

# MEASUREMENT AND CONCEPTUAL ISSUES IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN SERVICES DATA

*Sieh Lee Mei Ling\* & Nurul Shahnaz Ahmad Mahdzan\*\**

## ABSTRACT

*Developments initiated by the World Trade Organization (WTO) that have implications toward the global economy and international trade environment require major adjustments to the way economic data is collected, recorded and measured. A prime issue in international services data arises as a result of the agreements on services trade that include completely new concepts of which even fundamental comprehension can be of great challenge to many.*

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\* Sieh Lee Mei Ling is a Senior Research Fellow who is Adviser of the Services Research and Innovation Centre, ServRI, University of Malaya – a centre that she spear headed. Before ServRI, she was an Adviser on the services sector of the Malaysian Industrial Development Authority (MIDA), and she also chaired the Task Force on Services Statistics. Dr. Sieh also was a director of a bank that merged with another to become the second largest commercial bank in Malaysia. Previously, Dr. Sieh was the Chair Professor of Business Administration, University of Malaya where she taught, researched and published in marketing, international business, policy research and services development and trade, since 1972. She has published extensively in refereed journals in her long academic career. Among her recognitions received are the Best Innovative Research Proposal Award of East West Center, University of Hawaii 1980, the Young Leaders Award of Canada in 1991 and the Ohira Memorial Prize, Japan, for the best foreign academic publication in 1999. Dr. Sieh is currently a Public Interest Director appointed by the Securities Commission to the Board of the Federation of Investment Managers of Malaysia which is the first self-regulatory financial organization in the country. The author can be reached at [mlsiehlee@gmail.com](mailto:mlsiehlee@gmail.com).

\*\* Nurul Shahnaz Ahmad Mahdzan is currently a Lecturer at the Department of Finance & Banking, Faculty of Business & Accountancy, University of Malaya, Malaysia, and teaches subjects such as Economics and Finance. She obtained her PhD from University of Nottingham, United Kingdom, and her Masters of Business Administration degree from University of Malaya, Malaysia. Her research interests are financial services, services trade, risk management, insurance, and personal finance including saving behavior and financial attitudes of households. The author can be reached at [n\\_shahnaz@um.edu.my](mailto:n_shahnaz@um.edu.my).

*Notwithstanding these issues, it is essential that these new concepts and definitions are fully understood in order to be able to produce reliable statistics on services industries that realistically account for transactions. A number of countries especially those with developing economies, however, are still grappling with the immense task of filling knowledge and data gaps for policies and decision making. A reason for this is due to the infancy state of services statistics in these economies. In view of the implementation of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services (AFAS), there is an urgent need to investigate and understand how services trade data is compiled and measured by data compilers to ensure that meaningful services statistics are produced. This paper conceptualizes some of the pertinent issues faced by those involved in generating relevant services statistics that measure and account for international trade in services (ITS), and explores an approach in dealing with those issues.*

**KEYWORDS:** *International trade in services, services measurement, national treatment, WTO*