

PRESS RELEASE

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Well-coordinated national statistical systems are a prerequisite for high quality of European statistics

In its fifth annual report the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB) calls for a stronger coordination role for the national statistical institutes (NSIs) in order to ensure compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice by all producers of European statistics at national level. As a good governance practice, ESGAB suggests regular exchanges of views between the NSIs and national parliaments. In the words of the ESGAB Chair, Thomas Wieser: 'Good governance leads to good data, and good data to good policies.'

In its report ESGAB examines the degree of compliance with the Code of Practice by other producers of European statistics which transmit data directly to Eurostat, for dissemination of comparable statistics between countries and regions. Compared to the good quality of transmitted data in general, the amount of correction of data needed before dissemination for statistics from these other producers is relatively high. Therefore ESGAB calls for a mandate for NSIs to co-ordinate more strongly other producers of European statistics. This should include a clear role for the NSIs in addressing quality and methodology issues with owners of administrative data. ESGAB also supports the stronger involvement of the NSIs in the process of recruiting the top managers of the other national producers of European statistics and encourages the update of the Code with a principle and indicators on coordination of other national producers of European statistics.

ESGAB suggests that the resource needs of the NSIs be publicly known and clearly distinguished in governments' financing proposals. In addition, NSIs or the bodies monitoring compliance with the Code of Practice within the national statistical systems could report on statistical activities annually to the national parliaments.

With the view of improving the effectiveness of the European Statistical System (ESS), ESGAB calls for an urgent modernisation of the production of European statistics, e.g. by further developing, in close collaboration with data protection offices, the use of administrative data. To benefit from wider economies of scale in a more integrated production system, a common understanding regarding rights and obligations for access and sharing of micro-data amongst the producers of European statistics in the ESS should be swiftly established.

ESGAB's fifth report to the European Parliament and the Council includes a 3-page executive summary with recommendations, while country specific observations can be

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found in the main report. The 2013 report is largely devoted to the inter-dependence between coordination and quality of European statistics. Furthermore the recommendations focus on the principles of the Code of Practice for the statistical system's professional independence and effectiveness and the Report addresses the new round of peer reviews.

Further information

The ESGAB 2013 report with a short executive summary is available on the ESGAB homepage (<http://ec.europa.eu/esgab/>).

Contact for media assistance

To arrange an interview with the ESGAB Chair, Mr Thomas Wieser, please contact the ESGAB secretariat: Heli Lehtimäki (estat-esgab@ec.europa.eu), tel. +352 4301-36484.

About ESGAB

The European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB) was established by the European Parliament and the Council in 2008 to provide an independent overview of the implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice in the European Statistical System. ESGAB's work aims at enhancing professional independence, integrity and accountability of the European Statistical System, key elements of the code of practice, as well as enhancing the quality of European statistics.

ESGAB consists of seven members. Its tasks include the preparation of an annual report to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the code of practice insofar as it relates to the Commission (Eurostat) and the European Statistical System as a whole. ESGAB also advises the Commission (Eurostat) on appropriate measures to facilitate the process.

Key concepts

The **European Statistics Code of Practice** is based on 15 principles. Governance and statistical authorities in the European Union undertake to adhere to the principles of the code covering the institutional environment, statistical processes and outputs. A set of indicators of good practice for each principle provides a reference for reviewing the implementation of the code.

Code of practice: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/quality/documents/CoP_October_2011.pdf

The **European Statistical System (ESS)**: the partnership between the Union statistical authority, which is the Commission (Eurostat), and the national statistical institutes and other national authorities responsible in each Member State for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics (see http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/ess_eurostat/introduction).