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Session 4 : Globalisation, statistics and National Accounts

Globalisation: A Challenge for National Statistics and National Accounts

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In relation to globalisation, statistics are confronted with a number of challenges. These challenges can be grouped into four broad categories:

- The measurement of the phenomenon itself. How can we measure (the further development of) globalisation? Which indicators capture the further growth of the international interdependencies between national economies?
- The description of the behaviour of multinational enterprises (MNEs). MNEs are the driving forces behind globalisation. Question is how and why MNEs act and behave as they do? What are the reasons behind the division of activities and the subsequent allocation of these activities to countries? What are the comparative advantages of national economies?
- The impact of globalisation on traditional indicators. Globalisation can have a significant impact on all aspects of societal progress: economically, socially as well as environmentally. Especially in the domains of significant impact, it is important to have available more (detailed) information to support further analysis and research.
- The impact of globalisation on the compilation of traditional indicators. The increasing share of enterprises running affairs on an international scale poses specific problems when compiling national statistics. These problems need to be addressed.

The paper will mainly discuss the latter issue. More specifically, attention will be paid to problems related to the compilation of national accounts data, e.g. allocation of output and value added (including the question of valuation of intra-enterprise imports and exports of goods and services), specialisation of supply chains and related problems (exchange of knowledge related intangible assets, special purpose entities, etc.), re-export and transit trade.

Furthermore, the need for clear and practical international guidelines and the need for more intensified international co-operation, including exchange of individual data, will be advocated as well. Doing so, attention is also paid to the work of the Joint UNECE/OECD/Eurostat Working Group on the Impact of Globalisation on National Accounts (WGGNA).