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UNCTAD Working Group on  
Measuring E-commerce and the  
Digital Economy

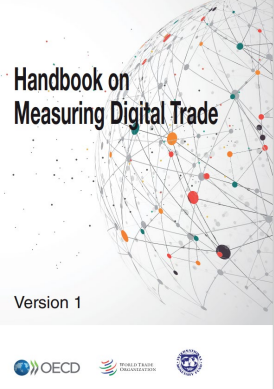
3-4 May 2021

# Measuring Digital Trade

## Handbook on Measuring Digital Trade

Version 1





# The OECD-WTO-IMF Handbook on Measuring Digital Trade

**2017 UN Inter-Agency Task Force on International Trade Statistics** created an Expert Group from international organisations, national statistics agencies and central banks, to develop a Handbook to provide:

- A **conceptual framework** to define digital trade
- A **mechanism** to share existing national and international efforts on measuring digital trade and/or dimensions of it, to identify and develop best practice.
- Version 1 published **in 2020**, a living document

<https://www.oecd.org/sdd/its/Handbook-on-Measuring-Digital-Trade-Version-1.pdf>

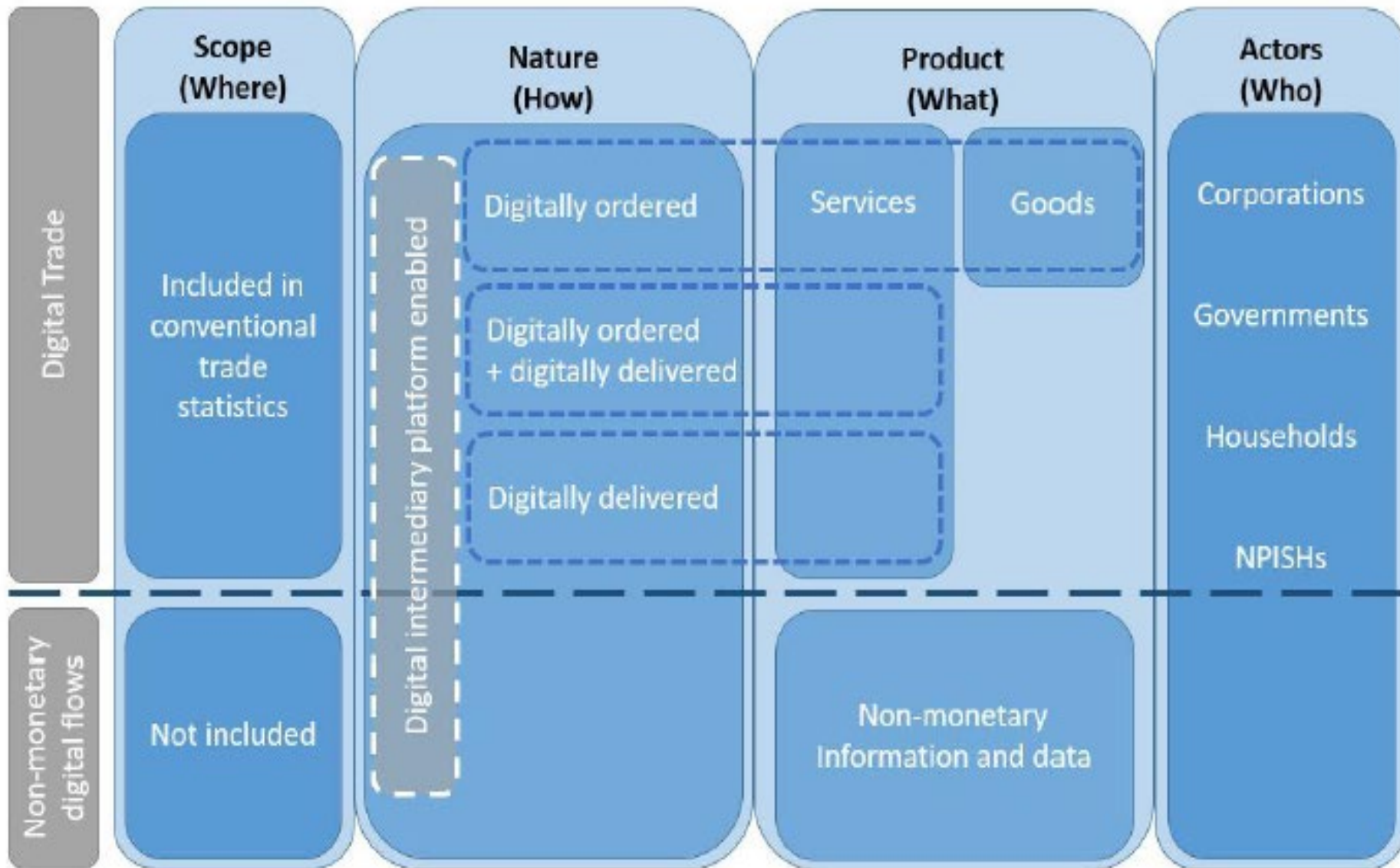
# DIGITAL TRADE

“all trade that is **digitally** ordered  
and/or digitally delivered”  
*over computer networks*

a statistical definition based  
on the **nature of the transaction**,  
**NOT** on the nature of the traded product



# Conceptual framework for Digital trade



# Reporting template for Digital Trade (simplified version)

	Exports			Imports		
	By Institutional sector			By Institutional sector		
	Corporations By industry	Governments	Households / NPISHs	Corporations By industry	Governments	Households / NPISHs
i Digitally ordered						
ii Goods	ES	AR	HS/CC	ES/ITSS	AR	HS/CC
iii Services*, not digitally delivered	ES/ITSS					
iv Digitally delivered services*						
v Digitally ordered*		AR	HS/CC	ES/ITSS/ITRS/VAT	AR	HS/CC/MOSS
vi Not digitally ordered*	ES/ITSS/ITRS					
<b>vii Total Digital Trade</b>						
<b>viii Transactions via DIP's</b>						
ix Digitally ordered						
x Goods	ES + DIP		HS/CC + DIP	ES/ITSS + DIP		HS/CC + DIP
xi Services*						
xii Digitally delivered*			HS/CC + DIP	ES/ITSS/ITRS/VAT		HS/CC/MOSS
xiii Not digitally delivered*	ES/ITSS/ITRS + DIP			+ DIP		+ DIP

\* Services should be displayed by EBOPS category, see Chapter 4

ES = Enterprise surveys

HS = Household survey

CC = Credit card data

ITSS = International Trade in Services Statistics Survey

DIP = Data collected directly from Digital Intermediation Platforms  
(especial surveys, webscraping, etc.)

ITRS = International Transaction Reporting System

MOSS = Mini One Stop Shop

AR = Administrative records

VAT = administrative records from value added tax collection (especific for digital activities)



# Digital Intermediation Platforms (DIPs)



*Focus is on fee-based DIPs (next version also non-fee-based DIPs)*

**Online interfaces that facilitate, for a fee, the direct interaction between multiple buyers and sellers, without taking ownership of the goods or services being sold (intermediated)**

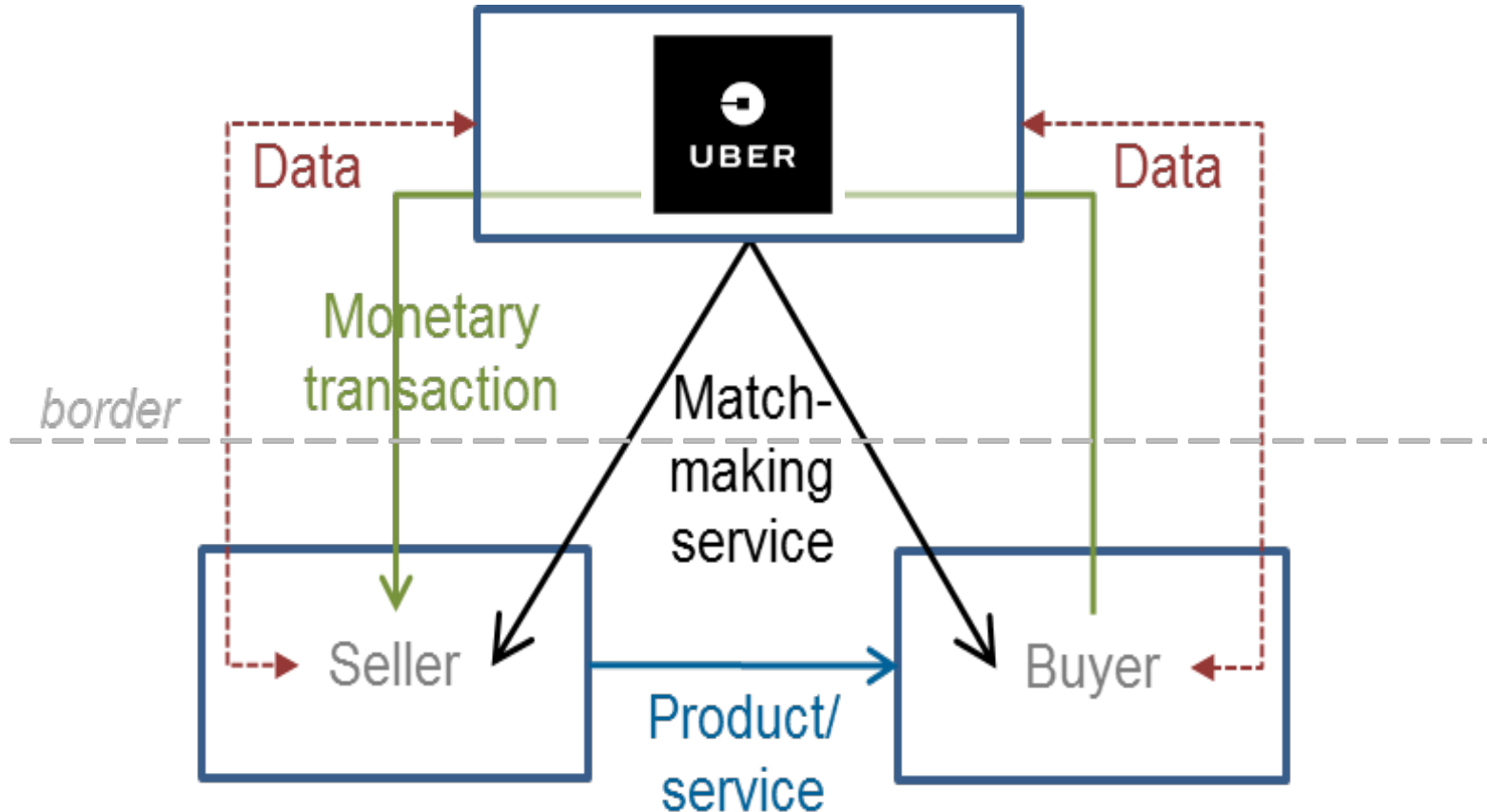
Can be domestic or foreign-owned

## Challenges

- Difficulty to identify DIPs (domestic or foreign-owned) in the economy
- Even more difficult to identify payments to non-resident DIPs
- Non-resident DIPs. Only the intermediation service should be recorded in trade statistics. NET approach, same for DIPs in goods and DIPs services.
- Estimation and treatment of implicit intermediation fees
- Industry classification of DIPs (and product)? Implications for trade policy



# Unpacking a DIP transaction: an example



**Table 5.1. Recording of trade transactions involving digital intermediation platforms**

<b>Seller</b>	<b>DIP</b>	<b>Buyer</b>	<b>Treatment of transacted product</b>	<b>Treatment of Intermediation services</b>
<b><i>If the seller pays the intermediation fee OR if no explicit intermediation fee is charged to the final consumer</i></b>				
Ctry A	Ctry A	Ctry B	Import by country B from country A	None (domestic transaction)
Ctry A	Ctry B	Ctry B	Import by country B from country A	Import by country A from country B
Ctry A	Ctry B	Ctry A	None (domestic transaction)	Import by country A from country B
Ctry A	Ctry B	Ctry C	Import by country C from country A	Import by country A from country B
<b><i>If the buyer pays an explicit intermediation fee</i></b>				
Ctry A	Ctry A	Ctry B	Import by country B from country A	Import by country B from country A
Ctry A	Ctry B	Ctry B	Import by country B from country A	None (domestic transaction)
Ctry A	Ctry B	Ctry A	None (domestic transaction)	Import by country A from country B
Ctry A	Ctry B	Ctry C	Import by country C from country A	Import by country C from country B
<b><i>If both the seller and the buyer pay an explicit intermediation fee</i></b>				
Ctry A	Ctry A	Ctry B	Import by country B from country A	Import by country B (of <i>part</i> of the intermediation services) from country A (the remainder of the intermediation services reflect a domestic transaction)
Ctry A	Ctry B	Ctry B	Import by country B from country A	Import by country A (of <i>part</i> of the intermediation services) from country B (the remainder of the intermediation services reflect a domestic transaction)
Ctry A	Ctry B	Ctry A	None (domestic transaction)	Import by country A from country B
Ctry A	Ctry B	Ctry C	Import by country C from country A	Import by country C (of <i>part</i> of the intermediation services) from country B and import by country A (of the remainder of the intermediation services) from country B



# WTO Technical Assistance on Measuring Digital Trade

- Regional course for Arab countries (October)
- Geneva-based WTO course (early 2022)
- National technical assistance, upon request

<https://tamis.wto.org/form/activity-request/create>