



59th ESGAB meeting

Thursday 13 December 2018

Minutes

Doc ESGAB 2019/15

The Secretariat



Brussels, 11 January 2019

Minutes

59th Meeting of the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB)

Expert Group *X02147*

13 December 2018

1 Place Madou, Brussels

1. Welcome and adoption of the agenda

The draft agenda (Doc. 2018/95) was presented by the Chair and agreed.

2. ESGAB Annual Report 2018

The final text of the 2018 Report was agreed by the Members. It will be sent to the Publications Office for proof-reading and layout on Monday, 17 December.

The Chair will draft a short executive summary for electronic discussion with, and endorsement by, the Members, so that it can be sent to the Publications Office later on.

The Board discussed the draft text of the press release to be issued on 22 January 2019, when the Annual Report is published. A revised version taking into account Members' suggestions will be circulated in the next days.

Ms Mireille Elbaum and Mr Kai Carstensen have kindly offered to read the French and German translations (respectively) of the press release to ensure that the text is in line with the spirit of the discussions.

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

3.1. Workshop of NSI Directors General on “The role of statistical institutes in digitalisation strategies of governments and the EU”

Eurostat briefed ESGAB on the workshop held on 19-20 November, in Vienna. The workshop allowed for a rich discussion among NSIs on the digitalisation and data strategies being adopted by national governments to promote e-government activities, make information available to a broader public and reduce reporting burden of citizens. In addition, NSIs shared experiences and best practices on their respective roles in those strategies.



3.2. Partnership Group meeting on 7 December 2018

Eurostat informed the Board about the outcomes of the PG meeting held on 7 December, in Copenhagen.

The Group discussed a new approach to priority-setting which includes the following elements: a) need for the ESS to scrutinise the new statistical demands flowing from the European Statistical Program and economic and social developments, as well as the existing body of European statistics; b) prioritisation requires an enhanced knowledge basis as regards the marginal costs of statistical production, but also more evidence about the actual usage (both at national and European level) and added-value of the European statistics produced, which also implies a reinforced and more structured dialogue with users; c) need for a multiannual approach to priority-setting.

The PG also had a stimulating exchange of views on the core values of the statistical system. It considered that the sharing of data within the ESS could be improved but also called for caution in that respect to avoid endangering the credibility of the system if confidentiality is put at risk.

4. Greek statistics

The Board exchanged views on the situation regarding judicial proceedings in Greece. The discussion was based on two documents:

(1) a criminal file from the Public Prosecutor of the Greek Court of Appeal, for consideration of the Courts' Judicial Council, accusing Mr Andreas Georgiou, former President of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), of “complicity in false certification against the State with the particularly aggravating circumstance of the extremely large amount of money involved in the crime” with respect to the Greek government deficit figures reported by ELSTAT to Eurostat in 2009; (2) Andreas Georgiou’s additional pleadings.

5. ESGAB work programme for 2019

ESGAB discussed its work programme for 2019.

5.1. 2019 Annual Report

The potential topics for the 2019 Annual Report will be discussed at the next ESGAB meeting, on 15 February.

5.2. Preparation of the Eurostat peer review in 2020

Eurostat informed about the ESS Committee’s decision to establish an ESS Task Force on Peer Reviews to develop a comprehensive and all-encompassing methodology as well as the necessary instruments to implement the peer reviews. The mandate, composition and roadmap



for the Task Force will be submitted to the ESS Committee in February 2019 for adoption, after which the Member States and EFTA countries will be asked to nominate experienced colleagues to be part of the Task Force.

5.3. Event with ESGAB-like bodies

The Board will invite the current six ESGAB-like bodies and the Heads of NSIs for an event to discuss both the functioning of the national statistical systems where such bodies exist, and the pros and cons of establishing them where they do not exist.

5.4. Implementation of ESGAB Rules of Procedure

This issue was postponed to the next meeting, on 15 February.

6. Next meeting

The next meeting will take place on 15 February 2019 in Brussels.

The date of the ESGAB December meeting was changed to 11 December 2019.

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List of participants

Members

Mr Enrico Giovannini (Chair), via video-conference
Mr Kai Carstensen
Ms Mireille Elbaum
Mr Jaume García
Mr Algirdas Šemeta

Excused: Ms Frances Ruane, Mr Bart De Moor

Observers

Ms Mariana Kotzeva (Eurostat)
Mr Eduardo Barredo Capelot (Eurostat)

Secretariat

Ms Cristina Pereira de Sá