

Statistics, telematic networks and EDI bulletin

1 □ 1997

Letter from the EBES/EG6 - Statistics Chair

At the JRT in Singapore a strategy paper for the future development of EDIFACT messages was proposed. This paper, which was submitted by the EDIFACT Steering Group (ESG), proposes that UN/EDIFACT should follow three concurrent development paths, or "tracks" as they are called in the proposal. This topic was discussed at our EEG6 meeting in Paris which endorsed our current approach to EDI standardisation.

Three EDIFACT Tracks

The EEG6 understanding of the three tracks is:

⇒ **Track 1** is the current 'full' EDIFACT process

⇒ **Track 2** offers a simpler form of EDI targeted at the large number of organisations which find EDI costly to implement, and comprises simplified message sub-sets and guidelines

⇒ **Track 3** proposes the use of object oriented techniques to model the processes and data and will lead to a completely different way of accessing information based upon distributed object technology

For EEG6, track 1 is where the harmonisation work is done now. Without it, we cannot progress.

We see track 2 as an extension to the harmonisation process, and not as a separate process.

Track 3 has a heavy emphasis on process and data modelling. Its ultimate aim is to specify objects and processes so that inter-operable systems can be built at least cost. EEG6 has been working towards this

for some time. We have already developed three generic data models resulting in three messages, two of which are specified both in EDIFACT and SGML syntax. These models cover the exchange of classifications (CLASET), the exchange of multi-dimensional statistical arrays and time series (GESMES), and raw data reporting (RDRMES). These message definitions and associated implementation guides are our specifications to the software industry. We now want the software industry to build EDI-enabled products using these specifications.

The integration of these messages into applications will facilitate greatly the inter-operability of systems. This is especially true where the concepts in the exchange environment have been harmonised, and where coding systems for objects, and their relationships with other coding systems, exist. Therefore, the applicability of these messages is not confined to the statistical sector.

So, what is our reaction to the multiple track proposal? Well, we should embrace new technologies

but not by starting again. We must capitalise on the considerable harmonisation work we have already done. We should encourage the development of interfaces to our messages which use new technologies, such as object oriented APIs or Internet forms. We should encourage harmonised use of messages. This is the approach to standardisation for EEG6, and with this approach we can achieve our aim.

Philippe Lebaube
EBES/EG6 Chair

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Latest news since the last issue

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New E-mail addresses to join the EEG6 teams:

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I. Meetings

Joint Rapporteurs' Team Meeting in Helsinki, September 9-13, 1996

JM8 did not convene in Helsinki, since the Australian and the North-American delegations were not attending.

EEG6 sent one representative, Mr. Chris Nelson, for only two days. Ms Probert, of EEG6/WG7 attended the JM4 (Transport) working sessions

Mr. Nelson took part in the working sessions of the EAO (EDIFACT and Associated Objects group - former Multi-format Exchange) - he was asked to write a technical paper on the scopes of mutiformat exchange - and of the Security technical group.

Ms Probert attended the IHG (International Harmonisation Group) to develop generic message implementation rules - she was mandated to write a technical paper and the agenda of the group for the Singapore JRT.

Joint Rapporteurs' Team Meeting in Singapore, April 21-25, 1997

JM8 did not officially convene in Singapore, since North-American and Australian delegations were not attending.

However, a small EEG6 delegation was present: they promoted our last developments (implementation of our generic messages - GESMES and CLASET - in EDIFACT and SGML) and attended working sessions of interest for EEG6 activities (IHG, EAO, the empowerment, and the future of EDIFACT, such as Lite-EDI, Object Oriented issues and data modelling).

The impact on EEG6 activities will be discussed at the next EEG6 meetings in Paris and Dublin.

Joint Rapporteurs' Team Meeting in Anaheim, Sept.29-Oct. 3, 1997

JM8 will officially convene in Los Angeles, as the North American delegations and probably the Australian delegation will also be attending.

EEG6 will take the opportunity to present the EEG6 website and in particular its showroom where tutorials, demonstrators, benchmarks and Open-EDI toolboxes will be placed. It is hoped to have an open technical session organised during the JRT for this purpose.

JM8 also intends to take an active part in the working sessions concerning the future of EDIFACT (the three Tracks) and to try and obtain a common approach between EEG6 and its partners at the international level.

In 1998, the Joint Rapporteurs' Team Meetings will be held as follows:

In Miami, from April 27 through May 1, 1998

In Brussels, from September 7 through 11, 1998.

EEG6 Meetings in 1996/97

EEG6 has convened four times since Spring 1996:

- **Oslo**, May 28-29, 1996, hosted by Statistics Norway
- **Brussels**, November 6-8, 1996, hosted by the National Bank of Belgium
- **Luxembourg**, Feb. 13-14, 1997, hosted by Eurostat.
- **Paris**, May 14-16, 1997, hosted by INSEE

During the plenary meetings, the Chair recalled the end of the IDA programme which sponsored the EEG6 activities, and the preparation of an "IDA 2" programme. He emphasised the importance of informing the national IDA/TAC representatives of EEG6 activities and pilot projects in progress or yet to come, and stress the usefulness they have for national administrations.

The re-organisation of EEG6 was also placed on the agendas, but only for "brainstorming". From the discussions and from the way the last meetings took place, it appears that more and more joint meetings between working groups are needed, in particular between WG1, WG3 and WG4, but also between WG3 and WG5.

One sensible proposal was the convening of a joint meeting to deal with common issue or horizontal activities (e.g. awareness, security...), each Working Group delegating one or two representatives. This procedure has already been applied

in Luxembourg and in Paris. A second proposal was to merge the 3 generic working groups, i.e. WG1, WG3 and WG4 into one large generic working group. Another suggestion was the regular launching of task forces in charge of a specific problem. These task forces could be launched by the Joint meetings or by the new generic group.

These proposals are not exclusive.

A paper on this topic will be presented at the EEG6 meeting in Dublin for decision. Contributions from the EEG6 Conveners are requested.

In the meantime, a joint meeting on horizontal activities will be take place on Sept. 4 in Brussels and a joint meeting between WG1/WG3 and WG4 on their future will be organised at the Dublin EEG6 meeting.

The Conference of the international statistical Institute

The conference will take place in Istanbul on August 25-29 1997. A dedicated session on EDI & Statistics will take place.

The EEG6 Chair will attend, representing both EEG6 and Eurostat.

II. Awareness Activities and documentation

1. The "GESMES 95" User Guide and Reference Guide were made available as a limited distribution in March 1996. They will be superseded by the GESMES Version 2.1 guides which should be issued by July 1997. After the trials carried out during 1996 by the Eurostat GESMES Task Force, EG6/WG1 came to the conclusion that the GESMES

structure for the support of attributes had to be revised and a few DMRs to be submitted. This GESMES Version 2.1 reflects the revised structure of GESMES.

2. The demo diskette on the BOPxxx messages was ready for the IDA Conference in Rome, in June 1996 and widely disseminated.
3. A very successful Awareness Seminar was organised in Brussels on November 6, 1996, by and in the premises of the National Bank of Belgium. It included not only the banking sector and software houses, but also economic operators and other administrations (e.g. the Belgian Ministry of Finance). It stressed the burden of filling forms. The seminar was very well received by the 160 attendees and it was hoped that some attending organisations would be later willing to take part in pilot projects on the use of EDI messages developed by EEG6 such as BOPDIR, BOPBNK, RDRMES, CLASET, etc.
4. The final report of the EDIBOP task force, as well as all the international Message implementation Guides of the BOPxxx messages will be officially published by Eurostat during 1997.
5. The first release of the DSIS-IRC (Information Resource Centre) has now been implemented at Eurostat and amongst others, an EEG6 www has been created. It includes a library of documents, such as agendas, minutes and Message Implementation Guides, a list of EEG6 related meetings and a list of EEG6 contacts. This pilot version will be accessible from outside Eurostat by Autumn '97.

6. EEG6 Annual progress report. The 1996/1997 Annual Report on EEG6 activities will be issued in June 1997.

III. IDA related Events

In addition to the IDA conference in Rome, in June 1996, two workshops have been planned in 1997:

1. First IDA Workshop, Brussels, February 27-28; it was administration oriented and dedicated to the future of the IDA programme.
2. Second IDA Workshop, Brussels, April 29; it was industry oriented. Although very well attended, it was not a very responsive meeting.

IV. Officers

Looking for Convener

Chris Nelson is still holding the double position of WG1 Deputy Convener and WG1 technical expert. He performs both missions with great success, but the work load on his shoulders is quite heavy.

WG1 is looking for a candidate who will volunteer for the position. A suitable candidate should be part of a EU national statistical administration.

His duties would include assisting with the planning of the Work Programme, chairing the work sessions, supervising the minutes of the group, preparing the agenda and interfacing with the EEG6 secretariat.

He would get the dedicated assistance of the consultant.

If you are interested, please make yourself known to the EEG6 Chairmanship.

V. Report on Trials

Implementation of the CLASET for CN8 Subset message: Report on trials

The CLASET message has been developed by EEG6 to exchange (request and transfer) classifications and code lists (full version, parts, updates...).

0. Scope of CLASET within extra-Community trade statistics

EBES/EG6-WG5 group (External trade statistics) is studying the definition of a subset of CLASET which can be used to distribute the periodic updates of the TARIC codes and their related labels.

This subset should be used for exchanges from the Commission to the Member States' Competent National Administrations (CNAs) compiling statistics and from the statistical CNAs to the companies providing extra-Community trade statistical declarations.

1. Implementation tests

The EBES/EG6-WG3 group (statistical classification) in charge of the CLASET definition generated examples of the combined nomenclature in different formats such as EDIFACT and an HTML version derived from the CLASET/SGML version.

The codes of the combined nomenclature (CN8) are a subset of the TARIC codes and their related labels to be used to report on extra-Community trade statistics.

The EEG6-WG5 group decided to test the CN8 subset of the CLASET message.

These tests have been performed using an example of the EDIFACT format of the combined nomenclature derived from CLASET/SGML (file COMEXT1.EDI).

This EDIFACT message was implemented on a standard EDIFACT translator to get an application flat-file format (very similar to PXT or SDF format distributed by Eurostat) in order to:

- detect any problem which could occur during the EDIFACT translation,
- acquire a better knowledge of the EDIFACT CLASET message (used segments and different hierarchic levels),
- check that the CN8 data required by EEG6-WG5 are complete.

The generated PXT application file was translated again into EDIFACT CLASET/CN8 format and this message was then translated into CLASET/HTML format.

2. Results

For the purposes of trade statistics, approximately only 50% of the information contained in COMEXT1.EDI is required:

For example, the level information is not mapped because only the item information is required. The CLASET/HTML format obtained from our small re-generated CLASET/CN8 EDIFACT message shows the required data.

In the examples provided the supplementary units are not included in the file containing the codes and the description of the combined nomenclature (COMEXT1.EDI).

For CLASET/CN8, CN8 codes, description and supplementary units are required in the same EDIFACT message.

Even though the combined nomenclature with official texts has been tested, CLASET /CN8 has to contain the CN8 with self-explanatory texts.

3. Conclusions

These tests show that the EDIFACT CLASET message derived from CLASET/SGML is a good format for the dissemination of the combined nomenclature and has been easily implemented.

Being able to directly translate this EDIFACT format into HTML can be useful for further documentation.

Sylvie Colas
Eurostat Consultant

GESMES/CB

GESMES/CB stays for "GESMES for Central Banks"

A new profile of the GESMES message has been adopted which is designed for the exchange of time series generally and will be used for the exchange of all the statistical information required by the future European System of Central Banks in performance of its tasks.

Eurostat and EEG6 have supported and assisted the ad-hoc message design group in the preparation of this subset

Electronic Transmission of the INTRASTAT Declaration in France

Paperless Declaration

The INTRASTAT Declaration monthly supplied by those enterprises having trade operations with E.U. Member States, also allows, since January 1, 1993, for the collection of intra-Community trade statistics (INTRASTAT system) and also controls that intra-Community VAT regulations are respected.

From the very beginning, this declaration had been designed in such a way to be able to be transmitted in an electronic format, without paper support.

The INTRASTAT declaration was the first French *dematerialised* administrative declaration.

Modernising exchanges between Administrations and enterprises

The aims of French customs - which are in charge of the collection of the INTRASTAT declaration - are multiple:

- to diminish the input costs;
- to reduce the handling time;
- to improve the quality of statistics;
- to simplify the tasks of the enterprises.

Each declarant wishing to transmit his Intrastat declaration in an electronic format must sign an

interchange agreement with one of the 6 regional collection centres.

This agreement, together with the technical specifications attached to it, specify the transmission means, the communication protocols, the formats and the security counter-measures assuring identification, authentication and integrity control of the declaration.

Proposing the EDIFACT Standard to enterprises

The CUSDEC/INSTAT message, developed within the framework of EEG6/WG5, was proposed to declarants as early as January 1993: its message implementation guide allows the declarant enterprises and/or the software developers to integrate this message into their EDI platform or directly into their declaration software.

On January 1, 1997, more than 2,000 respondents used the CUSDEC/INSTAT message directly or through third declarant parties,

This represented a quarter of the declarants who currently use electronic transmission. 130,000 lines of declaration in EDIFACT format are presently transmitted per month.

The CUSDEC/EXSTAT message used by the same enterprises for the collection of extra-Community trade statistics was also developed to ensure consistency between the two types of flow.

Constant promotional efforts are made among data processing

service companies, software developers, enterprises and third parties such as Chartered accountants and Chambers of Commerce and Industry, to make the existence and the functionalities of these messages known.

A common action was undertaken with the Bank of France to inform the whole community of interested partners (enterprises, software houses,...) of the possibility of using these statistical EDIFACT messages, which are now available, in sectors connected with external trade and balance of payments.

Tools available to enterprises

In a circular of January 16 '97, the French government required all administrations to adopt the EDIFACT standard.

However, this voluntarist policy is not enough.

Progress in the use of EDIFACT messages highly depends on the availability in the software market.

By attributing a conformity label to software which meet the specifications, -including amongst others, the implementation of CUSDEC/INSTAT - the French Customs wished to induce software houses to develop quality products using the EDIFACT standard.

The dissemination of IDEP/CN8, a product developed by Eurostat within the framework of the EDICOM programme, allowed enterprises to satisfy their declarative obligations by using

the information already available on their information systems and transmit it in the format of an EDIFACT message. This initiative has had a strong impact on the market.

**EDIBOP PILOT PROJECTS:
LAST NEWS**

**RDRMES PILOT PROJECT:
SBB Accounting wins EDI
Award '97.**

**Transmission of the
INTRASTAT Declaration &
Internet**

Internet technology offers interesting perspectives which will undergo pilot trials in the next few months.

The first experiment will consist of allowing for the browsing of information pages regarding electronic transmission of the Intrastat declaration and for the downloading of EDIFACT MIGs and software products such as IDEP/CN8.

Another project consists of making available on the Web to the declarants an electronic questionnaire to be downloaded with its associated checks. This form could be filled on-line and then printed or directly transmitted in the format of a CUSDEC/INSTAT message.

The recent trends in this area show that with an intelligent use of these 2 tools, Internet and EDI, far from being in competition, are perfectly complementary.

The concept of "EFI" (Electronic Form Interchange) is proving it in the field of relationships between administrations and enterprises.

**Antoine Egea
French - DGDDI**

The National Bank of Belgium presents the national subset of the BOPDIR message to software houses:

On June 20, 1997 about 150 software houses specialised in accounting software will attend the official presentation of the national Message Implementation Guide for BOPDIR Belgium.

During this seminar, attendees will receive all kinds of information necessary to implement the BOPDIR specifications into the future releases of their software packages. The objective is to integrate a BOPDIR generator as a standard functionality in various packages.

This event is part of a programme establishing partnerships between the National Bank of Belgium and software manufacturers for a whole range of electronic administrative reporting initiatives: e.g. IDEP/CN8 for INTRASTAT declarations.

**Philippe Franck
Eurostat Consultant**

Every year the organizing committee of **Interchange 97**, a congress on Electronic Data Interchange, honors companies that have done a special effort for the promotion of EDI in Belgium.

This year, the Belgian SBB Accounting software house received the EDI Award '97 for its pioneering role in the electronic reporting of Value Added Tax declarations to the Ministry of Finance.

SBB Accounting is one of the pilot partners in the EDIVAT project.

Sponsored by Eurostat and technically implemented by Cap Gemini Belgium and EDIFICAS, this project enables companies to send their VAT declarations to the responsible administration via the EDIFACT message RDRMES.

This electronic system with less paper, less human intervention and therefore less errors, allows substantial cost savings on both sides of the reporting chain.

Within three years EDIVAT should handle 20% of the 2.800.000 declarations submitted in Belgium, bringing a potential global saving of **200 MBEF per year** on the declarants' side.

**Stefan Van Bouwel
Eurostat Consultant**

EEG6 Message Implementation Guides Available

These message Implementation Guides can be obtained in their paper form from the EEG6 Secretariat.

By July 1997, they will be available on the EEG6 www for browsing and downloading.

☞ **CUSDEC/INSTAT** (in English, French and German)

INSTAT Subset of CUSDEC User Guide, Eurostat, Luxbg, March, 1996 **ISBN 92-827-6206-8**

☞ **CUSDEC/EXSTAT** (in English, French and German)

EXSTAT Subset of CUSDEC User Guide, Eurostat, Luxbg, March 1997 **ISBN 92-827-6207-6**

☞ **CUSRES/INSRES (Response to INSTAT)** (in English, French and German)

INSRES Subset of CUSRES User Guide, Eurostat, Luxbg, March, 1996 **ISBN 92-827-6208-4**

☞ **GESMES General** (in English)

GESMES 95 Guidance to users, (draft only - to be superseded by GESMES Version 2.1)

GESMES 95 Reference Guide (draft only - to be superseded by GESMES Version 2.1)

GESMES "Quick Results", Eurostat, 1995

GESMES Version 2.1 - Under development - available Mid-97

☞ **GESMES/ECOSER** (in English)

GESMES Implementation Guidelines, Eurostat, Luxbg, 1995

ISBN 92-827-0137-9

☞ **GESMES/PRODCOM** (in English)

PRODCOM Subset of GESMES User Guide, Eurostat, Luxbg, 1994 (Rev. 1)

☞ **GESMES/BOPSTA** (in English)

BOPSTA Subset of GESMES Guide to the User, Eurostat, Luxbg, 1996

National versions and an international version.

RDRMES (in English)

RDRMES 96 Reference Guide, Eurostat, Luxembourg, November, 1996

RDRMES 96 "Quick Results", Eurostat, Luxembourg, February, 1997

BOPxxx Messages

Various national versions of the Message Implementation Guides (Message Implementation Guides) for the Balance of Payments messages are available for most EU countries.

The Group has finalised the international versions of their Message Implementation Guides. They hope to see them published by Eurostat during the second half of 1997.

Messages for Transport Statistics (in English)

BAPLIE Subset for Transport Statistics

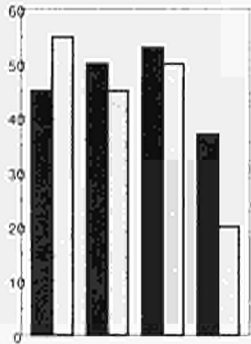
IFCSUM Subset for Transport Statistics

CUSCAR Subset for Transport Statistics

GESMES dataset for Transport Statistics

} Guidelines for extracting a subset for
} maritime transport statistics, Eurostat,
} Luxembourg, 1996 (Draft)

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Working Group 1
Aggregated Statistics

WGI is concerned with the exchange of multi-dimensional statistical tables and time series. The type of data exchanged in

this way is many and varied: insurance, tourism, National accounts, structural statistics, population, transport, etc.

The result of this work is **GESMES** – Generic Statistical Message – which reached Status 1 in March 1995. **GESMES** supports the exchange of statistical figures together with its associated metadata (e.g. footnotes, methodological notes, dataset structures). **GESMES** works in synergy with **CLASET**, the message for the exchange of classification.

Various profiles of **GESMES** have been developed: **GESMES/ECOSER**, **GESMES/BOPSTA**, **GESMES/PRODCOM** and **GESMES/CB**.

GESMES can also be used as a request message for data.

A number of organisations operating at the international level have implemented **GESMES** to collect a wide variety of statistical data:

◆ From National Statistical Administrations to Eurostat.

- ⇒ product data ⇒ transportation data
- ⇒ industrial indicators ⇒ national accounts
- ⇒ insurance ⇒ structural statistics

◆ From Central Banks to Eurostat and to the International Monetary Fund:

- ⇒ Balance of Payments

◆ From Central Banks to the European Monetary Institute:

- ⇒ Balance of Payments ⇒ money & banking
- ⇒ industrial indicators

◆ From transition countries to the UN/ECE:

- ⇒ a wide variety of macro economic data

◆ From economic operators to the National Statistical Administrations:

- ⇒ transport data from port authorities & shipping lines

The appeal of **GESMES** is not confined to statistical organisations, any organisation which has a need to exchange data of a tabular, multi-dimensional, or time related (time series) nature will find **GESMES** useful

The data modelling method was applied for the design of **GESMES**. This allowed its implementation in more than one EDI syntax:

- ❖ An EDIFACT message has been implemented which was granted status 1 in 1995.
- ❖ An SGML (Standard Generalized Mark-up Language – ISO-8879) DTD (Document Type definition) is under development.

A **GESMES toolbox** has also been developed: A prototype programme is available, for training and awareness purposes, that converts **GESMES/EDIFACT** to HTML. Demonstration tools are also available to convert **GESMES** to Excel and Lotus formats, and to convert from Excel to **GESMES**.

A User Guide, **GESMES 95** - based on the Status 1 message definition - is available. It is the blueprint from which all sectorial **GESMES** user guides are being developed. This guide explains the architecture of **GESMES**, defines the rules for the use of all the data structures in the message, and contains many examples of its use.

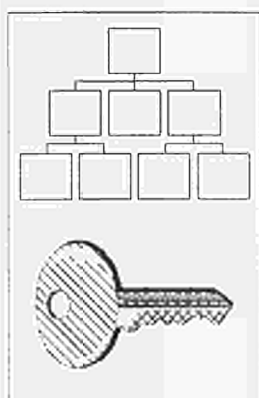
Its version 2 will be published in July '97; it will include some structure changes which appeared necessary during the **GESMES** trials carried out during 1996.

For users wishing a short introduction to **GESMES**, the "GESMES - Quick Results" booklet has been developed. With the aid of this booklet, it is possible to use many of the more popular features of **GESMES**, without the need to understand its more complex features.

In the European Reference Environment, **GESMES** and **CLASET** are used to exchange data and metadata. Trials are in progress in ES, IT, NO, SE and at Eurostat.

It is hoped that the **GESMES** facilities will soon be integrated into commercial application systems. Software houses will be approached.

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Working Group 3 Exchange of Statistical Classifications

The primary aim of WG3 is to define structured EDI message to exchange the structure and contents of classifications (e.g. nomenclatures, code lists, directories,...), and their

relationships.

In addition to this WG3 aims at:

□ easing the use of classifications by economic operators, maintenance agencies and international bodies (e.g. National Standards Institutes, National Statistical Administrations, Customs Authorities, professional federations, Chambers of Commerce, Eurostat, OECD, UN/STAT, etc.).

□ promoting the use of official classifications, in particular statistical classifications, in EDI messages.

A specific side of this work is to ensure that the multi-lingual aspects of the classifications and the use of different character sets within the same message are catered for, including the handling of textual components.

For instance, solutions are being analysed allowing for the cross-referencing between EDIFACT-oriented message parts and SGML¹ oriented message parts.

EEG6/WG3 is interested in the EDIFACT studies on multi-format exchanges (now called EDIFACT and Associated Objects) and in Open EDI in general.

Following the requirements of the exchange of classifications during the different phases of their life cycle (e.g. compilation, consultation, dissemination), WG3 has conceived and designed one structured message: **CLASET**

CLASET has 3 functions:

- ➔ to transfer a selected set of information elements relating to a classification (whole or part of it);
- ➔ to transfer a selected set of information relating to relationships between classifications;;
- ➔ to request information relating to a classification.

The data modelling method was applied for the design of CLASET and one exchange conceptual data model was designed. This allowed its implementation in more than one EDI syntax

❖ An EDIFACT message has been implemented which reach the EDIFACT Status 0 in Spring 1993 and Status 1 is targeted for September 1998.

❖ In parallel, an SGML DTD version (document type definition) will be finalised during Spring '97.

A **CLASET toolbox** has also been developed: An HTML version of CLASET, for tutorial, awareness and validation purposes, has also been developed and is maintained. Filters allowing for the translation between all these formats have been developed.

The Group supported the CLASET trials project, which involved INSEE, Statistics Finland and various units of Eurostat where the three formats were successfully tested for a wide variety of classifications..

A future activity of the group is to extend its work into the development of messages allowing the exchange of other metadata (e.g. statistical unit, definition, concept, methodology).

In a study carried out by DSIS Lot 4.2 on Internationally used Classifications, CLASET has become the emerging standard for the transfer of classifications.

The group will build on the output from other groups working in this area (e.g. DSIS, METIS and the DOSIS research programme).

* * *

¹ SGML: Standard Generalized Mark-up Language - ISO 8879



Working Group 4

Raw Statistical Data Collection

WG4 is concerned with investigating new ways of collecting raw statistical data.

In order to reduce the burden of compiling statistical information on individual organisations, the vital job of

statistics gathering needs to be integrated into the information systems currently being used on a day to day basis by the economic operators (e.g. payroll, accounting, production, distribution).

Ideally, this integration should support both regular surveys and ad hoc enquiries for ALL declarative purposes (statistics, customs, trade associations etc.).

The target public for such messages includes the National Statistical Administrations, the economic operators and the professional bodies representing the economic operators (e.g. the professional unions and chambers of commerce).

The objectives of this group represent the most challenging work for EEG6.

The technical aspects of the work are concerned with the development of EDI messages which are used for declarative purposes; one such type of message is a generic message which supports the responses to a questionnaire.

Initiatives in this field had been taken in America, Australia and in Europe:

⇒ in 1993, the US Bureau of the Census started developing RDRMES (Raw data Reporting message)

⇒ In early 1994, WG4 started developing a general data model for questionnaire data

The two projects were merged and a new version of RDRMES, which meets the requirements of Europe, Australia and North-America, was finalised during the September 1994 JRT in Vienna.

The data modelling method was applied for the design of RDRMES and one conceptual data model was designed. This allowed its implementation in more than one EDI syntax

❖ An EDIFACT message has been implemented which reach the EDIFACT Status 1 in September 1995.

❖ An SGML/HTML version is foreseen for the near future, in order to adapt RDRMES to the new concept of EFI (Electronic Form Interchange) showing that EDI and Internet can be intelligently combined.

The message has been successfully trialed in 1995 and 1996 in a number of pilot projects within the framework of the SERT project:

In 1995, **EDIVAT.I** (VAT declaration) in BE and NL, and the statistical returns from the UK Steel Industry (ECSC framework) and in 1996-97, **EDIVAT.II**: (VAT and INTRASTAT data) in Belgium

In addition, the UK Tax Administration is carrying out a pilot project for the collection of tax returns using RDRMES as an alternative to the paper declaration.

In 1996, most efforts were dedicated to the writing-up of User-oriented technical documentation for RDRMES.

A RDRMES 96 Message Reference Guide and an "RDRMES 96 - Quick Results" short implementation Guide were issued in Nov. '96 and Feb. '97, respectively.

A leaflet specifying the differences and the synergy between GESMES and RDRMES, and when one message - or the other - should be used will be written up during 1997.

* * *



Working Group 5 *External Trade Statistics*

WG5 is concentrating on the procedures for collecting and disseminating statistical information in the field of international trade. For the EEA countries such a solution will create a mechanism for collecting these statistics in an open trading environment.

The target public for the messages developed by the group are the National Statistical Administrations, the national or regional collection centres, and the economic operators who are direct declarants.

WG5 works in close collaboration with EBES/EEG3, the Customs Message Development Group responsible for the management of customs messages, and with the Statistical Committee for External Trade.

Three subsets of messages have been developed so far:-

❑ INSTAT:

For the declaration of intra-Community trade. This is a subset of the Customs declaration message, CUSDEC. CUSDEC/INSTAT has been part of the EC INTRASTAT regulation since the opening of the Single European Market in 1993. The related MESSAGE IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE was published in March '96 (S.93A & 92.1 directories).

❑ EXSTAT:

for the declaration of extra-Community trade, which is also a subset of the Customs declaration message, CUSDEC. The publication of its MESSAGE IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE was issued in March '97 (D.96.B directory).

❑ INSRES:

the response message to INSTAT, implemented as a subset of the Customs response message CUSRES. The related MESSAGE IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE has been published in March '96 (S.93A & 92.1 directories).

❑ CLASET/CN8/TARIC

a subset of CLASET is being studied for the transmission of the updates of the Combined Nomenclature (CN8) with TARIC codes from the Competent National Administrations to the companies providing extra-Community trade statistics.

❑ CONTRL

The Message Implementation Guide of the CONTRL message as a syntactical response to CUSDEC/ INSTAT and EXSTAT is completed. CONTRL is implemented in the IDEP/CN8 package.

❑ SECURITY and LEGAL ISSUES.

In 1995, the group created a prototype for the implementation of security counter-measures for EDIFACT messages in the field of statistics. Promotion and demonstrations have been held in various organisations involved in EDI.

A feasibility study is under progress for comparing the advantages and disadvantages of having STATEM implemented as a dataset in GEMMES or as a subset of CUSDEC. STATEM is the name for the Datasets of intra- and extra-Community trade sent by the Competent National Administrations (CNA) to Eurostat for the compilation of trade statistics.

* * *



Working Group 6 Balance of Payments Statistics

The aim of WG6 is to design the messages to support the compilation of the Balance of Payments (BOP) statistics.

The partners in this project will ultimately be the enterprises (direct declarants), the corporate banks, the Central Banks and the (inter)national statistical institutes.

WG6 has close working relationships with the EDIFACT Balance of Payments Task Force, one of the task forces set up under the Committee on Financial, Monetary and Balance of Payments Statistics chaired by Eurostat.

This Task Force was responsible for the development of a strategy for the collection of Balance of Payments (BOP) statistics in terms of EDIFACT while EEG6/WG6 was in charge of the standardisation process necessary to support this strategy.

The statistical reporting requirements for BOP data were integrated by EEG4, the group responsible for financial messages, into the electronic payment order information exchanged between enterprises and corporate banks. These restructured EEG4 messages were granted Status 1 in 1995.

WG6 developed so far four new messages: and uses two profiles of GESMES.

BOPCUS

A commercial bank reports to the Central Bank the debit and credit transactions.

BOPBNK

A commercial bank reports to the central bank its own transactions and portfolio transactions.

BOPDIR

An aggregated declaration sent by an individual enterprise to a central bank or national statistical office.

BOPINF:

The beneficiary informs its bank of the nature of a transaction.

GESMES/BOPSTA

Aggregated BOP information is sent by the collection agency to an international statistical organisation. BOPSTA is implemented as a dataset in GESMES (based on the Status 1 version reached in March 1995).

The BOPxxx messages reached Status 1 in September 1994 and in the IMF¹ Guide for Balance of Payments Reporting, one chapter is dedicated to the EEG6 BOPxxx messages..

For BOPSTA, trials have been carried out in most countries of the EU, with Eurostat, the OECD, the IMF. These international organisations, as well as the remaining Member States and even Japan will be involved in more pilot operations during 1997.

France, Finland and the Netherlands are now using BOPDIR, BOPCUS and BOPBNK on an operational basis. Trials are carried out in Germany and Italy for BOPDIR, and more trials of the four messages should start soon in Belgium, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, France and the Netherlands.

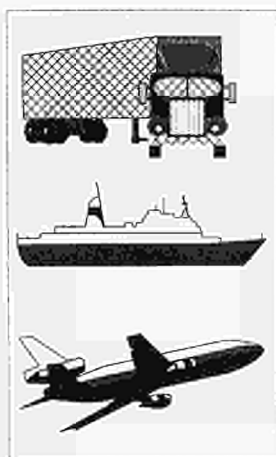
GESMES/CB (Central banks)

As part of the DSIS project Eurostat has advised the EMI² fiche 9 project on the use of GESMES and in particular has played an active role on the GESMES task force which has developed the GESMES/CB profile of GESMES. GESMES/CB will be used between Central banks and the EMI and BIS for the exchange of time series data related to the Monetary Union. In the near future, GESMES/BOPSTA will be integrated into the more generic GESMES/CB profile.

* * *

¹ IMF: International Monetary Fund

² EMI: European Monetary Institute



Working Group 7 *Transport Statistics*

The main goal of WG7 is to find ways for the collection and dissemination of transport statistics by means of EDI. The group works in close cooperation with EBES/EEG2, the Message Development Group responsible for transport messages.

Maritime transport has been set as its first priority, considering the needs stemming from the proposed maritime transport statistics directive (adopted on December 8, 1995).

WG7 has identified the minimum statistical requirements in the field of maritime transport and studied the messages already existing – in particular those of EEG2, EEG3 and EEG6 –, selected those of interest for WG7 (i.e. BAPLIE, IFCSUM, CUSCAR and GESMES).

It undertook their thorough analysis concerning the coverage of the necessary statistical information.

In this context, a DSIS pilot project on the use of IFCSUM and GESMES, covering a few ports and economic operators in three Member States (France, Netherlands & Spain) was carried out during 1995.

A new pilot project on the use of CUSCAR and GESMES was launched in 1996, focusing on a greater involvement of maritime transport operators and on the extension to other Member States (Germany, Ireland and UK). The use of BAPLIE seems to be of less interest.

For these pilot projects, Guidelines for the extraction of maritime statistical data were drawn up for IFCSUM, CUSCAR, GESMES and BAPLIE.

Awareness, promotion, and implementation will be emphasised during 1997.

First fact-finding studies in the field of air and road transport are underway.

In addition to this work, WG7 took an active participation in an ad-hoc international group concerned with the harmonisation of Message Implementation Guides in the transport sector.

The consultant of WG7 is now co-chairing the IHG (International harmonisation Group) at the Joint Rapporteurs' Team meetings which is in charge of harmonising the use of the segments throughout all EDIFACT messages

* * *

List of EEG6 Messages

Countries using them, testing them or contributing to their development

MESSAGES	Status	AT	BE	CH	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GR	IE	IT	LU	NL	NO	PT	SE	UK	Eurostat
GESMES/PRODCOM	1																		
GESMES/ECOSER	1																		
GESMES for transport	1																		
GESMES (other uses)	1																		
GESMES/CB	1																		
GESMES/BOPSTA	1																		
BOPBNK	1																		
BOPCUS	1																		
BOPDIR	1																		
BOPINF	1																		
CLASET	0																		
CUSDEC/INSTAT	1																		
CUSDEC/EXSTAT	1																		
CUSRES/INSRES	1																		
RDRMES	1																		

Legend:

- = *used in production*
- = *Tests and/or pilot projects in progress*
- = *Pilot project starting soon*
- = *Participant in the writing up of the specifications*
- = *Organisation consulted during development*

List of EEG6 Messages

Used by International Organisations (in Trials or Production)

MESSAGES	Status	Eurostat	UN/ECE	IMF	OECD	EMI	BIS	US BoC	US BoLS	STAT CAN	AUS ABS
CLASET	0										
GESMES/ECOSER	1										
GESMES/CB	1										
GESMES/BOPSTA ***	1										
Austria											
Belgium											
Canada											
Denmark											
Finland											
France											
Greece											
Germany											
Ireland											
Italy											
Japan											
Netherlands											
Norway											
Portugal											
Spain											
Sweden											
United Kingdom											
RDRMES	1										

ACRONYMS

- ABS: Australian Bureau of Statistics
 BIS: Bank of International Settlements
 BoC: Bureau of the Census
 BoLS: Bureau of Labor Statistics
 EMI: European Monetary Institute
 IMF: International Monetary Fund
 STATCAN: Statistics Canada
 UN/ECE: United Nations/Economic Commission for Europe

*** GESMES/BOPSTA will be replaced by GESMES/CB in the near future

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EBES/EEG6 WORKPLAN – 1997 - 1999

WG1: Aggregated Statistics

GESMES activities will concentrate on making GESMES a tool to be used by many different types of organisations. Priority activities for 1997 are:

GESMES/SGML and user guide	October 1997
GESMES HLI (High Level Interface) Specifications	October 1997
GESMES to HTML tool for training & awareness	May 1997
Awareness information to the EDI Showroom	June 1997

WG3: Exchange of Classifications

SGML Documentation, promotion, implementation

EDIFACT Status 1 September 1998

WG4: Questionnaire Data and Raw data Collection

RDRMES, a Joint Development between the Western European and Pan American regions, will be documented, promoted and implemented. An SGML version of RDRMES will be developed with a subset in HTML for demonstration purposes.

WG5: External Trade Statistics

This group is developing subsets of existing Customs messages and writing the corresponding Message Implementation Guides. The final CUSDEC/INSTAT and CUSRES/INSRES Message Implementation Guides. Eurostat paper publications of the Message Implementation Guides of CUSDEC/INSTAT, CUSDEC/EXSTAT and CUSDEC/INSRES are available. Electronic versions are in progress.

WG6: Balance of Payments Statistics

BOPBNK, BOPCUS, BOPDIR, BOPINF as well as the GESMES/BOPSTA subset will be documented, promoted, trialed and implemented.

In co-operation with WG1, a profile of GESMES is envisaged to transmit monetary data other than Balance of Payments.

WG7: Transport Statistics

This EEG6 sectorial sub-group works in close co-operation with EEG2 (Transport). It is trialing subsets of existing operational EEG2, EEG3 and EEG6 messages (BAPLIE, IFCSUM, CUSCAR, GESMES) to convey transport statistics while minimising the burden for the declarants.

GLOSSARY

CEFACT :	Centre for Facilitation of Practices & Procedures for Administrations, Commerce and Transport - Replaces the former WP.4 since March '97.
CNA :	Competent National Administration
DOSIS :	Development Of Statistical Information Systems – Eurostat initiative
DSIS :	Distributed Statistical Information Services – Eurostat project
EDICOM :	EDI for COMmerce – Eurostat project
EBES :	European Board for EDI Standardisation - This Western European EDI authority placed under the umbrella of CEN (Comité Européen de Normalisation) replaces the WE/EB (Western European EDIFACT Board)
EEG :	Sectorial EDI Expert Group – These groups are presently 14. They replace the former Message Developments Groups (MD's). EEG6 is the 6th group, in charge of EDI for the statistical sector. EEG's are regional and Western Europe specific – When they meet inter-regionally (during <i>JRTs</i>), they become <i>JMs (Joint Meetings)</i>
JM8 :	International Joint Meeting Group dealing with Statistics during <i>JRTs</i>
JRT :	Joint Rapporteurs' Team Meeting These International meetings comprise all EDIFACT <i>regions</i> and all Development Groups. They traditionally take place twice a year: in April and in September
METIS :	Metadata Information System – UN/ECE Statistical Division
MIG :	Message Implementation Guide
NSA :	National Statistical Administration
REGION :	In the UN terminology, vast geographical areas, roughly corresponding to continents. There are 6 regions: Africa, Asia, Australia/New Zealand, Central & Eastern Europe, Pan-America and Western Europe
SERT :	Business Statistics and Telematic Networks - Eurostat initiative
SGML :	Standard Generalised Mark-up Language – ISO-8879
UN/EDIFACT :	EDI For Administration, Commerce and Transport – UN Standard (ISO 9735)
UN/ECE :	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

The 2 levels of the EDIFACT Messages:

Status 0:	Message for information only
Status 1:	Messages for Implementation



Acknowledgements

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- ❖ In addition, we wish to thank the members of the various European statistical organisations who dedicate time and efforts to participate in the EEG6 activities and meetings,
... and in the publication of this bulletin.

Please, feel free to send comments and contributions to this bulletin to the EEG6 secretariat

Calendar of Meetings for 1997

Statistics, Telematic Networks & EDI working groups meetings

March 05-07	Luxembourg
October 22-24	Luxembourg

EEG6 Working Sessions and Plenary Meetings

February 13-14	Luxembourg
May 14-16	Paris
November 12-14	Dublin

Joint Rapporteurs' Teams Meetings (JRT)

April 21-25	Singapore
Sept 29 - Oct 3	Anaheim (Los Angeles)

Other -related Meetings

▪ *GESMES Task Force:*

January 18	Luxembourg
May 13	Paris
October	London

▪ *EEG6 Meeting on Horizontal activities*

Sept 4	Brussels
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▪ *G7 Global Standardisation activities on electronic commerce*

October 1 - 3	Brussels
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