



22nd Meeting

European Statistical Advisory Committee

29 January 2016

Brussels

European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)
JDE 63 (6th floor)
Rue Belliard, 99
B-1040 Brussels

Minutes

Minutes of the 22nd meeting of the European Statistical Advisory Committee 29 January 2016

9:00 – 15:30

Present:

Chair: Ineke Stoop

Members: Tasos Christofides, Michael Gold, Claudiu Herteliu, Irena Kotowska, Markos Kristof, Ariane König, Asta Manninen, Ulrike Oschischnig, Agnieszka Piasna, Walter Radermacher, Frances Ruane, Aurel Schubert, Biruta Sloka, Michael Smyth, Maria João Valente Rosa, Ildefonso Villán Criado, Maurizio Vichi, Gabriella Vukovich, Thomas Wobben

Observers, presenters: Mariana Kotzeva, Pieter Everaers, Marleen De Smedt, Andrea Scheller

Assistants: Oliver Heiden (to Mr Wobben), Tamara Pal (to Ms Vukovich), Alexander Alexandrov (to Mr Smyth)

Absent: Hugues Bayet, Axel Borsch-Supan, Alba Bosch Moline, David Hand

Secretariat: Heli Lehtimäki, Cristina Pereira de Sá

1. Welcome and adoption of the agenda

Ineke Stoop thanked Michael Smyth for hosting the ESAC meeting in the premises of the European Economic and Social committee. She also warmly welcomed the new ESAC members who started their 5-year term in January 2016: David Hand (absent), Claudiu Herteliu, Ariane König and Biruta Sloka.

The Chair informed the plenary about the meeting of Executive Board¹ on 28 January. The discussion focussed on the indicator workshop, the Conference on European Statistics Stakeholders and the initiative to launch a European Statistics Day. Preparation of the events advances well while the timing for dissemination of the planned data manifesto appears not to be optimal. The Executive Board also reflected on how to communicate ESAC activities.

The draft agenda was adopted after changing the order of some agenda points and adding an item under any other business.

¹ 28 January 2016 from 16 to 18 hours, present: Ineke Stoop, Maria João Valente Rosa, Maurizio Vichi, Walter Radermacher and ESAC secretariat (Heli Lehtimäki)

2. Minutes of previous meetings

The 19 October minutes had been adopted in a written procedure. All action points identified at the last meeting are on the agenda of this meeting.

3. Recent developments and updates

3.1. Recent ESAC representation in ESS related meetings²

- Ineke Stoop meeting with Ruth Paserman, Cabinet of Commissioner Thyssen on 26 October 2015, and the ESS Committee on 19 November 2015.
- Michael Gold in Business Statistics Directors Group, 8-9 December 2015.
- Tasos Christofides, programme committee of the European Conference on Quality in official statistics (Q2016), 13-14 January 2016.

3.2. Planning for ESAC participation in ESS meetings

ESAC's presence in other ESS Director and expert group meetings was agreed as outlined in Annex 1. ESAC members were reminded that they should receive the formal invitation letter from Eurostat including the details for reimbursing travel expenses before committing themselves to binding travel arrangements. In case an invitation to a meeting in which an ESAC member has agreed to represent the committee has not arrived three weeks before the meeting date at the latest, the member should contact ESAC secretariat. Members are kindly requested to report back from the attended meeting shortly after by means of the feedback form (Annex 2)

3.3. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Eurostat informed ESAC on the latest status on SDG indicators³ and the upcoming discussions in the UN Statistical Commission in March. The role of international organisations is focused on methodology and recommendations while data ownership is at national level. Moreover, some data needed for the indicators are not produced by the official statisticians. The current situation raises concerns about the role of the international organisations as guardians for standards and quality. ESAC wishes to be regularly informed on the developments to measure SDGs.

3.4. Migration

The dossier is waiting for the outcomes of the feasibility studies on the definition of 'usual residence' and discussions at the Conference of European Statistics Stakeholders in Budapest (see point 6.3 below).

² For more information please see respective feedback form distributed as a meeting document

³ Sustainable Development Goal indicators website <http://unstats.un.org/sdgs>

4. European Statistics annual work programme 2017 (AWP 2017)

The AWP 2017 is the last annual programme implementing the multiannual framework of the current European statistical programme (ESP) 2013-17.

Three actions in this statistical work programme are covered in the European Commission's Regulatory Fitness and Performance programme for making EU law simpler and reducing regulatory costs (REFIT)⁴ which has identified statistics as one of the priority areas:

- Integrated European Social Statistics (IESS), proposal for Framework Regulation for European Statistics on Persons and Households
- Framework Regulation Integrating Business Statistics (FRIBS)
- Strategy on Agricultural Statistics 2020 and Beyond (EASS)

The draft will be revised in the light of comments received and discussed in the ESSC meeting in May. Thereafter discussion with the Commission directorates general will take place and the programme will be finalised towards the end of the year. ESAC agreed to revise the draft opinion to fill gaps on measuring outcomes, data on youth, citizens' science, crowdsourcing, open data and partnerships. ESAC's previous positions on resources and migration statistics are to be reinforced.

Action: deadline for additional input Tuesday 9 February.

5. European Statistical Programme 2018-2020

The extension of the European Statistical Programme (ESP) to 2018-20 seeks aligning the statistical planning with the 7-year-cycle of the multiannual financial framework of the EC 2014-2020. The intention is thus to extend the main orientations of the current ESP, new ideas could be introduced to the next full programming cycle. The present draft ESP 2018-20 is subject to an impact assessment to be discussed by the Regulatory Scrutiny Board on 16 March. Of the options "do nothing, do less, do more", ESAC expressed its appreciation for the option 2c with the statistics and work to be increased and suggested that a few other topics could also be taken into account when the result of the discussions would be an increase in budget. Suggestions included:

- representation of uncertainties associated in particular with aggregate and composite indicators;
- regional dimension;
- resources to support statistical infrastructure:
- labour mobility and migration;
- economic implications of volunteering work;
- development of open linked data and encourage partnership building.

Action: the draft impact assessment is to be circulated to ESAC when available⁵. Comments on the accompanying memo "Better statistics, better Europe" are to be sent to the secretariat by 9 February.

⁴ COM(2015) 610 final –Commission Work Programme 2016 "No time for business as usual". [Annex II](#) Refit initiative, point 26 "Statistics package" on p. 5

⁵ Secretary's remark: done 19 February 2016

6. Cost estimates for production of official statistics

For Eurostat's presentation for Survey on statistical production costs in the ESS and Cost analysis of European Statistics (costs by product) please see Annex 3. ESAC much appreciated information on this ambitious project with many methodological challenges. Discussion at international level could be useful, albeit preferably with more information also on the benefits. At present, the cost-merit pilot which covered all direct/indirect costs is limited to Eurostat. ESAC looks forward to being informed of further developments.

7. ESAC activities

7.1. European Statistic Day 20 October

ESAC wishes to establish the 20 October as European Statistics Day on an annual basis. The date is the same as the World Statistics Day marked each five years. This initiative aims primarily at raising awareness of European citizens to the importance of official statistics and at communicating statistics to users, also during the 5-year gap between each World Statistics Day. The European Statistics Day initiative could be launched at the occasion of the second Conference of European Statistics Stakeholders, which will be held on 20-21 October 2016 in Budapest.

7.2. Workshop "Indicators: user requirements, construction methodology and communication"⁶ 10 May 2016, The Hague

The preliminary background paper and programme to the workshop was prepared by the organising team consisting of Ineke Stoop, Frances Ruane, Thomas Wobben (Oliver Heiden) and the ESAC secretariat, as well as Marleen De Smedt, John Verrinder and Nicola Massarelli from Eurostat.

Most European indicators/indicator sets are primarily designed to assist policy makers in monitoring European programmes and strategies. These indicator sets could also be used by a wider range of users such as academics, social partners and civil society at large. In order to make the indicator sets 'fit-for-purpose' Eurostat and its partners in the ESS need to engage with all actors and stakeholders in the indicator setting process. The objective of the workshop is to reflect on and advise about different approaches and processes for constructing, using and communicating indicators – particularly European indicators – and to make recommendations in particular from a European users' perspective where appropriate. The organising team will revise the programme and background paper in the light of the discussion.

Action: ESAC members are invited to confirm their presence to the workshop and propose potential candidates as participants, with a short description to explain why this person would be valuable for the workshop. Deadline 9 February.

⁶ Preliminary title

7.3. Conference of European Statistics Stakeholders (CESS) 20-21 October 2016, Budapest

Eurostat, ESAC, the Federation of European National Statistical Societies, the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, with the involvement of the Hungarian Statistical Association and European Central Bank are organising the second Conference of European Statistics Stakeholders in Budapest on 20–21 October 2016. The aim of the Conference is to bring together European methodologists, producers, and users of statistics to discuss users needs, to share best practices in the production of official statistics, to present innovative ways of visualising and communicating statistics, and to advance new methodological ideas for collecting and analysing data. The scientific committees are being set up and the call for papers will be launched shortly at <http://www.ksh.hu/cess2016>. The main themes are:

1. Bringing in information from where we can get it; Multi-source data collection: regulatory, methodological and quality issues
2. Learning more from what we already know; New methods for data analysis: from design to model-based estimation
3. More rapid statistics and indicators on new phenomena; New data sources for statistical production: experimental results
4. Getting the statistics out; Innovation in statistical data dissemination: methods, tools, applications
5. Different users – different needs – variety of approaches; Communication of statistical data in the digital era; enhance Statistical Culture by better communication towards Statistical Literacy
6. Small area statistics; General and methodological issues concerning statistics and indicators of high granularity
7. Better statistics for a globalised world; Challenges for making statistics on cross-border phenomena such as migration, tourism, trade and multinational enterprises

Action: ESAC appointed Asta Manninen to the programme committee as its representative. ESAC members are invited to organise sessions in the conference and inform Maurizio Vichi and the secretariat by July.

8. AOB

8.1. ESAC homepage

Andrea Scheller presented the plans for revising ESAC's online presence. On the homepage, the ESAC description below the news items is to be rewritten and shortened. On the left-hand menu, the order of items will be changed: events, opinions, papers, about ESAC (assignment, members, meetings), links, contact. The chronology of presenting events, meetings and opinions will consistently show the current year first and rest under "previous events/meetings".

Action: ESAC agreed to the proposed changes and decided to add a short summary describing the main points of each meeting record. The graphic pictogram used

previously in the publicly available ESS report and "EurostatInfos" (internal newsletter) is to be updated for use in deeper layers of the ESAC web space, not on the entry page. For updating the content on the website, the secretariat will seek approval of Andrea Scheller and the Chair.

Annexes:

Annex 1: Planning of meetings 2016

Annex 2: feedback form

Annex 3: cost estimates for production of official statistics