

Programme

Wednesday, 29 May 2013

13:30-14:30 Registration

Welcome

Walter Radermacher, EU Chief Statistician,
Director-General of Eurostat

Opening address

Algirdas Šemeta, Commissioner

Session 1

The political context — sovereign debt crisis,
economic governance, transparency and trust
in fiscal data

*Chair: Walter Radermacher, EU Chief
Statistician, Director-General of Eurostat*

Thursday, 30 May 2013

Session 2

Fiscal transparency and public accounting

*Chair: Lucio Pench, Director for Fiscal Policy at
DG ECFIN*

Session 3

Suitability of IPSAS and national experiences
of reforms

*Chair: Manfred Kraff, Deputy Director-General
of DG BUDG*

Session 4

Accounting standards, governance, the way
forward

*Chair: François Lequiller, Director of Govern-
ment Finance Statistics at Eurostat*

Round-table (including questions from the
audience)

Closing remarks: François Lequiller, Director
of Government Finance Statistics at Eurostat

Practical information

Participation is by registration only, through
the conference webpage:

[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/
portal/conferences/introduction/2013/epsas](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/conferences/introduction/2013/epsas)

There is no charge for participation. However,
the total number of participants may need to
be limited.

The language of the conference is English.

Contact points

Secretariat

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European
Commission

Conference

Towards implementing
European Public Sector
Accounting Standards

29-30 May 2013

Charlemagne – Room Alcide de Gasperi
170 rue de la Loi
1040 Brussels

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Background

The sovereign debt crisis has underlined the need for governments to clearly demonstrate their financial stability and the necessity of rigorous and transparent reporting of fiscal data.

Transparency, accountability and comparability of private business accounts have been bolstered by the adoption at EU level of harmonised accounting standards. The implementation of EU harmonised public sector accounting standards would similarly bolster the quality, transparency, comparability and accountability of public entities in the EU. At present fiscal monitoring in the EU is based on statistical data using the macro accounting framework of national accounts (ESA 95).

However, recent experiences have shown that the quality of the upstream data sources (the accounts of public entities) for these statistics has to be strengthened. This need is at the core of the so-called '6 Pack' of legislation, and in particular Council Directive 2011/85/EU (the Budgetary Frameworks Directive). In this context, EU harmonised public sector accounting standards at micro level would also bolster the quality of the macro fiscal reporting under the Excessive Deficit Procedure.



The Budgetary Frameworks Directive sets out the rules on Member State budgetary frameworks necessary to ensure compliance with the Treaty obligation to avoid excessive government deficits. It requested the Commission to assess the suitability of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) for the Member States.

The European Commission has forwarded its assessment to the Council and European Parliament, based on information received through consultations with Commission services, international organisations, Member States' experts and other interested parties.

It concludes that, even if IPSAS cannot be implemented in EU Member States as it stands currently, the IPSAS standards represent an indisputable reference for potential development of European Public Sector Accounting Standards (EPSAS), based on a strong EU governance system.

Aim of the conference

This conference, hosted by Eurostat and Algirdas Šemeta, Commissioner for Taxation, Customs, Statistics, Audit and Anti-fraud, will bring together high-level stakeholders and decision makers from public sector accounting, auditing and statistics to discuss the future development of harmonised government accounting standards in Europe.

The Commission considers that before deciding on the effective project to create and implement EPSAS in the Member States some further preparatory steps are necessary. Important questions need to be resolved, such as:

- deciding on a suitable governance structure,
- defining the EPSAS framework,
- specifying a first set of core EPSAS standards,
- planning the implementation.

The conference will therefore discuss and confirm the need for EPSAS and begin the discussion of important practical arrangements, by addressing issues such as finance, governance, possible synergies and the concerns of smaller government entities.

