

The System of National Accounts (SNA) update: Regional Outreach

Concept Note

The SNA update programme uses a three-pronged approach, which includes: Technical research, Broad consultation, and Ensuring overall consistency. The technical research addresses the various research topics in concept and in practice, while the overall consistency deals with the alignment of different economic statistics manuals and standards. The Broad consultation constitutes several rounds of consultations with various groups of stakeholders such as compilers, policymakers, academia, and the private sector. These consultations will be conducted using various instruments, including regional webinars and global forums.

The SNA update programme is now in full swing with several research activities taking place at different levels of progress. The outcome of these research activities and the recommendations are described in Guidance Notes (GNs). To facilitate the technical research, the ISWGNA and AEG have been meeting regularly to discuss the various outcomes emerging from these research activities, and to plan the work ahead. Over the past year, several GNs have been finalized and are in the process of (or ready for) global consultations. It is foreseen that most guidance notes would be finalized during the second half of 2021 until the end of 2022, after which they will be made publicly available for global consultation.

At the same time, the broad consultation with various groups of stakeholders on the SNA update programme has been initiated to inform countries about the update process and to engage users in the global consultation of the various guidance notes. In particular, the outreach component will present the progress with the drafting of the GNs and the schedule of global consultations, will establish a positive feedback loop with the member countries, and will promote their active engagement in the SNA update programme.

UNSD in collaboration with the UN regional commissions are organizing regional webinars. It is expected that the other members of the ISGWNA will also participate in these outreach activities. The webinars are being organized on a regional basis to help overcome potential impediments related to language barriers and knowledge gaps, and to focus on topics relevant to a specific region.

The purpose of the webinars is to achieve the following objectives and related documentation:

- Inform compilers about the progress with the SNA and BPM update programme
- Introduce the conceptual/compilation topics to foster informed participation in the global consultation on the GNs
- Collect and verify information of the baseline assessment (about the countries' statistical capacity to implement the new recommendations)
- Elicit views on the user demand on the new recommendations

- Explore potential volunteers for the early implementation of the new recommendations
- Collect information about the countries' implementation plans

It is expected that an inception webinar about the general overview of the SNA update programme will commence in each region in June/July 2021. The inception webinars will be followed by, possibly, two thematic webinars per region by the end of 2021. The organization of these webinars is being coordinated by the UN Regional Commissions to expedite the process in an efficient way while striving to make the outreach efforts as inclusive as possible. The webinar material as well as the recording of the meetings will be posted online for further reference and to enable access to the discussions for interested parties that could not attend the meeting.

The UN regional commissions will liaise with the country authorities, address the invitations, and organize the logistics. International experts and countries from the relevant region will be invited to share their experience in the topics selected for the thematic webinars.