



60th ESGAB meeting

Friday, 15 February 2019

Minutes

Doc ESGAB 2019/21

The Secretariat



Brussels, 4 March 2019

Minutes

60th Meeting of the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB)

Expert Group *X02147*

15 February 2019

1 Place Madou, Brussels

1. Welcome and adoption of the agenda

The draft agenda (Doc. 2019/01) was presented by the Chair and agreed.

2. ESGAB work programme for 2019

2.1. 2019 Annual Report

The topics for the 2019 Annual Report will be discussed and agreed at the next ESGAB meeting, on 3 April.

The Chair of ESGAB will be invited to the 2019 DGINS Conference dedicated to globalisation.

2.2. Event with ESGAB-like bodies on 19 June

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. It will be a full day event in June the day before the 62nd ESGAB meeting, in Brussels.

It was also agreed that it would be more relevant to think in terms of ‘ESGAB-like function’ because in some countries such function may be embedded in another entity, with a wider role, and be performed even though a separate ESGAB-like body does not actually exist.



2.3. Dialogues with National Statistical Institutes

The event mentioned under 2.2 would be a good occasion to invite one or two Heads of NSIs for a dialogue with ESGAB. As many new Heads have been appointed recently, it would also be interesting to exchange views on their respective expectations and perceived constraints.

2.4. Implementation of the ESGAB Rules of Procedure

ESGAB will debate these issues during its meeting on 3 April.

3. Greek statistics – GPAC 5th annual report

3.1. Main messages of the 5th GPAC annual report

The Chair of the Greek Good Practice Advisory Committee (GPAC), Mr Stephan Moens, participated in the meeting to present the 5th GPAC report.

Following on the analyses carried out in previous GPAC reports, the 2018 report deals with particular issues relevant to the implementation of the Code of Practice in the Hellenic Statistical System, namely: the organisation of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), adequacy of resources, certification of statistics produced by the agencies of the Hellenic Statistical System, statistical confidentiality and data protection, with special attention for the implementation of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). In addition, GPAC expressed concerns about court proceedings against the former President of ELSTAT, Mr Andreas Georgiou.

The 5th GPAC report concludes that the Greek Statistical System is committed to the aim of producing high quality statistics and that several actions have been taken to strengthen it. However, additional efforts are needed to further improve the functioning of ELSTAT and of the system.

ESGAB took note of the main messages of the report and thanked Mr Stephan Moens for his presentation.

3.2. Draft press release concerning recent developments of the Greek statistical system

ESGAB discussed and finalised the text for the press release to be published shortly.



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

4.1. ESSC meeting and workshop of NSI Directors General on “Core values of the statistical system” on 7 February

Eurostat informed about the ESSC’s decision to establish an ESS Task Force on Peer Reviews to develop a comprehensive methodology as well as the necessary instruments to implement the peer reviews. The Committee also endorsed the TF mandate and composition, as well as the roadmap for its work. Mr Jaume García is the ESGAB's representative at the ESS Task Force.

Eurostat also briefed on the ongoing debate regarding prioritisation in the ESS. The System is willing to respond positively to new statistical demands, but this requires a comprehensive priority-setting instrument to scrutinise not only the new demands, but also the existing body of European statistics, the marginal costs of production and the availability of human resources with the right skills, as well as the added-value of the statistics produced. In addition, there is a need for a multiannual approach to work programme implementation. A workshop of NSI Directors General will be organised on 13-14 June to debate these issues.

As regards the UK’s withdrawal from the European Union, Eurostat is prepared to adapt the dissemination of European statistics after Brexit, for which internal guidelines have been established. The objective is to make sure that on 30 March the new EU27 aggregate (EU without UK) is available for all the datasets, including backwards calculations for pre-Brexit reference periods. The adaptation of the *acquis* in the field of statistical legislation is also underway, with a first Regulation adopted by the Commission in December 2018 amending the geographical breakdown levels in the Balance of Payments Regulation.

In case of “no-deal” and in the absence of data transmitted by the UK, Eurostat’s objective will be to produce, whenever possible and whenever necessary for the users, estimates for the EU28 aggregate for those reference periods when the UK was an EU Member State.

5. Next meeting

The next ESGAB meeting is scheduled for 3 April 2019 in Brussels. However, the organisation of a big conference in Brussels at the beginning of April seems to be impacting the availability of hotel rooms. If this is confirmed, another location for the ESGAB meeting needs to be found. The Secretariat will check and keep the Members informed.



List of participants

Members

Mr Enrico Giovannini (Chair)
Mr Kai Carstensen
Ms Mireille Elbaum
Ms Frances Ruane
Mr Algirdas Šemeta

Excused: Mr Bart De Moor, Mr Jaume García

Observer

Ms Mariana Kotzeva (Eurostat)

Invited speaker

Mr Stephan Moens (Chair of GPAC)

Secretariat

Ms Cristina Pereira de Sá