



66th ESGAB meeting

Wednesday, 26 February 2020

Minutes

Doc ESGAB 2020/19

The Secretariat



Brussels, 26 February 2020

Minutes

66th Meeting of the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB)

Expert Group *X02147*

26 February 2020

1 Place Madou, Brussels

1. Welcome and adoption of the agenda

The draft agenda (Doc. 2020/01) was adopted with one amendment.

2. ESGAB's 2021-2023 mandate

The mandate of the ESGAB members will finish at the end of 2020 and members were asked to express their willingness to continue for a second term.

3. ESGAB's work programme

ESGAB members discussed the 2020 work programme. This year's programme will follow four areas of interest: the 2020 Annual Report, dialogues with Heads of NSIs, preparation of the peer review of Eurostat and collaboration with the European Statistical Advisory Committee (ESAC).

In order to strengthen the cooperation with ESAC, one ESGAB member suggested that a joint seminar be organised this year with ESAC, ESAC-like bodies, ESGAB-like bodies and NSIs to discuss governance issues.

In order to prepare for the next peer review exercise, ESGAB nominated Mr Priit Potisepp who will be in charge of this topic. ESGAB will nominate at a later stage another member who will assist Mr Potisepp.

ESGAB members agree to continue this year the series of dialogues with the Heads of NSIs. The first ones could take place on 6 May, during the ESGAB meeting. The chair suggested inviting Mr Dominik Rozkrut, Chair of the Partnership Group and Mr Gian Carlo Blangiardo, Head of the National Statistical Institute of Italy. In the second part of the year, several other Heads of NSIs should be invited for dialogues with ESGAB.



ESGAB members discussed the structure of the next Annual Report and agreed that an assessment of the appointment and dismissals procedures of the Head of NSIs should be included. One ESGAB member will draft a document based on the overview sent previously to ESGAB by the Secretariat. This document will highlight the elements on which ESGAB would like to have more information.

One member underlined the importance of keeping issues related to globalisation under review, while another member indicated that the Commitments on Confidence, which Eurostat has to produce every two years, should also be included in the report. Consequently, in preparation of the Annual Report 2020, Eurostat will send to ESGAB a report on the implementation actions taken following the last three DGINS, which focused on the following topics: the statistical implications of economic globalisation (Bratislava 2019), trusted smart statistics (Bucharest 2018) and population movements and integration issues – migration statistics (Budapest 2017).

The Chair added that the Annual Report will also need to take stock of the implications of the new priorities of the European Commission on the production of statistics. Mr Gueye explained that Eurostat translates these priorities into statistical needs, included in the European Statistical Programme on which ESAC is consulted.

4. Information from Eurostat on recent and future developments in the ESS

Eurostat presented the agenda and main conclusions of the ESSC meeting that took place in February, in Luxembourg.

Mr Paolo Gentiloni, Commissioner for Economy, attended the meeting and in his intervention he stressed the important role that statistics play in the new priorities of the Commission, such as the New Green Deal and digitalisation. He also underlined the importance of having a good communication strategy, which should make extensive use of the new modern communication tools. Commission Gentiloni re-affirmed his commitment to defend the professional independence of the ESS and Eurostat, which is of paramount importance in order to have trusted, official statistics.

The ESSC discussed priority-setting in the ESS and the best ways to identify them. The ESS agreed to create a task force, composed of Directors-General who will come up with proposals by early next year. The Chair participated in the discussions on this topic in order to present the point of view of ESGAB regarding the governance of the ESS.

Mr Gueye informed members on the progress made to obtain the ESS IT security certification, which is very important in order to ensure a safe exchange of information between Member States.

Mr Gueye also informed members on the creation of a task force on communication, comprised of 15 Heads of NSIs. The goal of the task force is to develop a communication strategy for



important issues, such as the peer review exercise. The first proposals are expected in the summer 2020.

One ESGAB member enquired if GDPR will interfere with the development of new statistics. Mr. Gueye replied that Eurostat is investigating different methods that will allow access to data, while respecting the principles of GDPR. He explained that further discussions are needed with Data Protection officers.

The Chair added that the European Commission has released recently a communication on European data strategy, which might have implications for the ESS. One ESGAB member will analyse it in order to identify possible risks and opportunities for the ESS.

5. Roadmap for Eurostat's peer review

ESGAB nominated Mr Priit Potisepp to participate in the development of the roadmap for Eurostat's peer review. At a later stage, ESGAB will also nominate another member who will assist Mr Potisepp.

In order to prepare for the next peer review exercise, ESGAB requested that it be provided with the documents of the latest peer review round.

6. Information on the work of the UK Statistics Authority

ESGAB would like to collaborate in the future with the UK Statistics Authority on matters of common interest.

7. Next meeting

The next ESGAB meeting will take place on 6 May, in Rome.



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List of participants

Members

Mr Enrico Giovannini (Chair) (via Skype)

Mr Algirdas Šemeta

Mr Kai Carstensen

Mr Priit Potisepp

Ms Mireille Elbaum (by phone)

Ms Frances Ruane (by phone)

Absent

Mr Bart de Moor

Observers

Mr Gallo Gueye, (Eurostat)

Secretariat

Ms Delia Bistreanu