

Privately held data communication toolkit

2022 edition



**Privately held data
communication toolkit | 2022 edition**

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Contents

Background	4
1(a) Website section text	5
1(b) FAQ – the ESS and access to privately held data	6
2. Text for a leaflet for policy makers	11
3. Text for a leaflet for private data holders	14
4. Slides for policy makers	16
5. Slides for private data holders	21

Background

In 2020 the Task Force on ESS strategic communication was launched, following the endorsement of its mandate at the meeting of the European Statistical System Committee in February 2020. The members of the Task Force are representatives of 17 National Statistical Institutes (NSIs)¹ and Eurostat. The aim of the Task Force has been to identify common challenges within the ESS and, where appropriate, to develop coordinated strategic communication approaches. The mandate of the Task Force expires in March 2022.

One of the three subgroups of the Task Force is the subgroup on communication around privately held data, chaired by Statistics Poland. Its members are representatives from seven NSIs (Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Slovenia and Poland) and Eurostat.

One of the key outputs of the subgroup has been to prepare a 'communication toolkit' for NSIs and Eurostat to use when communicating about privately held data. The toolkit contains a set of communication material focusing on three key target audiences – policy makers, private data holders and citizens.

The toolkit consists of five main elements:

1. Text for a website section on privately held data for Eurostat and NSIs' websites (targeting citizens)
 - a. An introduction
 - b. Frequently asked questions (FAQs)
2. Text for a leaflet for policy makers
3. Text for a leaflet for private data holders
4. Slide presentation for policy makers
5. Slide presentation for private data holders.

The material is expected to be translated and used by NSIs and Eurostat on their websites and during outreach events at national and European levels.

Eurostat, January 2022

¹ Statistics Belgium, Destatis, Statistics Denmark, the Hellenic Statistical Authority, INE Spain, INSEE, Croatian Bureau of Statistics, Hungarian Central Statistical Office, the Central Statistics Office Ireland, ISTAT, Statistics Lithuania, Statistics Netherlands, Statistics Poland, INE Portugal, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovakia, Statistics Finland Statistics. Austria was also a member of the Task Force from March 2020 until June 2021.

1(a) Website section text

[NSI] produces official statistics that inform decision-making for [nationality] and European Union (EU) citizens and policy makers. As a partner of the European Statistical System (ESS)², our **official statistics** are produced in accordance with the European Statistics Code of Practice, ensuring that they are of the highest quality, free from political influence, transparent, objective and independent. In addition, official statistics produced by members of the ESS undergo a stringent peer review process³ to guarantee that the standards that make European official statistics trustworthy and reliable are upheld.

[NSI] is committed to innovation through methodological developments and the use of **new data sources** for a more efficient and timely production of official statistics, helping us to better address user needs while reducing the burden on companies and citizens and the cost of production.

Privately held data, which are the data collected by private businesses and organisations, have the potential to help producers of official statistics such as [NSI] to provide more accurate statistics that reflect topics of interest to users at a faster pace. Privately held data are diverse, and include data gathered through mobile phone records, GPS locations and social media data. These sources of information can be used to improve official statistics at a more detailed level that provides useful insights to both citizens and policy makers.

[NSI to insert one or two general sentences about the NSI and examples of its present activities in relation to privately held data].

Currently, data sharing between private data holders and national statistical institutes (NSIs) in the ESS is enabled through private agreements on a case-by-case basis. Recognising the wealth of data and their potential value to official statistics, the ESS is focusing its efforts on the development of a **legal framework** that will allow NSIs to access and use these data in a reliable way.

The European data strategy aims at building a genuine single market for data and at making Europe a global leader in the data-agile economy. In this respect, the forthcoming Data Act should constitute a key pillar and the second major initiative announced in the data strategy. It is intended to contribute to the creation of a cross-sectoral governance framework for data access and use by legislating on issues that affect relations between actors in the data economy, to provide incentives for horizontal data sharing across sectors.

The protection of the **privacy** of citizens and companies and the **confidentiality** of information are core principles of each ESS NSI and Eurostat. The guarantee of confidentiality is set out in national and EU statistical legislation, and put into practice by publishing all information in aggregate form. NSIs cannot divulge any information that would lead to the disclosure of information on an individual or company.

² Hover text: "The European Statistical System (ESS) is the partnership between Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, and the National Statistical Institutes and other national authorities responsible in each EU Member State for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics. This Partnership also includes the countries of the European Economic Area (EEA) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA)"

³ Link: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/quality/peer-reviews>

1(b) FAQ – the ESS and access to privately held data

What is the European Statistical System (ESS)?

The European Statistical System (ESS) is the partnership between Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, and the National Statistical Institutes and other national authorities responsible in each EU Member State for the development, production and dissemination of European official statistics. This partnership also includes the countries of the European Economic Area (EEA) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).

The members of the European Statistical System provide European citizens and decision makers with trustworthy, independent high-quality information on the economy and society on European, national and regional levels.

Why are official statistics produced by ESS partners unique?

Official statistics produced by ESS partners are a trustworthy source of decision-making information for EU citizens and public policy.

They are produced in keeping with the European Statistics Code of Practice, which means that they are of the highest quality, are independent, objective, transparent, impartial and, importantly, free from political influence.

All official statistics produced in the ESS are also subject to a stringent peer review process, making them a trustworthy cornerstone of European democratic societies.

(see <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/quality/peer-reviews>)

What are privately held data?

Every day, private organisations and businesses collect a wealth of data in order to manufacture all sorts of goods, offer a wide range of services and make sure their businesses run smoothly.

This information, which is held by private industries, also includes behavioural data gathered through mobile phone records, GPS locations and social media data.

Why are ESS partners interested in accessing privately held data?

The data that private organisations and businesses hold can be used by members of the ESS to produce official statistics that help European citizens and decision makers understand important issues that are affecting our economy and society at European, national and regional levels.

Privately held data have the potential to help us understand phenomena like population movements, lifestyle changes, disease patterns, public transport and personal consumption.

These types of insights are becoming more important for decision makers who serve the public and need to understand increasingly complex and rapidly evolving subject matters, such as the environment, epidemiology, public infrastructure and our global economy.

For example, data from private organisations, such as retailers and supermarkets, can help official statistics producers build a more accurate, efficient and comprehensive price index to better understand the economy. Similarly, data from sensors in cities can provide insights to predict

tourist inflows or estimate pollution, and exchanges of data on transportation and cargo can ensure near-frictionless border controls.

Another advantage of using these data to produce official statistics is that it is often more cost-efficient and can produce faster outcomes on aspects such as population movements, prices, inflation, the internet economy, energy or traffic. Using such data also lowers the burden on companies and citizens by avoiding survey questionnaires.

Are any ESS members already using privately held data to create official statistics?

Yes, many National Statistics Institutes are already using privately held data and in recent years ESS members have worked proactively to produce innovative, agile and responsive insights based on these new data sources.

These efforts were clearly demonstrated by individual Member State responses to the Covid-19 pandemic which resulted in a variety of new and innovative economic and social indicators, many of which rely on privately held data.

[ESS members can tailor this answer adding their own practices and examples...]

In many ways, the pandemic served to reinforce the need for more timely, innovative and agile data insights and it accelerated the digital transformation that was already underway in the ESS.

The use of privately held data is not simply limited to crisis situations or rapidly evolving situations. It can also be used to create valuable new economic and social insights. For example, in June 2021, Eurostat published the [first information on short-stay accommodation offered via Airbnb, Booking, Expedia Group and Tripadvisor](#), based on a [data-sharing agreement](#) with these platforms. Unlike the traditional official accommodation statistics collected via business surveys or via local authorities, the data are collected using a previously unexplored channel, namely data on listings and bookings of these platforms. In the future, agreements such as this one will empower statistical offices to provide timelier, more accurate and relevant statistics, while at the same time reducing the response burden on individuals and private companies.

What is happening in [my country]?

[ESS members can tailor this answer adding their own practices and examples...]

During the Covid-19 crisis, statistical offices in many countries created dashboards to give users a quick and comprehensive overview of the key indicators showing the economic and societal impact of the pandemic. Eurostat, in cooperation with the statistical authorities in the EU Member States, created the [European Statistical Recovery Dashboard](#), allowing users to track the economic and social recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic on a monthly and quarterly basis.

Why aren't all National Statistical Institutes using privately held data to create insights?

The use of privately held data to produce valuable insights into complex and changing societal issues is relatively new and ESS members are increasingly developing their expertise and sharing learnings in this area.

However, the key challenge for the ESS members is around access to privately held data. There is no legal framework to enable the development of fast, responsible and sustainable data sharing between private sector businesses and National Statistical Institutes.

Any data sharing that has taken place to date between private organisations and public sector National Statistical Institutes has been by private agreement on an individual basis.

Why is a legal framework so important?

One of the challenges with the lack of a legal framework is that access to privately held data is not sustainable in the long term because the supply of data cannot be guaranteed. This affects the ability of National Statistical Institutes to produce comparable data over time. Comparability is an important aspect of official statistics in that it enables decision makers to draw meaningful insights.

Furthermore, as private companies are not obliged to provide public sector National Statistical Institutes with their data, they can decide to sell it on to other organisations who provide data insights for monetary gain.

However, National Statistical Institutes that produce official statistics under the robust lens of the European Statistics Code of Practice are in a unique position to provide EU citizens and public policy makers with high-quality, independent, objective, transparent, impartial insights that are free from political influence.

A legal framework would not only safeguard the public's right to independent, trustworthy decision-making information. It would also put in place a secure technical infrastructure to share data as well as establish robust ethical and privacy procedures in line with data protection legislation.

Lastly, the adoption of a legal framework across Europe would make sure that data are collected in such a way that they could be used to produce comparable official European statistics based on different national data obtained from private data holders. A common European legal approach is vital in this respect.

What is being done in order to put a legal framework in place?

The Commission's approach to regulation is to create frameworks that shape the context, allowing lively, dynamic and vivid ecosystems to develop. Because it is difficult to fully comprehend all elements of this transformation towards a data-agile economy, the Commission deliberately abstains from overly detailed, heavy-handed *ex ante* regulation, and will prefer an agile approach to governance that favours experimentation (such as regulatory sandboxes), iteration, and differentiation.

In line with this principle, a first priority for operationalising the vision is to put in place an enabling legislative framework for the governance of common European data spaces. Such governance structures should support decisions on what data can be used in which situations, facilitate cross-border data use, and prioritise interoperability requirements and standards within and across sectors, while taking into account the need for sectoral authorities to specify sectoral requirements. The framework will reinforce the necessary structures in the Member States and at EU level to facilitate the use of data for innovative business ideas, both at sector- or domain-specific level and from a cross-sector perspective. It will build on recent initiatives in the Member States⁴ and in individual sectors to address one or more of the following issues:

- strengthen the governance mechanisms at EU level and in the Member States relevant for cross-sector data use and for data use in the common sectoral data spaces, involving both

⁴ Finnish Health and Social Data Permit Authority (<https://www.findata.fi/en/>), French Health Data Hub (<https://www.health-data-hub.fr/>), German Forschungsdatenzentrum (<https://www.forschungsdatenzentrum.de/en>).

private and public players. This could include a mechanism to prioritise standardisation activities⁵ and to work towards a more harmonised description and overview of datasets, data objects and identifiers to foster data interoperability (i.e. their usability at a technical level⁶) between sectors and, where relevant, within sectors⁷. This can be done in line with the principles on Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability and Reusability (FAIR) of data taking into account the developments and decisions of sector-specific authorities;

- facilitate decisions on which data can be used, how and by whom for scientific research purposes in a manner compliant with the GDPR. This is particularly relevant for publicly-held databases with sensitive data not covered by the Open Data Directive;
- make it easier for individuals to allow the use of the data they generate for the public good, if they wish to do so ('data altruism'), in compliance with the GDPR.

The Commission will explore the need for legislative action on issues that affect relations between actors in the data-agile economy to provide incentives for horizontal data sharing across sectors. One or more of the following issues could be taken forward in a Data Act:

- foster business-to-government data sharing for the public interest also in the light of the recommendations included in the report of the Expert Group on Business-to-Government Data Sharing).
- support business-to-business data sharing, in particular addressing issues related to usage rights for co-generated data (such as IoT data in industrial settings), typically laid down in private contracts. The Commission will also seek to identify and address any undue existing hurdles hindering data sharing and to clarify rules for the responsible use of data (such as legal liability). The general principle shall be to facilitate voluntary data sharing.
- only where specific circumstances so dictate⁸, access to data should be made compulsory, where appropriate, under fair, transparent, reasonable, proportionate and/or non-discriminatory conditions⁹.
- evaluating the intellectual property rights (IPR) framework with a view to further enhance data access and use (including a possible revision of the Database Directive¹⁰ and a possible clarification of the application of the Trade Secrets Protection Directive¹¹ as an enabling framework).

⁵ The idea is not to create a body that develops new standards, but rather to be able to prioritise between existing and future standards to be developed.

⁶ See also the FAIR data principles: <https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles/>.

⁷ For instance, the 2017 Tallinn Ministerial Declaration on e-Government calls on governments to "increase the findability, quality and technical accessibility of data in key base registers."

⁸ A data access right should only be sector-specific and only given if a market failure in this sector is identified/can be foreseen, which competition law cannot solve. The scope of a data access right should take into account legitimate interests of the data holder and needs to respect the legal framework.

⁹ Variations of this principle apply in particular with respect to certain motor vehicle repair and maintenance information to be made accessible under Regulation 715/2007 as well as for information resulting from testing of chemicals on vertebrate animals under Regulation 1907/2006 (REACH).

¹⁰ Directive 96/9/EC.

¹¹ Directive (EU) 2016/943.

What about privacy and confidentiality?

One of the core principles of each ESS National Statistical Institute and Eurostat is protection of the confidentiality of all information supplied by data providers. The guarantee of confidentiality is put into practice through robust methodology, standards and infrastructure used in collecting, processing and disseminating statistics.

The ability of National Statistical Institutes to compile official statistics is based on the extent to which individuals and companies trust them with sensitive information. This guarantee of confidentiality is built on the fundamental requirement of non-disclosure of confidential data as set out in national and EU statistical legislation.

To comply with the requirement for confidentiality, National Statistical Institutes cannot divulge any information that would lead to the disclosure of information on an individual or company and all information is published in aggregate form.

Any privately held data used to compile official statistics are subject to this guarantee of confidentiality.



2. Text for a leaflet for policy makers

Accessing privately held data for policymaking: What you need to know

Graphic

What are ‘privately held data’?

The term ‘privately held data’ refers to the vast amount of data held by businesses, which could be used to inform policymaking at European, national and regional levels. Such data include, for example, figures on energy consumption, mobile network operator traffic, retail sales, movement of transport and financial transactions.

This type of detailed information has the potential to be used by policy makers for the benefit of society as a whole.

How does access to privately held data help policy makers?

The digital nature of privately held data sources means that important information can be quickly captured and analysed to support evidence-based policymaking. The amount of detail available can go far beyond what traditional surveys and administrative registers can provide, and can give the policy makers timely insights into the way society, the economy and the environment are changing.

For example, roadside sensors, constantly measuring traffic and pollution levels in different locations, help to identify dangers to public health and the environment. Data on mobile network operator traffic can be used to indicate daily population flows, and figures from major retail outlets can show the latest prices and stock levels of key household items.

Graphic

Current practice

A number of European National Statistics Institutes have already signed special agreements with companies to access their privately held data for statistical purposes. In 2021, under a special agreement, Eurostat published the first statistics on short-term holiday rentals derived from four online booking platforms: Airbnb, Booking, Expedia Group and Tripadvisor.

However, there is no general mechanism in place to enable private companies to share their data with National Statistical Institutes in this way.

Graphic

The need for a legal framework

The lack of a legal framework to enable data sharing between businesses and statistical authorities means that the regular supply of privately held data, comparable over time, cannot be guaranteed.

A legal framework would put in place a secure technical infrastructure to share privately held data and to establish robust procedures for the protection of the data.

Eurostat and National Statistical Institutes would then be able to access the shared information and to produce official statistics in accordance with the high quality standards established in the European Statistics Code of Practice.

A European approach to sharing privately held data

The Commission will propose the Data Act with the aim to ensure fairness in the allocation of data value among actors in the data economy and to foster access to and use of data. The proposal will serve broader policy goals of ensuring that, inter alia, public bodies are better equipped to tackle major policy challenges, including public emergencies.

The specific objectives of the proposal are to:

- Facilitate the access and use of data by businesses and consumers.
- Provide for the use, by public sector bodies and Union institutions, agencies or bodies, of data held by enterprises in exceptional situations.
- Provide for the development of interoperability standards for data to be reused between sectors to address barriers to data sharing within and between domain-specific common European data spaces and also between other data not (yet) subject to a specific common European data space.

The ability to compare statistics across the European Union Member States is crucial to European policymaking. The proposal should help to ensure that comparable statistics are derived from the shared data, and should increase the detail and range of statistics available to policy makers at European, national and regional levels.

Graphic

Cooperation within the European Statistical System

Official statistics in the European Union are produced for citizens, businesses and policy makers by the European Statistical System. This is the partnership between Eurostat and the National Statistical Institutes of the European Union, the European Economic Area and the European Free Trade Association.

Working closely together, these organisations agree a common position on the practices and standards required to produce impartial, trustworthy and independent statistics of the highest quality, in accordance with the European Statistics Code of Practice.

The European Statistical System has a major role to play in the development of reliable, safe and efficient data sharing across European borders. Representing the European Union's key statistical stakeholders, it will collaborate intensively in the discussions on the proposed legal framework.

Summary

- The European digital economy is constantly generating a wealth of information for private businesses
- This digital information could be accessed by the European Statistical System to produce trustworthy statistics for policymaking at European, national and regional levels
- The European Commission has made proposals aimed at enabling private businesses to share their data in a trusted and secure way
- The European Statistical System has a key role to play in the development of these proposals
- The European Statistical System aims to ensure that high quality official statistics, derived from privately held data sources, can be made available for the public good, with privacy and confidentiality guaranteed.

Graphic

3. Text for a leaflet for private data holders

A new data partnership to better serve society

A new data environment

In today's rapidly changing world, decision makers need timelier and more detailed official statistics to be able to make informed decisions. Digitalisation and new technologies create opportunities to access and use new data sources for the production of official statistics. Official statistics producers can use new data sources to better serve citizens, businesses and policy makers for the benefit of society as a whole.

Cooperation within the European Statistical System (ESS)

Official statistics in the European Union are produced for citizens, businesses and policy makers by the European Statistical System. This is the partnership between Eurostat and the National Statistical Institutes of the European Union, the European Economic Area and the European Free Trade Association.

Working closely together, these organisations agree on a common position on the practices and standards required to produce impartial, trustworthy and independent statistics of the highest quality, in accordance with the European Statistics Code of Practice.

Key role of privately held data in reinventing European official statistics

Official statistics produced by members of the ESS are a trustworthy source of decision-making information for European citizens, businesses and policy makers. Sustainable and reliable access to privately held data for official statistics is essential for the members of the ESS to continue fulfilling their mission in the future, through delivering the most reliable, comparable and precise data on every aspect of the lives of EU citizens.

The digital nature of privately held data sources means that important information can be quickly captured and analysed to support evidence-based decision-making. The amount of detail available can go far beyond what traditional surveys and administrative registers can provide, and can give the decision makers timely insights into the way society, the economy and the environment are changing.

For example, roadside sensors, constantly measuring traffic and pollution levels in different locations, help to identify dangers to public health and the environment. Data on electricity meters can be used to produce energy statistics, and figures from major retail outlets can show the latest prices and stock levels of key household items.

Using privately held data to produce official statistics is often more cost-efficient and can produce faster outcomes. It also lowers the burden on companies and citizens by avoiding survey questionnaires.

Once given access to privately held data, the members of the ESS will invest in infrastructure, technologies and standards that enable a secure and controlled transfer of data. In turn, contributing private data providers will benefit from the resulting improved

accuracy of commercial single-source analytics produced by each data contributor and from the resulting new market opportunities.

In addition, access to official statistics that are timelier, more detailed and that better describe newly emerging phenomena can help companies improve their business models and strategies.

A European approach to sharing privately held data

The Commission will propose the Data Act with the aim to ensure fairness in the allocation of data value among actors in the data economy and to foster access to and use of data. The proposal will serve broader policy goals of ensuring that, inter alia, public bodies are better equipped to tackle major policy challenges, including public emergencies.

The specific objectives of the proposal are to:

- Facilitate the access and use of data by businesses and consumers.
- Provide for the use, by public sector bodies and Union institutions, agencies or bodies, of data held by enterprises in exceptional situations.
- Provide for the development of interoperability standards for data to be reused between sectors to address barriers to data sharing within and between domain-specific common European data spaces and also between other data not (yet) subject to a specific common European data space.

The ability to compare statistics across the European Union Member States is crucial to European policymaking. The proposal should help to ensure that comparable statistics are derived from the shared data, and should increase the detail and range of statistics available to policy makers at European, national and regional levels.

Privacy and confidentiality guaranteed

Protecting the confidentiality of data is a core principle of the European Statistical System. The guarantee of confidentiality is put into practice through robust methodology, standards and infrastructure used in collecting, processing and disseminating statistics.

The ability of National Statistical Institutes to compile many of their official statistics is based on the extent to which individuals and companies trust them with sensitive information. This guarantee of confidentiality is built on the fundamental requirement of non-disclosure of confidential data as set out in national and European Union statistical legislation.

To comply with the requirement for confidentiality, National Statistical Institutes cannot divulge any information that would lead to the disclosure of information on an individual or company and all information is published in an aggregated form.

If you want to find out more, please visit:

<link to relevant pages on NSI website>

<link to relevant pages on Eurostat website>

NSI logo + Eurostat logo

4. Slides for policy makers

Accessing privately held data for policymaking:

What you need to know

Introduction

- What are '*privately held data*'?
- How does access to the data help policy makers?
- Current practice
- The need for a legal framework
- A European approach to sharing privately held data
- Cooperation within the European Statistical System

What are '*privately held data*'?

- Data sets held by private sector businesses
- Relevant to policymaking at European, national and regional levels
- Detailed information not available through government data collections
- Data on energy consumption, mobile network traffic, retail sales, financial transactions,...

How does access to the data help policy makers?

- The privately held data sources are in digital format, allowing policy makers fast access to detailed additional information
- Such data can provide new insights into the way society, the economy and the environment are changing
- Examples of data include measurements from traffic and pollution sensors, GPS coordinates of vehicles and mobile phones and the prices of goods in shops

Current practice

- Eurostat and some National Statistics Institutes have been given access to privately held data in a limited number of areas, such as mobile phone usage and online accommodation bookings
- In each case, access requires a special agreement to be negotiated
- There is no general mechanism in place that enables private companies to share their data with Eurostat or with National Statistical Institutes

The need for a legal framework

- Without a legal framework in place for businesses to share their data, the regular supply and quality of policy-relevant data cannot be guaranteed
- A legal framework would establish a secure infrastructure for businesses to share their data, applicable across the European Union
- A legal framework would also ensure that robust procedures are in place to protect any data shared by businesses

A European approach to sharing privately held data

- The European Commission has launched proposals to enable businesses to share their data for statistical purposes in exceptional cases and in emergencies
- Citizens and businesses would have greater control over how their data are used
- It will be important to ensure that statistics derived from privately held data are comparable at European, national and regional levels

Cooperation within the European Statistical System

- The European Statistical System is the partnership between Eurostat and the National Statistical Institutes of the EU, EEA and EFTA
- This important partnership defines the standards required for impartial, trustworthy and independent statistics, in accordance with the European statistics [Code of Practice](#)
- The European Statistical System has a major role to play in the development of reliable, safe and efficient data sharing across European borders

Links: Code of Practice (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-catalogues/-/ks-02-18-142>)

Summary

- The European digital economy is constantly generating a wealth of information for private businesses
- This digital information could be accessed by the European Statistical System for policy making at European, national and regional levels
- The European Commission has launched proposals to enable businesses to share their data for statistical purposes in exceptional cases
- The European Statistical System has a key role to play in the development of relevant proposals

5. Slides for private data holders

A new data partnership to better serve society

Introduction

- A new data environment
- Cooperation within the European Statistical System
- Why are privately held data essential for reinventing European official statistics?
- A European approach to sharing privately held data
- Privacy and confidentiality guaranteed

A new data environment

- Rapidly changing world
- Need for timelier and more detailed official statistics
- New technologies → opportunities to access and use new data sources
- Use of new data sources for official statistics can help us better serve citizens, businesses and policy makers for the benefit of the whole society

Cooperation with the European Statistical System

- Official statistics in the European Union are produced for citizens, businesses and policy makers by the European Statistical System
- The European Statistical System is the partnership between Eurostat and the National Statistical Institutes of the EU, EEA and EFTA
- This important partnership defines the standards required for impartial, trustworthy and independent statistics, in accordance with the European statistics [Code of Practice](#)

Link: Code of Practice (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-catalogues/-/ks-02-18-142>)

Why are privately held data essential for reinventing European official statistics?

Private data are:

- Digital – they offer quick insights and can be analysed easily
- Detailed
- Cost-efficient
- Less burdensome on companies and citizens
- Conducive to innovation

A European approach to sharing privately held data

- The European Commission has launched proposals to enable businesses to share their data for statistical purposes in exceptional cases and in emergencies
- Citizens and businesses would have greater control over how their data are used
- It will be important to ensure that statistics derived from privately held data are comparable at European, national and regional levels

Privacy and confidentiality guaranteed

- Protecting the confidentiality of data is a core principle of the European Statistical System
- This guarantee is built on the fundamental requirement of non-disclosure of confidential data as set out in national and European Union statistical legislation
- Any privately held data used to compile official statistics is subject to this guarantee of confidentiality

Summary

- The European digital economy is constantly generating a wealth of information for private businesses
- Sustainable and reliable access to privately held data is essential for the members of the European Statistical System to continue delivering reliable data and better support policy making at European, national and regional levels
- The European Commission has launched proposals to enable businesses to share their data for statistical purposes in exceptional cases
- The European Statistical System has a key role to play in the development of relevant proposals

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- at the following standard number: +32 22999696 or
- by email via: https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en

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EU law and related documents

For access to legal information from the EU, including all EU law since 1952 in all the official language versions, go to EUR-Lex at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu>

Open data from the EU

The EU Open Data Portal (<http://data.europa.eu/euodp/en>) provides access to datasets from the EU.

Data can be downloaded and reused for free, for both commercial and non-commercial purposes.

Privately held data communication toolkit

Privately held data, which are the data produced by private businesses and organisations, have the potential to help National Statistical Institutes improve the quality of their statistics. To support National Statistical Institutes and Eurostat when communicating about privately held data to different audiences, the Task Force on European Statistical System Strategic Communication has prepared a communication toolkit. The toolkit contains text for a website section aimed at citizens, including a section on Frequently Asked Questions; text for a leaflet and slides aimed at policy makers; and text for a leaflet and slides aimed at private data holders.

For more information

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/>