

Statistical references

Brief information on Eurostat products and services

Contents

Focus

Sustainable development indicators 2-3

New publications and databases

General and regional statistics..... 3

Economy and finance..... 6-7

Population and social conditions 8-10

Industry, trade and services 10-11

Agriculture and fisheries..... 12-13

External trade..... 14-15

Transport 15-16

Environment and energy..... 16-17

Science and technology 17-18

Eurostat in brief..... 19

Eurostat on the Internet 20

User support and the Eurostat website: an update

For more than a year, Eurostat has offered its products and services free of charge and easily accessible on its website in accordance with the free dissemination strategy. Right from the start, user support helped put into practice this policy. In the course of one year, however, both website and user support have undergone a number of modifications.

The user friendliness of website functionalities has been considerably improved, taking into account the observations and recommendations of the users and the findings of a benchmarking exercise. Among other amendments, the number of extractable cells was increased considerably. Further projects to reinforce usability are in the pipeline, including the improvement of the search functionalities.

The three-level support helps users to find data, methodology and publications, and has been as well subject to several improvements. On the level of online help, the content of the website was amended. To ease the troubleshooting for the most common problems, the number of FAQs was increased and they were structured in application areas. Efforts have been made to improve the methodology and documentation. To be able to provide a fast and efficient service in nearly all European languages, Eurostat collaborates with the national support centres for the treatment of user requests. Two more national support centres could be integrated in the network and, by now, 22 countries participate in the programme, providing support in 20 languages. To improve their service, cooperation between those national centres and Eurostat is fostered by providing information, quality controls and training on a regular basis. The national institutes report on their activities and provide user feedback which is taken into consideration for further improvements.

The amendments led to a higher level of user satisfaction, in particular concerning the technological aspects for which a decrease of requests could be observed. The approach of providing more sophisticated tools to find and download data and publications has been successful and accepted by the user.

Efforts to improve our website and the user support will proceed, and we will keep you informed about Eurostat's activities in the upcoming issue of *Statistical references*.

Gunter Schäfer
Head of Unit «Dissemination»

Our mission is to provide the European Union with a high-quality statistical information service.

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