

"Conceptual and practical problems measuring service productivity"

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Developed national economies are characterised by the fact that services gain in importance and account for an increasing share of value added. Consequently, the statistical coverage of this economic sector becomes increasingly important. While agriculture and industry are well, or even very well, covered in official statistics, relatively little information is available on the service sector. One reason is that, in contrast to agriculture and industry, services did not reach national economic significance until the second half of the last century. Another major reason is that collecting and recording data on the service sector is difficult in both conceptual and practical terms. This contribution identifies the difficulties of conceptually modelling services and, especially, their productivity and explains why the statistical coverage of services is challenging.

Key Words: goods and services, services industries, definition of services, quality of services service productivity, measurement problems.