



Please note not all delegates were available at the time the photo was taken.

Statistical Information Systems Collaboration Community Workshop

21-23 March 2011

Report

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Table of contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
DAY 1 SESSION 1 – LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR A STRONG COLLABORATION COMMUNITY.....	4
DAY 1 SESSION 2 – COLLABORATION COMMUNITY, IMPLEMENTATIONS AND EXPERIENCE	5
DAY 1 SESSION 3 – VISION FOR SIS STRATEGIES AND MODULES.....	6
DAY 1 SESSION 4 – WHY IS MY ORGANISATION INTERESTED?	6
DAY 2 SESSION 1 – FOCUS ON SDMX	7
DAY 2 SESSION 2 – USER FOCUS, REQUIREMENTS TO PUBLISHING	8
DAY 2 SESSION 3 – COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE AND FRAMEWORK	8
DAY 2 SESSION 4 – COLLABORATION IN PRACTICE	11
DAY 2 – CLOSING REMARKS.....	12
DAY 3 – OVERVIEW	13
DAY 4 – OVERVIEW	13
APPENDIX A – LIST OF DELEGATES	14
APPENDIX B – AGENDA.....	15
APPENDIX C – SISCC PRODUCT BREAKDOWN STRUCTURE	18
APPENDIX D – REFERENCES	19
APPENDIX E – FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPATES ON DRAFT REPORT	20

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The Statistical Information System (SIS) Collaboration Community is a community of organisations, that use the OECD's software to manage the lifecycle of statistical information. The OECD initially collaborated with the IMF in 2007 and the community subsequently expanded to include other International Organisations and National statistical offices, who have adopted the software. Today the community members include: OECD, International Monetary Fund, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Italian National Institute of Statistics, Statistics New Zealand and the European Commission.

The 2011 community workshop which was held at the OECD in Paris, brought all community members and other interested organisations together for the first time, setting the path for a new phase of active, multilateral collaboration towards a common goal – developing together state-of-the-art Statistical Information Systems according to a community oriented model, and sharing of experiences, knowledge and best practices.

Objectives

The theme of the workshop was “Laying the foundations for a strong collaboration community” with the following key objectives:

- Build a community spirit of sharing and working together for a common goal.
- Facilitate the sharing of ideas and knowledge to increase the use and awareness of OECD common statistical information systems.
- Confirm and initiate collaboration framework.

As an overall result, the strengthening of the community spirit was pursued, as was sharing information, experiences and addressing the questions of organisations interested in joining the community.

Outline

The main workshop was held over 2 days at the OECD conference centre in Paris. A total of 51 people attended representing 15 different organisations. See [appendix A](#) for full list of delegates. Following topics were covered:

- Presentations on use cases, working implementations and benefits gained from the systems,
- Vision for SIS strategies and user requirements,
- Focus on SDMX, an area where SIS have always been at the forefront of standards implementation,
- Community governance and feedback on collaboration experiences among community members.

3rd and 4th days were open to Community members only and covered specific topics in more detail, including

- Refinement of the governance model and development processes,
- Definition of the requirements to be included in the 2011 community workplan.

Main Outcomes for Interested Organisations

- Helped them increase their awareness and knowledge of OECD's SIS and the Collaboration Community,
- Benefited from the experience of member organisations on their respective SIS implementations and business cases.
- New relationships were created through the sharing of ideas and knowledge.
- Following the workshop, a number of organisations showed interest in evaluating the Statistical Information Systems or joining the community.

Main outcomes for member organisations

- Exchanged precious experience, technical expertise and business views.
- Confirmed and refined the proposed collaboration framework and governance model.
- Agreed on the requirements to form the community workplan for 2011.
- Strengthened relationships and sense of belonging among community members.

Through the sharing of vision and the laying of the foundations for future collaborative work, the path has been set for the community to bring substantial value and benefits to community members in 2011 and beyond.

DAY 1 SESSION 1 – LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR A STRONG COLLABORATION COMMUNITY

The opening session included welcome speeches from Martine Durand, OECD Chief Statistician, Enrico Giovannini, President of IStat, and Lester Rodriques, OECD Head of Information Technology and Network Services. They both enforced the message of collaboration and encouraged participants to use this opportunity to build on the work already started.

Martine Durand welcomed the participants and highlighted how the SIS collaboration community has now been recognised and promoted by a number of key groups including OECD Committee on Statistics (CSTAT), the High-Level Group for Strategic Developments in Business Architecture in Statistics (HLG-BAS), the Sharing Advisory Board (SAB), and the International Group for the Management of Statistical Information Systems (MSIS). **Martine also talked about the pros of collaboration including facilitating mobility of ‘agents’ by sharing human capital, saving time and money, sharing new features, use of standards such as SDMX, and the cons, increased complexity in project management, how to involve all partners, not just international organisations.** The overall message was that Statistical Directorate at OECD fully supports collaboration among international organisations and government agencies, and looks forward to the positive outcomes from the workshop.

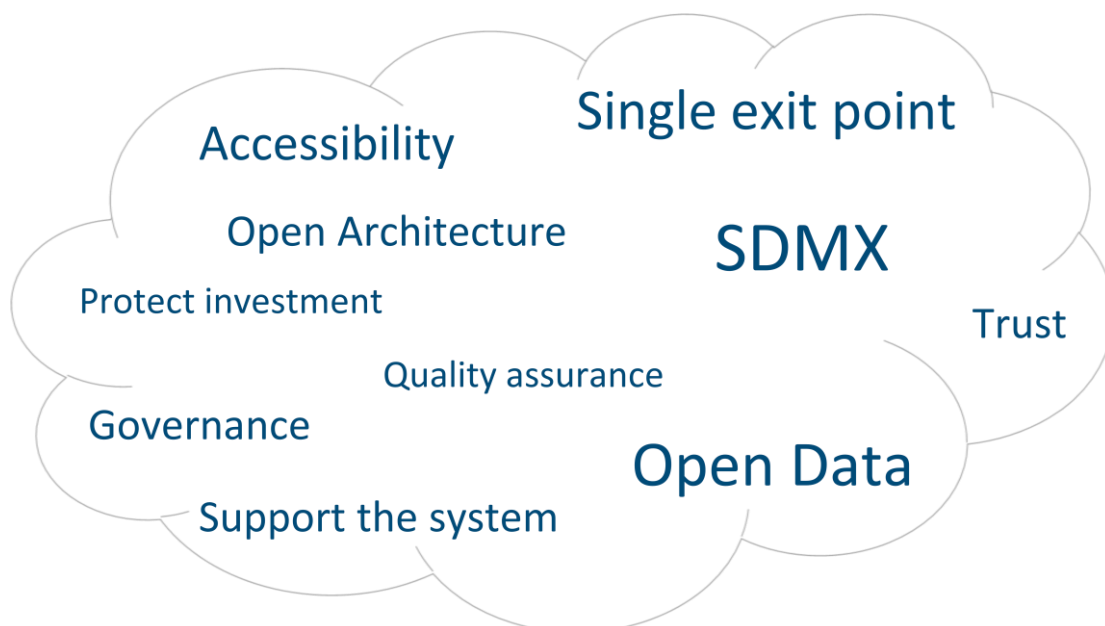
Enrico Giovannini, President of ISTAT and former Chief Statistician at OECD. Enrico was a key driver behind the implementation and reform of the statistical systems at the OECD and spoke about how the same had been put into action in ISTAT with the implementation of the OECD’s .Stat solution and evaluation of the other SIS modules, StatWorks and MetaStore. Enrico gave an insight into the early days of the SIS modules and how the goal of being a federated modular system as opposed to a centralised system, was a key to its success. There were still some areas it does not currently handle such as validation and dissemination of Microdata. **Enrico talked about the new challenges this group and organisations will face including culture change, ‘for young people sharing is normal and we need to learn from them’. NSO’s need to show the benefits of collaboration and how this pays off the investment made.** Also, how do we as organisations embrace new initiatives such as Open Data? A key message was trust in the system and trust in OECD to support the system.

Lester Rodriques, OECD’s Head of Information Technology and Network Services welcomed participants and emphasised the importance the OECD places on sharing and collaborating. **The benefits are substantial and it also sends a strong message to our stakeholders that we are actively pursuing opportunities to reduce costs and deliver value.** He thanked Martine and Enrico for their participation and support. Lester then highlighted the agenda for the 3 days and invited delegates to actively participate in the discussions to ensure that their own expectations were met.

Session questions and answers

Q. What is the interest and scope of WikiProgress for this group?

A. Very relevant and already being discussed between ISTAT and Wikiprogress team for possible reuse.



Key points cloud based on topics of high interest and discussion points during the workshop.

DAY 1 SESSION 2 – COLLABORATION COMMUNITY, IMPLEMENTATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

This session gave the current collaborating members an opportunity to share their experiences and implementations of OECD.Stat in their institutions with the rest of the group.

Rayhana Ruzehaji – ABS

Rayhana Ruzehaji, Technical Project Manager, gave a brief introduction on the vision they have for ABS.Stat and the desired outcomes. These included ‘Support exchange and sharing of data and metadata’, ‘improve the way in which ABS communicates statistics’, ‘efficiency of access and reuse of ABS data’, and ‘interoperability of ABS data and opportunities for collaboration’. Rayhana showed how ABS currently provides data to users through the use of excel documents uploaded to web pages, and how .Stat is to provide a means for users to dynamical query this same data. For ABS some key areas that are being and will need to be addressed include, accessibility (WCAG2.0), support of Fiscal years and security. The latter was part of the collaboration exercise between OECD, ABS and SNZ, to move to a 3-tier architecture which was presented in session 4 on day 2. ABS will go live with an ABS.Stat basic by June 2011. As with many NSO’s ABS highlighted a number of challenges both from within their organisation and external stakeholders. These ranged from security requirements, increased demand for detailed information, data visualisation, subject matter buy-in, developing collaboratively. Rayhana finished by saying the experience to date had been a positive one.

Stefania Bergamasco – ISTAT

IStat implementation experiences were presented by Stefania Bergamasco, Project Manager of I.Stat project. Stefania (pictured right) first spoke about the roadmap and key dates starting with the initial collaboration in October 2009 to the final public release of I.Stat in 2010. It was also impressive to hear 15,000 users visited the I.Stat application during the first month with a total of 80,000 page impressions. The I.Stat application contains 19 top level themes and a total of 361 hyper cubes. Stefania gave an overview of the project structure including the strategic group of the President’s office, Department for Statistical Production, division for users’ needs, integration and Territory and ITC division. A key part of the success to date being buy-in from the top down. There was a major challenge with changing the system to support another language other than French and English due to hardcoded references. A lot of work by OECD in coordination with IStat, went into removal of these from the code and creation of resource files for better management of multiple languages. Stefania thanked the OECD SIS team for being responsive to their needs and for quickly resolving the issues. Stefania finished by outlining their wish list for the future including being able to apply more granular access permissions to queries, and improving the display of the queries by greater control of slicing and dicing to avoid empty tables.



Tony Breen – SNZ

Tony Breen project manager for the SDDM project at Statistics NZ started by looking at the challenges they faced within the dissemination area. These included; a number of legacy silo systems, no standard publishing process, and a high current total cost of ownership. Statistics NZ vision is to have a standard dissemination platform for publishing official statistics. Tony explained that the system will be made up of 4 blocks or components, Business Managed for data provision contracts, System managed for data release register, Subject Matter Area Managed for packaging and making data available to the register, and Product Development and Publishing managed for products and dissemination store. The latter is where the .Stat solution is positioned. Tony talked about how .Stat is currently being used for providing data to the Business Toolbox application though the SDMX WS, and the next phase with the replacement of Table Builder (Beyond2020 commercial product). The feedback and results of the recent collaboration work between OECD, ABS and SNZ were outstanding and the aim is to continue this good work and significantly accelerate delivery.

Gini Robins and Gareth McGuinness – IMF

IMF presentation was split into two parts; the first was presented by Gini Robins project manager for the IMF.Stat project. Gini started by outlining the objectives of the Economic Data Warehouse project which included, establishing a single repository for the storage of economic data and associated metadata collected and produced throughout the Fund, reduce the reporting burden on member countries, and strengthen data management

processes to enhance the quality of data and metadata. Next Gini covered the roadmap from the initial MOU with OECD in 2007 through to today, with the introduction of the IMF Data Explorer application. IMF had to make a number of changes to .Stat in order to meet their needs, some of these have been merged into the core code others have not. IMF took a different approach to OECD and what .Stat was designed for, with the publishing of one giant cube rather than smaller more manageable chunks in specific datasets. The presentation then moved onto the new Data Explorer demonstration and Gareth McGuinness took over. This tool was developed by the commercial company Prognoz specifically for IMF and sits on top of the .Stat data warehouse. The video provided a good demonstration of this product. IMF also uses the MetaStore application.



DAY 1 SESSION 3 – VISION FOR SIS STRATEGIES AND MODULES

This session gave those delegates who were not so familiar with the SIS suite of products, an overview of each of the modules as well as a little bit of how they have evolved and the vision for the future. The session included presentations by Trevor Fletcher, Head of Statistical Information Management Systems unit in the Statistical Directorate, and the ITN Analytical and Statistical team who manage and support the use of the SIS modules.

Trevor opened the session by giving a brief history of the reasons for software sharing, the challenges faced by the organisations and how it has evolved to where we are today with the SIS community. Trevor talked about how we are all partners, not competitors and software should be built with sharing in mind. Jens Dossé, Head of Analytical and Statistical Systems (pictured right), then talked about the SIS strategies and the modules from concept to how they are now an integral part of the production of Statistical information at the OECD.



Following on from Jens, delegates were provided with a brief introduction to each of the SIS modules; StatWorks, MetaStore and .Stat. The presentations were given by Karine Lepron, Petrus Kaartinen, and Casper Meyer Zu Schlochtern. Demonstrations were also provided which can be downloaded from the workshop web site (See [Appendix D – References](#)).

Session questions and answers

Q. Is it possible to use different classification from OECD 42 types in MetaStore?

A. Yes, it is possible.

Q. StatWorks was tested, it is good for macro data – any plans for microdata?

A. No plans at present, but perhaps a collaboration member would like to take this task on.

DAY 1 SESSION 4 – WHY IS MY ORGANISATION INTERESTED?

This session was all about interested organisations who are not currently members. This list included; Statistics Canada, European Commission (EC), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), France's National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE), Mexico's National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI), Statistics Netherlands (CBS), Statistics Poland, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP).

There were two main presentations, the first by Marek Chroscicki from EC and the second by Michiel Eijkhout from Statistics Netherlands. Marek said that the EC became a member today and will now work with OECD to go live with their implementation of .Stat by mid April. Marek also outlined some of the EC expectations including customising to their specific needs, support, training and ongoing maintenance. Michiel talked about Statistics Netherlands interest in .Stat and how it was seen as the only viable candidate for replacing their current StatLine solution. They are looking at how they can retain some of the existing systems with possible integration with .Stat to avoid a large development programme. Michiel also provided an overview of the Blaise community and how

the SISCC might be interested to compare and learn from its success. Blaise is a software which is used for interview assistance and survey processing. It was developed by Statistics Netherlands and is shared with more than 30 organisations. See www.blaise.com for more information.

Session chair Eric Anvar then did a round table to ask all the other interested organisations present to provide the reason for their interest in SIS modules, the business issues they hope to address, as well as their expectations from the workshop. A similar message came across from the majority of the organisations. We have same needs as everyone else: decentralised in-house environment, users cannot find things, need more data coherence, need a common output data warehouse, better integration with charts and maps. Also a number of questions were put forward including: What does “collaboration” mean? What are the “duties” of the community member? and For organisations not using Microsoft technology, what are the implications of choosing .Stat? SDMX was also a constant theme of the discussions. In tune with Ms. Durand’s opening remarks, some organizations mentioned the potential of a collaboration community to drive and guide more efficient, effective and coherent development of statistical information management in national statistical systems as a major incentive for their involvement.



The day ended with a tour of the conference facilities and the delegates joined OECD in the Château for an aperitif before heading off for the evening.

DAY 2 SESSION 1 – FOCUS ON SDMX

The first half of the morning of day 2 focused on the hot topic of Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX). A panel of experts provided the presentations and answered a number of questions put forward by delegates. The panel consisted of Jens Dossé, Dario Camol, and David Baraclough from OECD, Gangti Zhu from IMF and Francesco Rizzo from IStat. The first presentation was by OECD and covered a brief history of the SDMX standards, the new 2.1 standards, and uses of SDMX in web applications and user interfaces. It was also an opportunity to initiate the discussion around what 2.1 standards will mean for the .Stat solution and its users.

The next presentation by Gangti Zhu talked about the collaboration work between OECD and the IMF to jointly develop the SDMX web service which is an integral part of the .Stat solution. Gangti also highlighted some of the changes IMF has made to improve security and reduce the possibility of SQL injection attacks. SDMX does not natively provide security and this is usually handled by the clients. IMF is now working with OECD to merge these changes back into the core web services for the benefit of all. SDMX is a major part of the systems at IMF including the data exchange between OECD and IMF to populate each of the data warehouses (IMF.Stat and OECD.Stat).

To finish the session Francesco Rizzo presented how SMDX has been in use at IStat since 2004 and the evolution over time including the EuroStat Census hub project to work towards a single exit point for all data and metadata. Francesco also talked about how IStat has been and is still heavily involved in the standards including coordinating a sub-group on the compact message for the new 2.1 standards. IStat have also utilised the SDMX infrastructure available with .Stat and from EuroStat to build a mapping systems that maps the I.Stat data warehouse to different data sources through a registry. This is now being looked at further to incorporate into .Stat as part of the core solution for reuse by others.

Session questions and answers

Q. What does the group think of alternate API’s and data structures that conform to underlying SDMX information model but not necessarily to the existing standard formats XML and DDI for bulk extract of data mainly for internal systems?

A. OECD has already started to reflect on alternatives as a sponsor of SDMX but we should try and stick close to the SDMX interface. OpenData WS is seen as one possible alternative. Direct SQL access to the database is also being investigated as an internal option for bulk extract.

Q. Have there been any thoughts to implement caching to improve SDMX performance?

A. Performance has improved with the implementation of streaming which has been a very efficient way to access large amounts of data through SDMX.

Q. Has there been any effort to look at the source of the requests for SDMX queries, to improve security?

A. Native support for SDMX security is through the SOAP header information. The two ways to handle this is through server side and client side implementation. Client side is the preferred method for handling security to avoid the user coming into the systems through use of WCF. Also, a user can only send 1 request at a time to stop multiple requests from the same user. Only authentication users can request data through SDMX web service.

DAY 2 SESSION 2 – USER FOCUS, REQUIREMENTS TO PUBLISHING

The first presentation was of the OECD Regional eXplorer v4 visualisation application and was given by Professor Mikael Jern from NComVA. This provided a nice transition from SDMX to user focus as Mikael explained it is utilising the SDMX WS to source the data from .Stat used to display the visuals. Mikael talked about how eXplorer is built to provide a story of the data from selecting data, discovery of trends and patterns, to arrive at a result to gain insight. Mikael also demonstrated how this result can be published to blogs or web pages to enable the user to add the words to the story that can then be shared with others. NComVA have also been working with IStat to implement 'Noi Italia' a standalone version of the eXplorer providing users of IStat data with stories and visualisations. OECD has also a number of these available. Mikael also talked about the eXplorer light version which has been linked to the .Stat data warehouse via the SDMX web service to gain dynamic links to the source data. This light version is to be made available to collaborating members as part of the .Stat solution.

Next delegates were given a presentation by Toby Green Head of OECD Publishing Division entitled 'User-Centric dissemination'. Toby discussed the methods to capture your audience by getting inside other organisations web sites with an interesting analogy of the Trojan horse. This can be done by providing publishing metadata with your datasets, building the right tools and application for your audience, and being accessible. Toby talked about how all the data, although being served up in many different formats and through different interfaces, is being sourced from the OECD.Stat data warehouse. This ensures a consistent message across all publications. The PAC team were also available during the lunch break to discuss any specific areas of interest further with delegates.

The session finished with an overview of the OECD and SIS community workplan for 2011 and collaborating members requirements. This was provided by Jens Dossé, Head of Analytical and Statistical Systems. Jens talked about the main developments scheduled to be completed this year including migration to SQL 2008, TFS upgrade to 2010, SDMX 2.1 integration, and the Browser redesign. The latter will be coordinated with the collaborating members to ensure their requirements form part of this work package. There are also a number of member specific developments such as support of Time Series ID's, Cross-domain concepts, Fiscal years including non-standard quarters, and one which was big on everyone's agenda accessibility. It was stressed that members' contributions were vital to ensure the delivery of this full work program.

DAY 2 SESSION 3 – COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE AND FRAMEWORK

This session which focused on the collaboration community governance and framework, was presented by Eric Anvar, Head of Core Information Systems and Jonathan Challenger who manages and coordinates the activities of the SIS collaboration community. Eric introduced the session and explained that it would take a slightly different format to the previous ones, to enable delegates to ask questions as we go and discuss the various aspects presented to the group.

Jonathan highlighted the three organisational enablers that form the collaboration framework; Governance and process, Members and culture, and Tools and technology. Next Jonathan talked about the community values, partnership, commitment, transparency, and foster common standards, for example SDMX. One of the key messages, and part of the main philosophy of the community, is based on collaboration as opposed to a customer supplier commercial relationship. Eric then introduced the breakdown of the contributions to the community which can be seen in figure 2.3.1 (Breakdown of the contributions to the community).

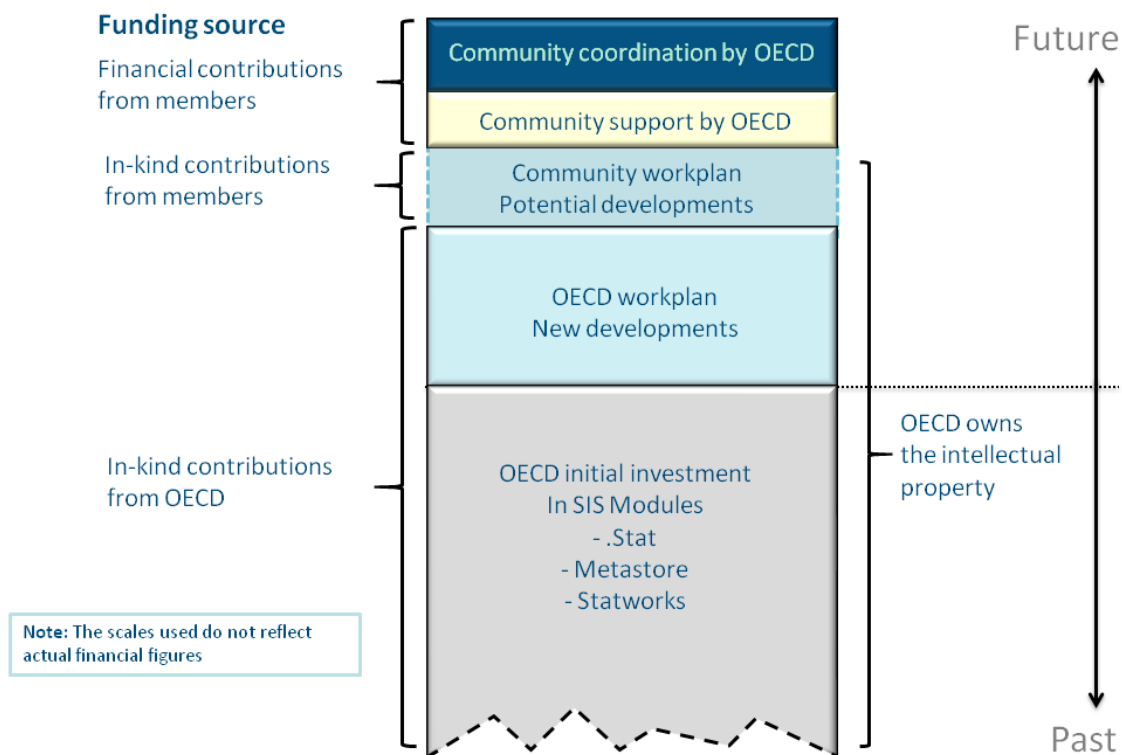


Figure 2.3.1 Breakdown of the contributions to the community

This slide generated a number of questions from delegates including:

Q. The model looks more like an opensource model. Have you considered looking at the PC-Axis community where members meet and discuss requirements at a meeting such as this one?

A. Yes, this model is similar to PC-Axis community. Requirements have been discussed over the last few months and will be discussed further in detail tomorrow with members.

Q. The size of the OECD workplan chunk is considerably larger than the community workplan, ideally would we be moving towards a single workplan for the community as a whole?

A. OECD is already providing the community with our core SIS products, so all members can take advantage of the significant development and investments already made by the OECD. The OECD SIS team works to a specific annual workplan to meet the needs of OECD users and a large part of these developments also meet the needs of member organisations. The decision on what is included in the OECD workplan remains with OECD and items identified by members would be fed back through the internal consultation and prioritisation process and would become part of this plan if seen as a high priority.

Q. Could community coordination be rotated amongst members?

A. We need to build the community framework and reach a level of stability before we consider such a move. Certain aspects of the coordination could be taken on by members.

Q. Clarification that ABS, IStat and IMF have made changes to the core code base?

A. IMF: That was the initial intention and some of the changes have been merged others have not. A convergence work has to be carried out so that IMF's platform may fully benefit from the value add brought by the community in the future. IStat: A fork was created to deal with the language requirements and it is agreed that these will be merged back into the core code in the next version. ABS: A recent collaboration exercise was undertaken and changes to the core were made, which will be included in the next version.

Jonathan highlighted the key documents that form the basis of the collaboration: MOU, the bilateral agreement between OECD and organisation 'X'; intellectual property, which remains 100% with OECD but made available for use by the community; governance model, which is managed 100% by OECD but validated by the community; community workplan, which is decided 100% by community consensus; and OECD workplan, which is decided 100% by OECD but shared with the community. Jonathan also talked about the activities at the 3 levels; strategic, management, and operational. These activities are then broken down further into 4 main activity streams;

Promotion, Build, Support, and Coordination playing the central role to ensure coherence across all of the other activities. Jonathan mentioned that although most collaboration requires leadership, and in this case OECD as the leading member contributes 100%, the SIS collaboration community is one that will evolve over time depending on the level of participation of its members. Each of the main activity streams have a number of inputs and outputs for example the initial contribution input to coordination would output as bilateral work streams, multilateral work streams, governance framework, project lifecycle, and the community workplan.

The project lifecycle, or what can be referred to as ‘SIS Application Lifecycle management’ started the discussion on how the community will work together technically from the concept to delivery which was further elaborated in the following session ‘Collaboration in practice’. Jonathan talked about the points to consider as well as the baseline that is to be agreed before working on core components and code. These included, having the right skill sets, matching technology and following the agreed development standards. Figure 2.3.2 “What are the scenarios”, highlights the scenarios for taking on developments, starting with the simplest at the bottom moving towards the top and a higher level of complexity.

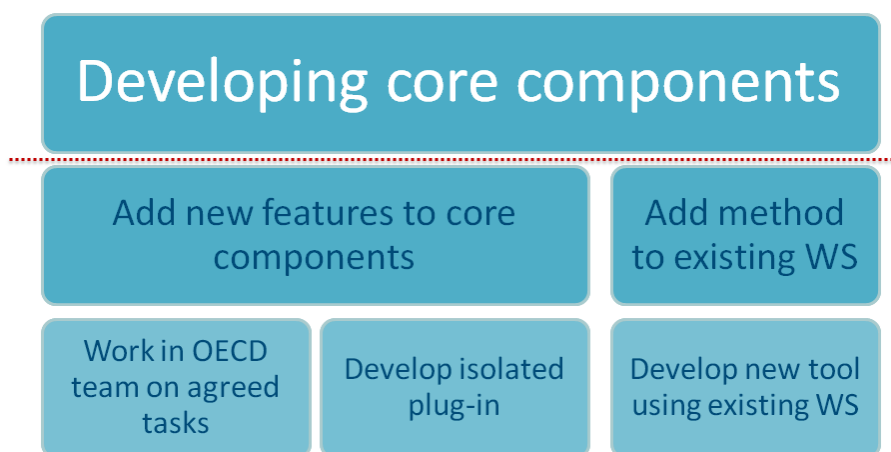


Figure 2.3.2 What are the scenarios

Jonathan spoke about how members that wish to undertake the development of core components (top line) from start to finish must have a very good understanding of the core, cross dependencies and demonstrated commitment to the common needs. These tasks are only likely to be undertaken by those who have worked with the core team by sending staff to OECD.

He presented an overview of the tools used by the community that are helping to provide the means to collaborate. These include face to face meetings, for example SISCC workshop, video conferences, telephone conferences, email, SharePoint sites (SISCC portal), Skype (We said hello to Timothy Lo ABS Project manager who joined us from Australia via Skype), WebEx, online conferencing software which allows for audio and screen sharing, TFS with visual studio as the development tool of choice, Direct MC to MC access via specified IP. This was used to help resolve a number of IStat issues which would have taken a lot longer by email.

The session was completed with a presentation by Tony Breen, Project manager at Statistics NZ who talked about Change management in an IT development project. Tony first talked about why we manage change and how if it isn't managed the outcome is chaotic and becomes unmanageable. So what is needed to ensure success? It can be defined as the formula: $(IP + D2E) + (QA+CM) = S^2$. Install package, deployment to environment, quality assurance, and configuration management equals a well managed and successful development. Tony also covered the process for change from submitting the 'Request for change' (RFC) to approval and elaborated on the roles of the advisory board that approves and governs the change process. The board is made up of a number of experts from across the IT environment including Application development, Quality Assurance, Vendor Procurement, Infrastructure, and Security. This ensures a robust process is followed and all aspects are covered. Tony then talked about the release process and 'Request for Release' (RFR). The RFC is submitted to the Change Advisory board, once approved an RFR is created from the RFC to manage the release. This process is well established in the procedures and processes in Statistics NZ and is used for planning, building, testing, rollout and training.

DAY 2 SESSION 4 – COLLABORATION IN PRACTICE

Session 4 continued the theme of the afternoon starting with the report back on the recent collaboration exercise between ABS, SNZ and ABS undertaken in Adelaide Australia. Casper Meyer Zu Schlochtern spent 2 weeks with the development team of ABS and Jonathan Brook from SNZ to work through a number of items including, installation of v1.7 of .Stat, specific environment issues being experienced by ABS, clarifying the collaboration process, and finishing with the development and changes to the core code. The report was jointly presented by Rayhana Ruzehaji Technical Project Manager at the ABS, and Casper from OECD. Casper started by looking at the scenarios, something which was briefly discussed in the previous session and can be seen in figure 2.3.2 on page 9. Next Casper walked through the steps to add features to core components, from submitting a request using the TFS collaboration portal, OECD validating the concept (or idea), writing and submitting the detailed specification, evaluating and agreeing on the list of all requests as well as setting priority, before commencing the development phase. Once developments are completed, changes will be deployed, tested, any bugs resolved (responsibility of the original organisation), a new install package is built and distributed to all members. Casper highlighted that with TFS2010 it will be easier to do parallel developments on the same components.

The proposal that was put forward was to undertake improving the security of .Stat by implementing an n-tier architecture, as this was a priority for ABS in order to satisfy their security team and release the solution for public use. The purpose was to remove all direct database calls (16 were initially found) and provide another layer using two web services, InformationBrowser and DataWriter. The SDMX web service was also looked at as this too made direct calls to the database. The process as described above was followed and the changes made. As this was undertaken while developments on existing components were still taking place it was decided to make the changes in the ABS version and then request a time slot to merge the changes back into the core during 1 day. This was then checked and validated by the OECD team to ensure the solution was working as it should and could be built. The team decided on some key points which should be part of the process. These included automated unit tests, and the organisation that made the changes takes ownership of bug fixes.

Rayhana wrapped up by saying how the exercise had been a success and now further discussion was required to clarify and determine with the community, the governance structure, coding standards, naming conventions, testing standards, documentation and capturing requirements.

Following on from the exercise report Bertrand Riviere, Developer on the .Stat project team at OECD looked at how we are using TFS, what improvements will be made, the steps to introduce new standards, and migration to TFS2010 to support a more collaborative environment. Bertrand first covered the key terms or vocabulary of the TFS environment, including; work items management, naming conventions, branching and merging policy, source control, test policy and development best practices. Next Bertrand highlighted how we will move to TFS2010 to take advantage of the new features such as 'Gated Check-in' or 'Unbreakable build', to ensure code cannot be submitted without passing a set of standards. This will commence with forcing all check-ins to be associated to work items, verifying that code checked in complies by June 2011. Then by October 2011 test plans will be mandatory along with some basic code analysis rules. Within the first quarter of 2012 more code analysis rules will be applied and code coverage introduced.

Session questions and answers

Q. Will you use a tool to do hot spot analysis to define busy parts of the code to improve optimisation?

A. Yes, we plan to use the tools built into Visual Studio that can perform this task including code analysis.

Q. What are the challenges to manage this type of collaboration environment with organisations using different IT platforms?

A. We don't have a complete answer yet and it was identified during the collaboration exercise as needing further discussion. We will need to decide on a common set or version of tools, how we move to new versions, upgrade path, notifications and scheduling.

Q. What is the vision and process around handling business and software requirements?

A. TFS is being used for the source code and work items for high-level scenarios attaching the business requirements. TFS also has a SharePoint part which will be used to handle the initial requirements

Q. Organisations have their own tools for managing requirements and lifecycle so it is likely there would be some duplication of effort to create this again for the community requirements. How can we avoid this?

A. TFS allows documents to be attached to the scenario or high-level requirement which could be an output document from your own system. We do not want to increase the work load of organisations.

Q. The DPI was mentioned as a way to get data into the .Stat database; does OECD have plans to automate this workflow?

A. We already have this in place through the batch loading command line tool. Also, Statistics NZ have also automated the creation of xml instructions through their own data production system TAC.

Q. Do you have any ideas for how we can better support and up-skill the different teams?

A. ABS found this exercise to be very valuable and think the face to face contact and staff exchanges provides a great way to do this. Just need to work through the logistics. Doesn't always have to be OECD that support others, Statistics NZ have provided support to ABS and it is hoped that ABS can also provide support to others.

DAY 2 – CLOSING REMARKS

Before the main workshop was brought to a close by Lester Rodrigues, Head of ITN, he asked delegates to highlight what they will take away from the workshop, were expectations met, and any other relevant feedback.

UNESCAP – came to get more information about the potential of the different SIS modules for possible application in an ESCAP context & to exchange views and expectations with other organizations, including OECD, National Statistical Offices & other UN entities to the functioning of a SIS Collaboration Community. Expectations were met, and the information obtained will be an important input to building a business case for the future use of statistical information systems in ESCAP.

UNCTAD – came to learn about SIS modules, learnt a lot from the workshop and will take this back to see how it can be used.

Statistics Poland – came to learn, very good opportunity to meet and talk to everyone. He will now take this information to help make the right decision about how to proceed on their current proposed project.

Statistics NZ – initial experiences have been great and came to understand what collaboration means and started to get answers. Been great to meet those we deal with over the video screen in person. Face to face contact has really been useful. The most valuable part has been understanding the workplan and seeing the synergies between what SNZ wants to do and what others want to do.

IStat – Been great to share experiences and listen to interested organisations point of view. Looking forward to working on joint developments and share ideas, knowledge and form the SISCC group. Hoping this is just a starting point to continue communication and the ongoing collaboration.

INEGI – Take home many ideas and knowledge of the SIS modules. Must see .Stat in action to test and see how it fits with dissemination. It was very good to discuss and find out more about SDMX integration.

INSEE – Got a lot of information and will now report back within INSEE and see what comes out of it.

IMF – Very impressed by the number of participants present and level of commitment from community members. The community can learn from the mistakes of the early days of the collaboration and discuss how we work on a single code base.

Statistics Canada – Learned a lot, in early stages of reviewing dissemination model will need to look at all options but SIS does seem promising. SDMX remains a little bit of a mystery as not using it, but see the advantages of using it especially for international data exchange. More work to do on the cost/benefits analysis. Quality of presentations was very high.

ABS – Very valuable and it is important to have this meeting on an annual basis. ABS is really looking forward to collaborating and working on .Stat with other organisations.

OECD – Up to now we had bilateral relationships but it feels like we have now formed a wider collaboration community and spirit with a sense of belonging and working towards the same goal.

Lester informed the group that when we first started planning the workshop, the OECD was unsure of the level of interest of organisations or what to expect in terms of outcome. Given the positive feedback and active participation of the delegates, we can only be happy with the outcome. We have all jointly contributed to meeting the goal of “laying the foundations for a strong collaboration community”. The dialogue and comments have added value, delegates have actively participated, and given us more to reflect on as we look forward to making this a workable community for all. Lester reviewed the key objectives that were mentioned at the start of day 1 and how these have been discussed and covered during the 2 days. He emphasised that the OECD is fully committed to the collaboration community and repeated the message that Chief Statistician Martine Durand gave at the start of day 1, of how collaboration and software sharing is promoted at the highest level by member countries. If organisations can demonstrate benefits and show the value of what we are doing then they will continue to be supported and this sends a positive message to our stakeholders. He thanked the delegates and stressed that it is important for members to continue the discussions that were started at this workshop, using the community SharePoint site as well through audio/video conferences.

DAY 3 – OVERVIEW

A change to the original agenda was proposed and members agreed to this. The day was split into two parts; the morning would cover requirements, and the afternoon would be split into parallel sessions to discuss how we will work together technically, and the governance model. The sessions were conducted in a brainstorming format with a designated facilitator, to ensure that the information was captured and the objectives met.

The requirements session gave members an opportunity to produce a list of needs for their respective organisations and then report back on the top 2-3 requirements. Common requirements (those with 3 or more organisations interested) were collected and grouped together to identify those of higher importance to the group. The next step was to identify an owner for the requirements who would be tasked with producing the detailed specification for each of the requirements. A deadline was set for the 15 April to produce and circulate a first draft for comments before finalising these specifications by 30 April. It was agreed that a standard template would be created to ensure consistent information was gathered.

The outcomes of the requirements session can be seen in [Appendix C – SISCC Product breakdown structure](#). This shows the community workplan work packages and components of these work packages.

The afternoon session was split into two groups, technical and non-technical to make better use of the time. The technical group led by Jens Dossé concentrated on how TFS will be used, branching, standards, testing, the approach (Agile) including length of sprints and number of releases. They also proposed a timeline to implement some of the changes, TFS2010 upgrade and Naming conventions by end of April 2011. The non-technical group continued the discussion on the governance model as presented in session 3 on day 2. They discussed the three levels in detail, strategic, management and operational, and came up with a list of roles and responsibilities for each. A number of key procedures were identified that require further elaboration. The governance model would be updated to reflect these changes and they would be implemented incrementally to avoid difficulties of acceptance.

DAY 4 – OVERVIEW

The morning of day 4 was devoted to a further discussion on SDMX and mainly around the IStat mapping solution. The idea was to discover if it would be of use to include in the .Stat solution and if members agreed be part of the SDMX developments of 2011. Each member organisation was asked to provide comments based on their own needs and build a set of requirements to be detailed further in an overall SDMX work package. It was decided that OECD would lead this work and work closely with other organisations to include their specific needs in the specification. The agreed requirements for SDMX can be seen in [Appendix C – SISCC Product breakdown structure](#). This shows the SDMX work package (WP2) and components of this work package

APPENDIX A – LIST OF DELEGATES

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APPENDIX B – AGENDA

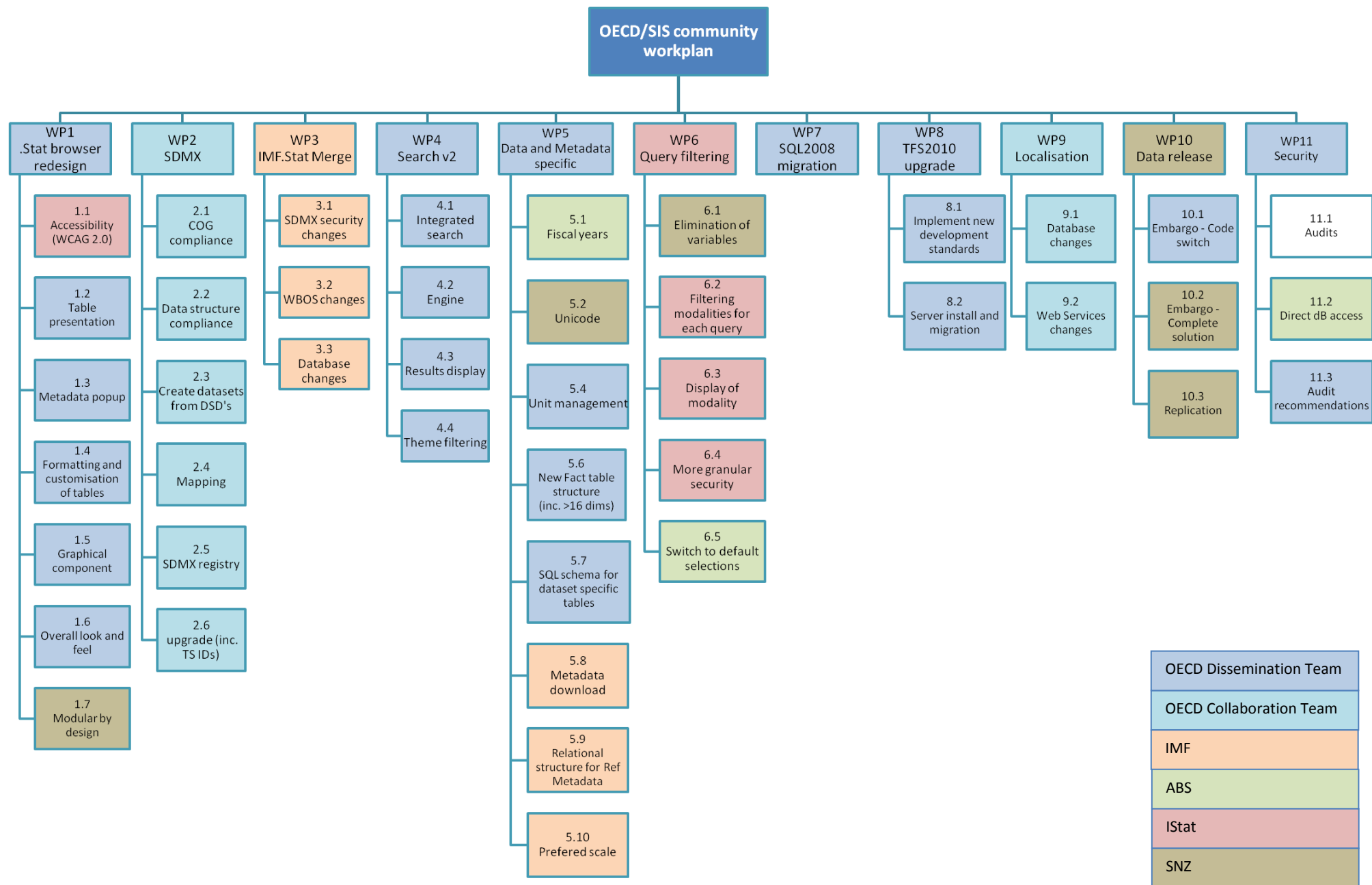
Ref	Day	Start time	Finish time	Session	Presentation title	Description	Room	Audience	Presenter (s)	Chair
1.1	1	0845hrs	0925hrs	Laying the foundations for a strong collaboration community	Registration	Delegates to arrive and go through security	Conference centre	All	N/A	Lester Rodrigues
1.2	1	0930hrs	0935hrs		Welcome	Welcome and opening speech by Head of Information Technology and Network Services	CC2	All	Lester Rodrigues	
1.3	1	0935hrs	0950hrs		Introduction by Chief Statistician	OECD Chief Statistician Martine Durand will briefly welcome delegates to OECD and introduce the OECDs vision for Statistical Information Management Systems	CC2	All	Martine Durand	
1.4	1	0950hrs	1020hrs		Laying the foundations for a strong collaboration community	Guest speech by Enrico Giovannini, President of Istat and former Chief Statistician and Director of the Statistics Directorate at OECD. Enrico was a key driven behind the implementation and reform of the statistical systems at the OECD.	CC2	All	Enrico Giovannini (Istat)	
1.5	1	1020hrs	1030hrs		Workshop agenda	Introducing the workshop agenda for the 2 days	CC2	All	Lester Rodrigues	
1.6	1	1035hrs	1050hrs		Tea/Coffee break	Refreshments provided outside the conference room for delegates to take a break		All	N/A	
1.7	1	1050hrs	1055hrs	Collaboration community implementations and experiences	Introducing the collaborating partners	Lester Rodrigues will introduce the current organisations who have signed MOU's and the tools that they are collaborating on	CC2	All	Lester Rodrigues	Lester Rodrigues
1.8	1	1055hrs	1120hrs		Australian Bureau of Statistics experiences, demonstration and future needs	Why .Stat was chosen, how it is being implemented, and experiences that could help others. With focus on moving from Java to .NET environment and skillsets.	CC2	All	Rayhana Ruzehaji (ABS)	
1.9	1	1120hrs	1145hrs		Italian National Institute of Statistics experiences, demonstration and future needs	Why .Stat was chosen, how it is being implemented, and experiences that could help others. With focus on localisation and supporting Italian language.	CC2	All	Stefania Bergamasco (Istat)	
1.10	1	1145hrs	1210hrs		Statistics New Zealand experiences, demonstration and future needs	Why .Stat was chosen, how it is being implemented, and experiences that could help others. With focus on data loading and automating the functions of the DPI	CC2	All	Tony Breen (SNZ)	
1.11	1	1210hrs	1235hrs		International Monetary Fund experiences, demonstration and future plans	Why .Stat was chosen, how it was implemented, and experiences that could help others. With focus on data dissemination and integration with other tools and platform.	CC2	All	Gini Robins (IMF)	
1.12	1	1235hrs	1345hrs		Lunch break	Lunch can be taken in La Muette Café situated on the ground floor of conference building		N/A	N/A	
1.13	1	1345hrs	1405hrs	Vision for Statistical Information Management Systems and tools	OECD's Statistical Information Management Systems strategies	Presentation by OECD Statistical Directorate (STD) to give delegates an overview of the OECD's SIMS strategies including a brief history and future plans	CC2	All	Trevor Fletcher	Jens Dossé
1.14	1	1405hrs	1420hrs		SIS tools and strategies	An overview of the SIS tools and how this fits within the overall CIS and ITN strategic goals	CC2	All	Jens Dossé	
1.15	1	1420hrs	1455hrs		Introduction to the SIS tools - StatWorks	A brief overview of StatWorks and future plans	CC2	All	Karine Lepron	
1.16	1	1455hrs	1515hrs		Introduction to the SIS tools - MetaStore	A brief overview of MetaStore and future plans	CC2	All	Petrus Kaartinen	
1.17	1	1515hrs	1530hrs		Introduction to the SIS tools - .Stat	A brief overview of .Stat and related services	CC2	All	Casper Meyer	
1.18	1	1530hrs	1545hrs		Break	Short break for delegates to grab a coffee		N/A	N/A	
1.19	1	1545hrs	1610hrs	Why is my organisation interested	Presentation by interested organisation 2	A presentation by European commission outlining the general context and objectives for the use of SIS tools. European commission are looking at an offsite hosting solution rather than in-house.	CC2	All	Marek Chroscicki (EC)	Eric Anvar
1.20	1	1610hrs	1635hrs		Presentation by interested organisation 1	A presentation by Statistics Netherlands on how they currently dissemination statistical data and why .Stat is being considered as a replacement for the current system. Plus a brief overview of the Blaise international community, how it works and history.	CC2	All	Michiel Eijkhout (NL)	
1.21	1	1635hrs	1700hrs		Round table session with interested organisations	A round table session chair by Eric Anvar. An opportunity for the other interested organisations to provide an insight into the reason for their interest in SIS tools	CC2	All	Eric Anvar	
1.22	1	1700hrs	1900hrs		Tour of conference centre	Delegates are invited to join a behind the scenes look at the conference center that is not normally open to non OECD staff. Then please join us in Roger Ockrent room in La Chateau for an appetitif before you depart for the evening.	Conference centre / Roger Ockrent Room	All	OECD	
End of day 1										

Ref	Day	Start time	Finish time	Session	Presentation title	Description	Room	Audience	Presenter (s)	Chair
2.1	2	0930hrs	1005hrs	SDMX focus	Introducing SDMX 2.1	What are the new standards Feedback from public review Changes and impacts for .Stat	CC2	All	Dario Camol / Jens Dossé / David Barraclough	Trevor Fletcher
2.2	2	1005hrs	1025hrs		Improving the security of SDMX WS	What changes have been made to improve the security of SDMX Web service and connecting to other data sources	CC2	All	Gangti Zhu (IMF)	
2.3	2	1025hrs	1050hrs		NSI challenges of meeting EuroStat Census Hub requirements for 2011	A presentation by Istat on what they have put in place to enable the push of data to EuroStat Census Hub for 2011 via SDMX	CC2	All	Francesco Rizzo (Istat)	
2.4	2	1050hrs	1110hrs		Tea/Coffee break	Refreshments provided outside the conference room for delegates to take a break		All		
2.5	2	1110hrs	1135hrs	User focus - requirements to publishing	OECD eExplorer	A presentation by NCVA on how the eExplorer tool has evolved with a brief overview of the new features in v4 including use of SDMX	CC2	All	Mikael Jern (NCVA)	Terri Mitton
2.6	2	1135hrs	1210hrs		User-Centric Dissemination	A presentation by Public Affairs and Communications Directorate (PAC) with a focus on the different interfaces to the .Stat data, and how user requirements are fed back into the work plan. Delegates can follow-up with detailed discussion during the lunchtime session.	CC2	All	Toby Green	
2.7	2	1210hrs	1230hrs		2011 workplan and future requirements	A more detailed look at the roadmap for .Stat solution for 2011 and looking ahead on what might be included in the 2012 workplan	CC2	All	Jens Dossé	
2.8	2	1230hrs	1400hrs		Lunch break	Delegates have the option of taking lunch in La Murette Café situated on the ground floor of conference building or,	Café			
2.8.1	2	1300hrs	1345hrs		Lunchtime session	A brown bag lunch session hosted by PAC for delegates to continue discussions related to the publishing tools covered in session 2.		All	PAC	
2.9	2	1400hrs	1440hrs	Community governance and framework	Proposing the collaboration model	This session will cover the changes that have, and are being put in place to enable the community to be a success. This includes how to ensure sustainability through the business model, requirements process for ensuring needs are met, sharing the support through up skilling of community members and expectations for being part of a collaborative community	CC2	All	Eric Anvar / Jonathan Challener	Eric Anvar
2.10	2	1440hrs	1500hrs		Statistics NZ model for managing change	A look at how a member organisation manages change and quality assurance in an IT development project	CC2	All	Tony Breen (SNZ)	
2.11	2	1500hrs	1520hrs		Break	Short break for delegates to grab a coffee		All		
2.12	2	1520hrs	1600hrs	Collaboration in practice	Collaboration exercise report	A report on the collaboration exercise completed during a recent visit by OECD to ABS	CC2	All	Casper Meyer / Kim Tran (ABS)	Jens Dossé
2.13	2	1600hrs	1620hrs		Ensuring quality code	Following on from the collaboration exercise we will look at managing the code through TFS, source control, and labelling to ensure quality is maintain	CC2	All	Bertrand Riviere	
2.14		1620hrs	1650hrs		Open floor Q&A	An open floor question and answer session chaired by Eric Anvar to discuss any of the topics covered over the last 2 days	CC2	All	Eric Anvar	
2.15	2	1650hrs	1710hrs		Close of open sessions of workshop	Closing speech for open sessions	CC2	All	Lester Rodriques	
2.16	2	1730hrs	2130hrs		Group social activity	Dinner and Seine river cruise	External			
End of day 2										

Ref	Day	Start time	Finish time	Session title	Session description	Room	Audience	Facilitated by
3.1	3	0915hrs	0930hrs	Sign in	Welcome to the Delta building	Delta reception	All	Jonathan Challener
					Tea and coffee will be available in the meeting room upon arrival	DT5104	All	
3.2	3	0935hrs	0945hrs	Agenda for the day	Details of the days sessions and changes based on last 2 days	DT5104	All	Jonathan Challener
3.3	3	0945hrs	1200hrs	Community requirements	Discussion on priority requirements for 2011 including: 1. Identifying common needs 2. list of top 3 requirements from each member 3. assign documenting the requirement specification	DT5104 and DT5106	All	Jens Dossé
3.4	3	1200hrs	1315hrs	Lunch break	Lunch can be taken in Delta Café situated on floor -1 of building	Café		
3.5	3	1315hrs	1600hrs	How to work together technically	Discussion on how best to work together from a technical perspective including: 1. Development standards, 2. Testing 3. TFS, branching and migration to 2010 4. Agile using scrum	DT7106	Technical	Jens Dossé
3.6				Governance model proposal and associated risks	Discussion points include: 1. Further discussion on proposed governance model (see day 2 session 3) 2.. Validate and agree on way forward	DT5104 and DT5106	Non-technical	Gerard Salou (IMF)
3.7	3	1600hrs	1620hrs	Break	Short break for delegates to grab a coffee			
3.8	3	1620hrs	1650hrs	How to work together technically - report back	Brief overview of discussion and outcomes	DT5104 and DT5106	All	Jens Dossé
3.9	3	1650hrs	1720hrs	Governance model proposal and associated risks	Brief overview of discussion and outcomes	DT5104 and DT5106	All	Gerard Salou (IMF)
End of day 3								

Ref	Day	Start time	Finish time	Session title	Session description	Room	Audience	Facilitated by
4.1	4	0915hrs	0930hrs	Sign in	Welcome to the Delta building	Delta reception	All	Jonathan Challener
4.2	4	0930hrs	1200hrs	SDMX and .Stat	Further discussion on SDMX including: 1. IStat mapping solution and how this fits with .Stat 2. Members needs and deciding on what will be included in 2011 workplan	DT7106	All	Jens Dossé
4.3	4	1200hrs	1315hrs	Lunch break	Lunch can be taken in Delta Café situated on floor -1 of building	Café		
Please note: afternoon sessions are to be arranged based on members specific needs								
End of day 4								

APPENDIX C – SISCC PRODUCT BREAKDOWN STRUCTURE



APPENDIX D – REFERENCES

- Abstracts: https://vs-tfs-ext-1.oecd.org/sites/SIS/collaboration_portal/workshop2011/Document%20Library1/
- Presentations: https://vs-tfs-ext-1.oecd.org/sites/SIS/collaboration_portal/workshop2011/Document%20Library/
- Photos: https://vs-tfs-ext-1.oecd.org/sites/SIS/collaboration_portal/workshop2011/SIScc%20Workshop%20photos
- Audio recording from workshop
- Digital audio recording provided by ABS
- Notes taken by OECD attendees

APPENDIX E – FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPATES ON DRAFT REPORT

The following list represents the changes made to the draft report based on participates feedback.

Page #	Section heading	Paragraph	Details
12	Day 2 – Closing remarks	2	UNESCAP comments updated
7	Day 1 Session 4 – Why is my organisation interested?	2	Additional text added
3	Executive summary	All	Changed to improve structure and highlight key points.