ISI 2019 - Session IARIW-IPS

Abstract paper 2:

The Next Generation of International Statistical Standards: an IMF View

In the past decades, advances in technology and communication, increasing free capital movements and dominance of multinationals as well as reductions in shipping costs have redefined global economy. The new phenomenon called Globalization has led to tighter integration of economies, with the creation of global value chains through which large multinational corporations stretch their operations across borders. Current statistical manuals (SNA2008 and BPM6), for which value-added generation is anchored in the central notion of residency, are showing their limits.

Digitalization is also changing the way we work, entertain ourselves and communicate in manners that stretch our statistical standards. New technologies are transforming businesses, social interactions and the traditional household non-market production. While improving business efficiency and customer experiences, digitalization creates challenges, disrupt well-established activities, concentrates market power through "winner takes all" dynamics and affect a wide range of businesses and jobs. The distributional issues stemming from the destruction of unskilled labor and concentration of wealth are poorly accounted for in the SNA whose income metrics only depicts aggregates or averages. Likewise, the gig economy, an offspring of digitalization, has given a new meaning to the concept of informality in the economy, but also perhaps additional ways to measure economic activity happening on the fringe of the traditional economy. Digitalization has made data "the new oil" of modern economies, and a valuable component of corporations intangible assets and intellectual property.

The paper will offer a discussion on the priorities that the next generation of manuals need to consider. The paper will also advocate for greater attention in the next generation of manuals to data sources - being new, like big data or old but underutilized like administrative data- and more general compilation processes.