-30 October 2009), http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2009.10.census.htm
3-6 NOVEMBER	Second Meeting of the Expert Group on International Merchandise Trade Statistics, (EG-IMTS), New York, United States, http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/EG-IMTS/EG-IMTS%20Nov%202009.html
10-12 NOVEMBER	Expert Group Meeting on the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics, UNHQ, New York, United States
2-4 DECEMBER	Joint UNECE/Eurostat Work Session on Statistical Data Confidentiality, Bilbao, Spain, http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2009.12.confidentiality.htm
14-16 DECEMBER	International Seminar on Early Warning and Business Cycle Indicators, Scheveningen, The Netherlands. UNSD, Eurostat and Statistics Netherlands.