Statistical cooperation - introduction

Statistics Explained

This article is part of a series of background articles about the European Union (EU) international statistical cooperation with non-EU countries. This work is done in the context of three main policies:

- **Enlargement policy**

- **European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)**

- **European Development Policy**

The countries benefiting from this support include:

1. Enlargement countries / candidate countries

- Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo[1], Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, and Ukraine.

- Note: Moldova, Georgia, and Ukraine are also ENP-East countries.

2. European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) countries

- **ENP-East:** Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus[2], Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine

- **Southern Neighbourhood countries:** Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine[3], Syria, Tunisia

3. Other regions

- African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries

- Latin American countries

- Asian countries

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[1]This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

[2]Cooperation with Belarus has been suspended as of March 2022 (Council Regulation 2022/398).

[3]This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the EU Member States on this issue.

Why statistical cooperation?

Official statistics are independent high-quality statistics developed, produced and disseminated within a national statistical system comprising the National Statistical Institute and other national authorities. They serve as a basis for evidence-based policymaking: democratic societies cannot function properly without reliable, trustworthy and objective statistics. In addition, they guide operational decisions made by businesses in the private sector and support researchers, academia and journalists with information that reflects reality. Furthermore, official statistics help the citizens to shape their opinions on the basis of facts.

Official Statistics: the basis for informed opinions.

Reliable official statistics are therefore crucial for planning, monitoring and evaluating policies, holding governments accountable to citizens and fighting disinformation. They are key components of governance nationally (for instance, monitoring economic performance), within the EU (for example the European Green Deal), and globally (for example, on climate change , education for all or the 2030 agenda for sustainable development).

Statistical cooperation helps the partner countries to strengthen their statistical capacities. In this way, the respective statistical systems become more capable of supporting good governance and national and regional development.

The EU shares its experience in developing regional statistical systems with countries and regions worldwide, supporting harmonisation and adherence to European and international standards. This role is entrusted to Eurostat , the statistical office of the EU. Eurostat is in the lead of the European Statistical System (ESS) and has accumulated extensive experience, know-how and knowledge, in the development of both statistics and statistical systems. It shares this expertise with non-EU countries within the context of statistical cooperation activities.

Eurostat works closely with international organisations to promote global statistical standards and coordination. It represents the EU in key international forums such as the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) , in the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) organised by the UNECE and in the [[Glossary:Organisation_for_Economic_Co-operation_and_Development_(OECD)|OECD]'s committee on statistics and statistical policy (CSSP) . Eurostat also has bilateral relationships with international institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) , the World Bank , the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to improve data comparability and strengthen national statistical systems worldwide.

Forms and areas of Eurostat cooperation in statistics

Eurostat's cooperation in statistics aims at helping partner countries improve the quality, reliability and timeliness of their data and to respond effectively to new user needs.

This cooperation includes the **exchange of experience and best practices, peer reviews, technical assistance provided by experts, joint publications, statistical training courses, organisation of workshops and seminars, study visits, support for the use of common statistical tools, financial support** and the **promotion of key international principles** such as the United Nations' Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics , the European Statistics Code of Practice , the African Charter on Statistics and the Statistics Code of Practice for ENP-South countries .

It covers all parts of the statistical system — from infrastructure to data production. On the other hand, it may focus on specific domains — such as poverty, health or economic statistics — depending on each partner country's priorities.

Assistance is delivered either through **multi-beneficiary regional programmes** , where countries can share experience and build synergies, or through **bilateral programmes** addressing national priorities.

For statistical cooperation with development countries, Eurostat offers the Guide to statistics in European Commission development cooperation , which helps European Commission Directorates and Delegations design, monitor, and evaluate cooperation programmes that rely on high-quality data and indicators. In addition, Eurostat has developed a suite of strategic , programming and operational tools to help regional and national development partners build sustainable statistical systems and processes. The objective is to strengthen the capacity to produce quality statistics in line with international standards and user needs. By providing assistance at strategic, programming and operational level, the tools are useful for a wide range of stakeholders involved in development cooperation.

Types of statistical cooperation vary according to the policy frameworks, which in turn depend on the geographical region in question. Eurostat has a global engagement as shown below.

Eurostat statistical cooperation by region

Enlargement countries

Enlargement countries consist of:

- Candidate countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye and Ukraine

- Potential candidate: Kosovo.

Statistical cooperation with the enlargement countries is broader and more intensive than with other countries, as it aims at preparing them for accession to the EU and ensuring full compliance with the EU acquis and standards. Official statistics play a double role. Within the enlargement process, they are assessed as part of the EU acquis under Chapter 18 (enlargement package). Beyond this, they provide the evidence base for monitoring developments and assessing the impacts of policies and regulatory frameworks.

The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) provides both multi-beneficiary and national programmes from which the Western Balkans and Türkiye benefit.

In addition, practical assistance is provided through Twinning programmes and the technical assistance and information exchange instrument (TAIEX), addressing government institutions in the public sector.

More details can be found in the Statistics Explained article Enlargement policy and statistical cooperation .

European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) countries

ENP countries are divided into two broad geographic groups:

- ENP-East countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, of which the last three are also candidate countries) and

- Southern Neighbourhood countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia).

Within the overall policy and related initiatives, the countries are supported in the process of aligning their statistical production to EU and international standards. This is for example done through the STAT- East programme and the MEDSTAT programme. They can also profit from Twinning programmes and TAIEX .

More details can be found in the Statistics Explained articles: Statistical cooperation – European Neighbourhood Policy , Statistical cooperation – European Neighbourhood Policy-East (ENP-E) and Statistical cooperation – European Neighbourhood Policy-South (ENP-S) .

Africa

Within **Africa** , Eurostat supports the African Union Commission (AUC) , in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) , to implement the Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa 2017-2026 (SHaSA II) . Eurostat has managed 4 of the 6 components of the Pan-African Statistics programme II (PAS II) , as part of the flagship Africa-EU Partnership Pan-African programme . The overall objective of the programme was to support African integration by improving the availability and quality of statistical information required for informed decision-making and policy monitoring. The PAS II implementation started in 2022 and ended in November 2025.

Asia, Latin America and the Pacific

Within **Asia, Latin America and the Pacific** , Eurostat supports statistical development mainly through training courses, statistical workshops and the involvement of the heads of the national statistical offices in the discussion about developments in statistics. As part of the cooperation with Central Asia, covering Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, Eurostat also participates in statistical assessments in these countries led by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) .*View this article online at* $http://ec.$ $europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistical\_cooperation\_-\_introduction$

Footnotes

Explore further

Other articles

- Enlargement countries - statistical overview – online publication

- European Neighbourhood Policy countries - statistical overview – online publication

- International statistical cooperation – online publication

Database

- Available data on the candidate countries and potential candidate are disseminated with the data of the EU Member States in Eurostat's database .

- Data on the ENP countries are disseminated in specific sub-sections in Eurostat's database, under:

Detailed datasets / General and regional statistics / Non-EU countries (noneu):

Eastern European Neighbourhood Policy countries (ENP-East) (enpe)

Southern European Neighbourhood Policy countries (ENP-South) (enps)

Thematic section

- Enlargement countries
- European Neighbourhood Policy countries

Publications

- All publications on Eurostat's international cooperation

External links

- European Commission

Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations — Enlargement policy

Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations — European Neighbourhood Policy

European External Action Service (EEAS) — European Neighbourhood Policy

Directorate-General for International Partnerships - Partnership and Development Policy

- United Nations

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)