

MEETS programme - introducing results

Statistics Explained

This article is a general introduction to an [online publication](#) presenting the results of the [European Commission](#) programme 'Modernisation of European Enterprise and Trade Statistics', or MEETS for short, which ran from 2009 to 2013 with the objectives of adjusting European business statistics to new needs and reducing the burden on [enterprises](#) .

The two most important reasons for launching the MEETS programme were demands for cost reductions and the need to increase the relevance of European business statistics. In addition, the deepening of European integration in a number of areas created new statistical needs.

Business statistics should be able to provide new indicators based on timely and high quality statistical information about structural changes in the European economy and its business sector. The MEETS programme dedicated resources to modernise the statistical production system and to satisfy emerging data needs.

Four objectives - many results

The MEETS programme achieved many important results within its four main objectives.

(1) **Review priorities and develop target sets of indicators for new areas** was about identifying and deciding on which new areas to describe and on reviewing old requirements because of changing economic structures:

- An external study identified inconsistencies, further analysed by projects under objective 2.
- New indicators related to entrepreneurship like "culture for entrepreneurship", "access to finance" and "innovation and technology".

(2) **Achieve a streamlined framework of business-related statistics** was about integration of different areas of business statistics including coordination of legal acts and harmonisation of methodologies, classifications and business registers:

- Identification of inconsistencies and their reasons accompanied by recommendations which included revised definitions and operational rules for statistical units, a method to classify statistical units in a comparable manner across statistical areas, comparable breakdowns, measures to harmonise business registers and recommendations for a system of variables with consistent and standardised terminology and definitions for all statistical areas.
- The EuroGroups Register (EGR) with a yearly frame population 10 000 multinational enterprise groups (MNEs) providing consistent and coordinated survey frames for [Foreign Affiliates Statistics \(FATS\)](#) and [Foreign Direct Investments \(FDI\)](#) .
- Guidelines, documentation and training support for profiling of MNEs.

(3) **Support the implementation of a more efficient way of producing enterprise and trade statistics** was about more efficiently using existing data, increasing use of administrative data and exploiting harmonised accounting standards:

- Guidelines, models and recommendations for building a statistical data warehouse.
- Several data linking projects including production of statistics on international trade by enterprise characteristics based on linking trade data and business register information, measurement of global value chains through linking SBS ([Structural Business Statistics](#)) microdata and other business statistics and analysis of [ICT](#) (Information and Communication Technology) impact via linking data from [ICT](#) usage, innovation, SBS and business registers.
- Methodological development concerning design, data collection and [estimation](#) and summarisation of business statistics methods in the coherent framework of an electronic handbook.
- Recommendations for use of administrative data for business statistics including overview of national practices, estimation methods when using incomplete data sets, list of indicators for assessing quality of business statistics based on administrative data.
- Handbook with assessment of feasibility of collecting high quality statistics from Internet and other big data sources.

(4) **Modernise Intrastat** was about improving and simplifying the Intrastat system through work on harmonising methods, enhancing the use of administrative data and ICT improvements:

- Guidelines and support for implementation of Intrastat and Extrastat legislation to promote harmonised practices and reduced asymmetries at detailed and aggregated level.
- Enhanced use of administrative data, VAT (Value Added Tax) and VIES (Value Added Tax Information Exchange) data.
- Development of tools and methods for data exchange within Intrastat.

More information about these and other results achieved can be found under each of the [four objectives](#) .

There is also a detailed [table of all MEETS actions and projects](#) with their respective results (downloadable Word document).

How were the results achieved?

The MEETS programme was adopted by the [European Parliament](#) and the [Council](#) in December 2008. The programme was closed down by the end of 2013. It provided financial resources of 42.5 million euros to support development within several areas in the ESS (European Statistical System).

European statistical system networks (ESSnets)

Grants to European statistical system networks (ESSnets) were the most common instrument for financing the work. The idea behind projects organised in ESSnets is to use results achieved by the cooperation of a few national statistical institutes to the benefit of the whole [European statistical system \(ESS\)](#) .

The aim is that sharing the results achieved will reduce the total costs needed for solving common problems. Therefore the transfer of results to non-participating countries is very important. Several ESSnets provided results within areas such as consistency of concepts and applied methods, EGR, microdata linking and data warehousing, use of [administrative data](#) , design and implementation of business surveys and profiling of large and complex enterprises. 72 % of the ESS members participated in at least one MEETS financed ESSnet.

Table 1 : Number of ESS Member States¹ participating in at least one ESSnet or at least one individual grant

	ESS members participating	ESS members not participating	Total
At least one ESSnet	23	9	32
At least one individual grant	28	4	32

Individual grants

In parallel, a substantial number of individual grants were also used to support the work of ESS members within areas such as EGR, linking of microdata, use of administrative data, facilitation of data transfer from enterprises to NSIs, better use of administrative data, modernisation of [Intrastat](#) . Almost 90 % of the ESS members participated in at least one of the individual grants of the MEETS programme.

Procurements

A number of procurement contracts were used to acquire services within areas such as evaluation of legal acts, development of combined external trade and business statistics, usage of Internet as a data source, a combined nomenclature aid for Intrastat declarants, tools and methods for data exchange in [Intrastat](#) , implementation and testing of profiling, and development of EU sampling schemes to produce EU [aggregates](#) .

See also

- [MEETS programme - results](#) (online publication)

Database

- [Annual detailed enterprise statistics for trade \(NACE Rev. 2 G\)](#)

Dedicated section

- [Structural business statistics](#)

Publications

- [External study on detail evaluation of the legal acts in the areas of statistics which were identified by member states as areas for revision](#)

Legislation

- [Communication COM\(2009\) 404](#) on the production method of EU statistics: a vision for the next decade
- [Decision 1297/2008/EC](#) of 16 December 2008 on a Programme for the Modernisation of European Enterprise and Trade Statistics (MEETS)
- [MEETS project overview, key results and follow-up](#) (downloadable Word document)
- [Modernisation of European Enterprise and Trade Statistics \(MEETS\)](#)
- [Report COM\(2010\) 813](#) on the implementation of Decision 1297/2008/EC of 16 December 2008 on a Programme for the Modernisation of European Enterprise and Trade Statistics (MEETS)

¹In total 32: the 28 EU Member States + Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland

External links

- [Cros portal](#)

<references>