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**EUROPEAN COMMISSION
STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (EUROSTAT)**

**ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC
COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD)
STATISTICS DIRECTORATE**

Joint ECE/Eurostat/OECD Meeting on the Management of Statistical Information Systems (MSIS)
(Bratislava, Slovakia, 18-20 April 2005)

Topic (iii): XML and web services

SDMX OPEN DATA INTERCHANGE (SODI)

Invited Paper

Submitted by Eurostat¹

Summary

I. BACKGROUND

1. SDMX (Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange) is an initiative sponsored by BIS, ECB, Eurostat, IMF, OECD, UN and the World Bank to foster standards for the exchange of statistical information. The SDMX Standards (Version 1.0) are in the process of being submitted to ISO for acceptance as a Technical Specification.

2. SODI is proposed as an alignment project under SDMX, as a proof of its concept of data sharing, within the European Statistical System. The project is lead by Eurostat; the national statistical institutes of Germany, France, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK participate in the pilot phase, which started in November 2004.

II. OBJECTIVES

3. The SODI project has been designed to test a new approach for collecting and disseminating short-term statistics from EU Member States, aimed particularly at:

- Making short-term statistics at EU available more quickly, ideally at the same time as they are available at national level;
- Making these statistics easily accessible to users in formats that facilitate further use.

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4. The project is centred on the concept of data published at national level by EU Member States being made simultaneously available through a common dissemination environment at EU level. The project will investigate not only technical issues but also the issues related to divergence between national and EU versions of the same indicators.

III. APPROACH

5. The SODI project will investigate various approaches, based on SDMX standards and tools, for streamlining the collection of these indicators. The project will address, among other issues:

- The data model and metadata standard to be used (SDMX-based);
- The interface to be used;
- Implementation of the “pull” mechanism
- Legal questions (relation of SODI with the reporting obligations of the Member States);
- Questions of validation and adjustment by Member States and by Eurostat;
- Integration of the SODI concept into the data life cycle for EU statistics.

6. There will be a regular exchange of experience with the OECD NAWWE project, in order to ensure the coherence of technical developments in the two projects.

7. The SODI concept requires a by far higher degree of harmonization of statistical dissemination in the Member States (at least in the form of a "European" area in their dissemination data base) than the current data transmission methods.

IV. EXPECTED OUTCOME

8. The special benefits of SODI would be:

- A single European source for up-to-date economic data from all participating Member States;
- A dissemination format based on the SDMX standard. With special modules for visualisation, this will improve the readability for citizens, but give at the same time the chance to automatic data analysis for business users;
- Decreased reporting burden to international organizations, as the SDMX standards used are accepted by all stakeholders.

9. SODI shows the need for standards in data and metadata, and the need for concepts understood the same way everywhere in Europe. It will demonstrate the need for a discipline in publishing; national dissemination has to be simultaneous with European dissemination. This will mean revising transmission procedures and aligning our treatment processes, for instance in seasonal adjustment.
