



European Statistical  
Advisory Committee

## **24<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

### **European Statistical Advisory Committee**

**19 October 2016**

**Budapest**

Starting at 9:30 a.m. in the premises of

The Hungarian Central Statistical Office

Keleti Károly meeting room

(1st Floor in the main building)

Keleti Károly utca 5-7

1024 Budapest

HUNGARY

## **Minutes**

## Minutes of the 24th meeting of the European Statistical Advisory Committee

19 October 2016

9:30 – 16.00

### Present:

Chair: Ineke Stoop

Members: Tasos Christofides, Michael Gold, Claudiu Herteliu, Irena Kotowska, Marko Kristof, Ariane König, Asta Manninen, Ulrike Oschischnig, Agnieszka Piasna, Walter Radermacher, Frances Ruane, Aurel Schubert, Biruta Sloka, Maria João Valente Rosa, Ildefonso Villán Criado, Maurizio Vichi, Gabriella Vukovich, Thomas Wobben

Observers Mariana Kotzeva, Volker Täube

Absent: Hugues Bayet, Axel Borsch-Supan, Alba Bosch Moline, David Hand, Michael Smyth

Secretariat: Cristina Pereira de Sá, Stephen Clarke, Kirsi Mankki, Szilvia Opoczky

### 1. Welcome and adoption of the agenda

The Chair welcomed ESAC members to the 24<sup>th</sup> meeting of ESAC and thanked Gabriella Vukovich and the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO) for hosting the meeting in its premises. The Chair introduced the new EFTA observer, Volker Täube and the new ESAC secretariat members Stephen Clarke and Kirsi Mankki.

The Chair regretted the absence of Hugues Bayet despite a direct attempt to encourage him to participate.

Gabriella Vukovic welcomed ESAC to the premises of HCSO and introduced the building and its history.

The draft agenda (Doc.2016/1224) was adopted.

## 2. Eurostat update

### 2.1 ESSC and DGINS of September 2016

Eurostat informed ESAC about the outcome of the ESSC and DGINS meetings which were organised in Vienna in September 2016.

The DGINS discussed the skills required of management to adapt to the new statistical environment, covering different styles of management, communication and training, and allowed for an exchange of lessons learnt.

The statistical session of DGINS was dedicated to income, consumption and wealth (ICW).

At the ESSC meeting, the Vienna Memorandum (Doc. 2016/1234), which outlines the actions needed for further development of ICW statistics was adopted.

### 2.2 Quality Declaration of the European Statistical System

Eurostat described the Quality Declaration (Doc. 2016/1233) which was endorsed by the ESSC in its September meeting and which would be presented at the CESS 2016 conference at its opening session.

In the discussion ESAC agreed on the need to increase public trust in statistics, with greater engagement between data providers and citizens at the different stages of statistical data collections, from the design to dissemination.

### 2.3 Extension of the European Statistical Programme (ESP) 2018-20

Eurostat reported on the state of play of the ESP extension. On 7 September 2016 the Commission adopted the proposed extension, which will result in an increase of EUR 25 million over three years.

The next step is the co-decision procedure in the Council and in the European Parliament. The Council Working Party on Statistics will start its discussions on 19 October.

In response to a question on the possible impact of Brexit on the ESP, Eurostat said that the Brexit issue is still at an early stage. Eurostat has provided a detailed set of statistics, which are already in the public domain, to the Task Force for the preparation and conduct of the negotiations with the United Kingdom under Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union.

### 2.4 MOU on MIP Statistics with ECB

Eurostat informed ESAC that the ECB (Directorate General Statistics) and the Commission (Eurostat) are due to sign the Memorandum of Understanding

(MoU) on macroeconomic imbalances procedure (MIP) statistical indicators, which establishes a practical mechanism for improving the quality assurance of statistical data for MIP purposes, whilst providing greater clarity on the status of National Central Banks as producers of these statistics.

Aurel Schubert emphasised the importance of the MoU and expected the MoU to be signed soon, allowing the national central banks to officially take responsibility for some of the quality of MIP statistics.

### 3. Feedback from members

ESAC members reported back from directors' groups and other meetings, summarised as follows:

#### 3.1 Irena Kotowska - DSS (Directors of Social Statistics) 4.-5.10.2016

The meeting discussed progress with the modernisation of social statistics:

- Standardisation of social variables is ongoing with progress on the Identification of core variables;
- The Quality of Life Expert Group report was presented – it finalises the four years' work and should be promoted;
- There was support for a suggestion to organise regular meetings of quality of life experts every two years.

It was agreed that the Quality of Life Expert Group report should be put on the agenda of the next ESAC meeting.

#### 3.2 Claudiu Herteliu – DMES (Directors of Macro-Economic Statistics) 8.-9.6.2016

Although the discussions covered technical issues, which are not always easy to follow, it was an informative meeting with a range of different stakeholders.

- ESAC should continue to be informed about developments in this domain;
- The next meeting is in December.

#### 3.3 Ariane König – DIMESA (Directors of sectorial and environmental statistics and accounts) 10.-11.10.2016

The meeting covered topics relevant to ESAC, which are of high political interest and will be of importance for future ESAC meetings:

- Early methodological work is under way for the European Strategy on Environmental Accounts, natural capital and ecosystem accounts and climate change statistics;

- Discussion on the communication of data on energy statistics, with a request for feedback from users before the end of October;
- Sustainable Development Goals Indicators (and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development) – discussion on the efficiency of different international reporting systems.

Eurostat informed ESAC that a publication on sustainable development indicators (SDIs) will be finalised by the end of November, focusing on 50 robust indicators linked to the 2030 Agenda.

It was agreed to put this issue on the list of agenda items for discussion by ESAC in 2017.

Eurostat announced that a chapter on sustainable development will be included in a second Stiglitz report on inequalities and well-being. The chapter will look at the interactions between social and economic systems and will include a number of recommendations. The report is due to be published in the first quarter of 2017.

### **3.4 Ulrike Oschischnig – BSDG (Business Statistics Directors Group) 21.-22.6.2016**

The meeting included discussion on the development of statistics in several areas:

- Intra-EU trade in goods
- International trade in services
- Foreign direct investment
- European profiling
- The sharing economy

In addition the meeting discussed the draft proposal for the Framework Regulation Integrating Business Statistics (FRIBS).

Progress in these areas is being made and further developments with FRIBS should be monitored closely.

Mariana Kotzeva informed ESAC that the proposed FRIBS legislation is expected to be finalised at the ESSC in its November meeting, for adoption by the Commission early in 2017, and it was agreed that Eurostat would report back to ESAC on the progress with FRIBS in the January meeting.

As a result of the CESS 2016 conference, it was not possible for an ESAC representative to attend the BSDG meeting on 21 October. The secretariat will circulate a summary note of this BSDG meeting to ESAC members when available.

### **3.5 Frances Ruane – RDG (Resource Directors Group Meeting) 27.-28.6.2016**

The meeting concerned issues relating to the costs of producing statistics and training issues:

- Regarding the prioritisation of activities and costs, the costs of NSIs are difficult to compare due to different accounting systems in use;
- A report on 2<sup>nd</sup> EMOS call for applications and the quality assurance system in place;
- Skills gaps – shortage of high quality data analysts and possible options for filling skills gaps (e.g. EMOS, the European Statistics Training Programme, and more cross-organisation flexibility)
- The ESP 2018-20 will provide more financial resources but the required human resources may be limited.

### **3.6 Claudiu Herteliu – DGAS – (Directors Group on Agricultural Statistics) 27.- 29.6.2016**

Specific topics on the agenda of the June DGAS meeting included:

- Strategy for agricultural statistics for 2020 and beyond;
- Modernisation of the Economic Accounts for Agriculture;
- Discussion on agricultural input and output.

In addition to the ESAC representation at Directors Group meetings, the Committee was represented by the Chair at the ESSC and DGINS meetings in September, covered under item 2 of the minutes.

## **4. Update of 2016-2017 meeting list and participation of ESAC members in other meetings (Doc. 2016/1227)**

The Chair announced that a Conference on New Tools, Technology and Statistics (NTTS 2017) will take place in Brussels on 14-16 March 2017. The Chair is a member of the scientific committee and informed the members that the call for papers is open until 28 October 2016.

Maurizio Vichi volunteered to attend the NTTS conference to represent ESAC. The date of the NTTS meeting will be added to the list of meetings.

Regarding future participation of ESAC members at Directors Group meetings:

- Maurizio Vichi will attend the DIME/DIME & ITDG/ITDG meeting in February
- Irena Kotowska and Agnieszka Piasna will attend the DSS meeting on 2-3 March

### 5. **CESS conference in Budapest on 20-21 October 2016**

Gabriella Vukovic briefed ESAC members on the upcoming CESS 2016. Four hundred participants have registered for the conference. Presentation summaries are available on the website and a booklet on the program will be distributed.

ESAC members attending the sessions of track A of CESS 2016 were encouraged to prepare a short report of the respective session, with recommendations if possible, and to send the feedback to the secretariat using a specific feedback form which will be circulated by email by the secretariat after the meeting.

Gabriella Vukovic emphasised the workload and investment required for the organization of such an event.

The Chair thanked the secretariat for the preparation of the guidelines for speakers and session chairs. Gabriella Vukovic reminded presenters and session chairs that time limits will need to be respected due to the large number of presentations.

ESAC discussed and supported organising another conference in 2018 and the topics of migration or indicators were suggested as a possible theme. The CESS 2016 may suggest additional topics for consideration and the Chair invited members to reflect further on possible topics for the CESS 2018. Maurizio Vichi will report to FENStatS that CESS should continue.

It was considered not necessary that future CESS events should coincide with European Statistics Day, to facilitate participation in national actions on the day. It was suggested that publicity and presentations for the CESS should be ensured on the ESAC website to encourage participation.

### 6. **ESAC activities**

#### **6.1 Report on the ESAC Indicator workshop in The Hague 10 May 2016 (Doc. 2016/1220)**

ESAC took note of the Doc. 2016/1220 and stated that the workshop had been very successful. The workshop report has been published on the ESAC webpage. The three ESAC members who had chaired breakout sessions (Thomas Wobben, Tasos Christofides and Asta Manninen), in collaboration with Frances Ruane, will add an introduction and re-draft the recommendations. The revised document will be discussed at the January ESAC meeting.

### **6.2 Ten-points-recommendation for an improved indicator setting for a post-2020 Europe strategy (Doc. 2016/1228)**

The document prepared by CoR circulated prior to the meeting was discussed and suggestions were made regarding possible additions and clarifications within the text.

Later in the meeting Thomas Wobben presented a shortened version of the recommendations. ESAC members were asked to provide comments on the new text by 25 October, so that it can be submitted from the ESAC Chair to the Commission and it can be taken into account for the forthcoming Commission Communication on SDGs.

### **6.3 European Statistics Day – ESD (Doc. 2016/1236)**

Doc. 2016/1236 shows actions organised by NSIs in different member states. The activities seem to take place mainly in the smaller countries. It was noted that this year there was limited time to prepare for ESD and more preparation should be possible next year.

A suggestion was made to indicate some key messages when launching next year's ESD, involving media partnership to help raise awareness.

Feedback from Eurostat on successful activities this year would provide useful guidance for next year's preparations. Frances Ruane, Tasos Christofides, Maurizio Vichi and Maria João Valente Rosa volunteered to start preparations for ESD 2017.

The Chair proposed to discuss this in the next ESAC meeting.

### **6.4 Migration workshop 2017**

Irena Kotowska reported that feasibility studies on migration statistics are due to be completed later this year and the conclusions will provide important input for the planned workshop in autumn 2017. Further discussions with Eurostat are also planned regarding the organisation of the workshop.

The item will be on the agenda of the meeting in January and any members who would like to input their ideas on measuring migration should send them to Irena.

Mariana Kotzeva informed ESAC that Eurostat is launching an initiative "Power from Statistics" involving discussions with experts outside the statistical world about future information needs. The 1<sup>st</sup> round table is on migration and will take



place in Bratislava on 24 October. Eurostat will provide ESAC with a report on this meeting by the end of the year.

### 7. Next meeting

The next ESAC meeting will take place in Brussels on 27 January 2017. ESAC welcomed Thomas Wobben's proposal to organise the January meeting in the premises of the Committee of the Regions.

### 8. AOB

Walter Radermacher informed ESAC about his retirement at the end of 2016. ESAC warmly thanked him for the valuable work done for ESS.

The Chair announced the invitation of Asta Manninen and Statistics Finland to organise the ESAC meeting of 12 June 2017 in Helsinki back-to-back with a joint ESAC-Statistics Finland seminar on 13 June to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Finland's independence. Statistical literacy was suggested as a possible seminar theme.

In the proposed premises a seminar for approximately 150 people could be organised. Volunteers to prepare the seminar were Ineke Stoop, Asta Manninen, Biruta Sloka and Marko Kristof.

Eurostat will check the feasibility of having the ESAC meeting back-to-back with the proposed seminar in Helsinki, particularly with respect to financial resources.

### 9. End of the meeting

The meeting ended at 16.00