



European Statistical
Advisory Committee

33rd Meeting

Monday, 21 October 2019

14.00 – 18.30

ESSEC University

Place de la Défense 2, CNIT Building

Paris

Minutes

ESAC Doc. 2019/46

Minutes of the 33rd ESAC meeting

21 October 2019

14.00-18.30

Present:

Acting Chair: Maurizio Vichi

Members: Michael Gold, Claudiu Herteliu, Petra Lang, Matthieu Méaulle, Biruta Sloka, Maria João Valente Rosa, Petr Zahradník, Marie Bohata, Caroline Willeke, Audrone Jakaitiene, Tonu Kollo, Athanasios C. Thanopoulos, Peter Van der Heijden, Tamara Pal (replacing Gabriella Vukovich), Igor Caldera replacing Thomas Wobben (CoR), Cristina Pereira de Sá (replacing Mariana Kotzeva)

Observer: Lars Svennebye (replacing Volker Täube)

Absent: Thomas Wobben, Ariane König, Gabriella Vukovich, Andras Math, Axel Börsch-Supan, David Hand, Sune Karlsson

Secretariat: Delia Bistreanu

1. Welcome and adoption of agenda

The Acting Chair opened the meeting and presented the agenda, which was agreed by members. He also informed the members that, due to previous commitments, Ms Mariana Kotzeva was not able to attend the meeting and was replaced by Ms Cristina Pereira de Sá.

2. Feedback from members representing ESAC in Directors' Groups and in other meetings

Several ESAC members who participated in the DGINS Conference in Bratislava briefed the members on the discussions that took place. The theme of this year's meeting was "The statistical implications of economic globalisation", which presents particular challenges to upholding the relevance of statistics. Some of the points that were debated included: communication with users and between institutions and central banks, sharing of statistical confidential information, asymmetries and the early warning system.

Ms Ariane König joined the meeting via Skype and presented a proposal for a 'Workshop on citizen science and non-traditional data sources'. The workshop will be organised jointly with the University of Luxembourg and the date will be decided at a later stage. An ESAC meeting will take place back-to-back with the workshop.

ESAC members were invited to send to the Secretariat proposals for topics to be discussed at the workshop.

The Acting Chair informed the members that, due to budget constraints, the number of ESAC meetings for next year needs to be reduced from the usual three to two. One meeting will take place on 28 September 2020, in Prague, back-to-back with the CESS2020 Conference. The date for the second meeting needs to be agreed.

3. Update of the 2020 meeting schedule

Mr Vichi will attend the meeting of the DIME&ITDG Steering Group on 7 February. (Action: Maurizio Vichi, Eurostat)

Mr Vichi will attend the ESSC meeting on 12-13 February. (Action: Maurizio Vichi, Eurostat)

Ms Sloka will attend the meeting of the Directors of Social Statistics on 18-19 March. (Action: Biruta Sloka, Eurostat)

Mr Vichi will attend the ESSC meeting on 13-14 May. (Action: Maurizio Vichi, Eurostat)

Mr Herteliu will attend the meeting of the Directors Group on Agriculture Statistics on 3-5 June. (Action: Claudiu Herteliu, Eurostat)

Mr Gold will attend the meeting of the Business Statistics Directors' Group on 8-9 June. (Action: Michael Gold, Eurostat)

Mr Meulle will attend the Directors of Macroeconomic Statistics meeting on 17 June. (Action: Matthieu Meulle, Eurostat)

Mr Vichi will attend the DIME&ITDG plenary meeting on 2-3 July. (Action: Maurizio Vichi, Eurostat)

Mr Vichi will attend the DGINS and ESSC meetings on 7-9 October, to take place in Warsaw. (Action: Maurizio Vichi, Eurostat)

The Secretariat will check the availability of Ms König to participate in the DIMESA meeting on 21-22 October. (Action: Secretariat, Ariane König)

Ms Sloka will attend the meeting of the Directors of Social Statistics on 21-22 October. (Action: Biruta Sloka, Eurostat)

Mr Vichi will attend the meeting of the DIME&ITDG Steering Group on 20 November. (Action: Maurizio Vichi, Eurostat)

Ms Lang will attend the meeting of the Business Statistics Directors' Group on 1-2 December. (Action: Petra Lang, Eurostat)

Ms Sloka will attend the DSS Board meeting on 3-4 December. (Action: Biruta Sloka, Eurostat)

Mr Meulle will attend the Directors of Macroeconomic Statistics meeting on 10 December. (Action: Matthieu Meulle, Eurostat)

4. The use of population registers for sample drawing for large cross-European scientific surveys

Mr Börsch-Supan has drafted an Opinion on the use of population registers for sample drawing for large cross-European scientific surveys, which was discussed by the ESAC members.

ESAC members had some questions on the proposed text, to be clarified with Mr Börsch-Supan. Subsequently the Opinion will be agreed via written procedure and, once it is finalised, it will be sent to the NSIs and Eurostat.

(Action: Secretariat, Acting Chair, ESAC members)

5. An overview of national user councils

ESAC members discussed the two templates suggested to restructure the overview of national user councils (NUCs) and underlined the importance of a harmonised document allowing to grasp the common points and differences between user councils

Members also agreed that it is important to develop a typology of these bodies (advisory vs. governing) and analyse their composition. A starting point to achieve this will be to fill in the templates presented in the meeting with the available information.

(Action: Marie Bohatá, Maria João Valente Rosa)

The Acting Chair underlined the need to connect ESAC with the other national user bodies, in order to better identify the needs of users. ESAC members agreed that communications channels should be established with the NUCs, after the messages to convey to these bodies are clearly defined. To this end, ESAC will start planning visits to different Member States to meet with the respective national user council.

The Secretariat will find the email addresses of the national user councils and, in those cases where the email address cannot be found or it does not work, will contact the ESAC member from the respective Member State to look for the missing information nationally.

ESAC members suggested that another way of strengthening the cooperation with the NUCs could be to organise a roundtable with several of them to discuss common challenges and the way forward in the margins of the CESS2020 Conference in September 2020, in Prague.

6. Preparation of the next round of peer reviews

Eurostat presented the work of the ESS Task Force on Peer Reviews and gave details on the methodology and timeline of the new round of peer reviews.

ESAC members discussed the possible ways in which they could be involved in the process and decided that ESAC will act as a multiplier of the peer review exercise, advocating the value of official statistics. Members could promote the exercise via different channels, such as reaching out

to stakeholders during the peer review process, in conferences where ESAC members are present or by communicating on the results.

(Action: ESAC members)

7. European Statistics Day 2019

The European Statistics Day Declaration was endorsed.

8. Other ESAC activities

• Collaboration with ESGAB

ESAC members underlined the need for an enhanced cooperation with ESGAB. To this end, both bodies will write a joint paper outlining principles and guidelines that could lead to future legislation on Smart statistics and Big Data.

ESAC will write the first draft and send it to ESGAB for comments.

ESAC members also discussed the possibility of having one member of each body participating in a meeting of the other one in 2020. They agreed that this was a solution that could be implemented next year. Once decided, the dates of 2020 meetings of both bodies will be exchanged for agreement on participation in a specific meeting.

• Appointment of the Deputy Chair of ESAC

Mr Vichi stepped down as Deputy Chair of ESAC and Ms Valente Rosa was elected for that position.

ESAC members agreed that Mr Vichi will continue to be the Acting Chair for the time being.

• Appointment of two Executive Board members

Ms Bohatá and Mr Van der Heijden were elected as members of the Executive Board.

• CESS 2020

The CESS2020 conference will be organised in Prague.

Members proposed four sessions and one roundtable to be organised within the CESS2020:

- Session on religion/statistics on religion – proposed by Mr Herteliu
- Session on Earth observations and new geo-statistical indicators for policy support – proposed by Mr Vichi
- Session on statistical literacy – proposed by Mr Thanopoulos
- Session on experimental statistics – proposed by Ms Bohatá
- Roundtable with ESAC and the national user councils – proposed by Mr Vichi

The members need now to prepare an outline of the respective session and suggest speakers.