



*Brussels, 19 September 2023*

*ecfin.cef.cpe(2023) 9866158*

## **Requirements for structural statistics 2023: overview of progress made**

### **1. Overview**

Since 2006, the EPC has annually taken stock of the needs for structural statistics to support the work of the ECOFIN Council<sup>1</sup>.

The report gives an overview of progress made over recent years and identifies areas where further efforts are required, in particular:

- The first part of the report (sections 2 and 3) highlights two sets of statistical information that are of key policy relevance: The Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure (scoreboard and other relevant statistics) and the EU SDG indicators. It is important to continue the work to further develop and improve the data sets for MIP and to continue monitoring EU SDG.
- The last part of the report (section 4) outlines progress made on other structural data for which continued development and improvement of the underlying statistics is also important.

The EPC acknowledges the need for prioritisation of statistical activities and recommends that main developments aiming at the improvement of structural statistics should be pursued and should relate to the priorities of the European Commission.

The Russian military aggression against Ukraine creates additional and urgent needs for reliable and harmonised statistics, in particular, in the fields of energy, migration and labour market statistics. Eurostat together with the ESS is providing statistics in order to support policy decisions on Ukraine and on the implications of the war.

### **2. Statistics for the Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure**

The Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure (MIP), based on Regulation (EU) No 1174/2011<sup>2</sup> and Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011<sup>3</sup> is a surveillance mechanism that aims to detect, prevent and correct macroeconomic imbalances, which emerge or persist in the euro area and the Member States.

The MIP is based on a scoreboard of fourteen macroeconomic and macro-financial indicators defined by the Commission and endorsed by the ECOFIN Council and the European

---

<sup>1</sup> Doc. ECFIN/EPC(2006)51285 final of 22 May 2006

<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EU) No 1174/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 November 2011 on enforcement measures to correct excessive macroeconomic imbalances in the euro area <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1407944383247&uri=CELEX:32011R1174>

<sup>3</sup> Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 November 2011 on the prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1407944142061&uri=CELEX%3A32011R1176>

Parliament. The scoreboard indicators cover developments in public and private indebtedness, private sector credit flow, housing prices, net international investment position, current account balances, real effective exchange rates, world export market shares, unit labour costs, unemployment and a set of employment indicators.

The Commission publishes annually at the opening of the European Semester an autumn package also containing the Annual Growth Sustainability Survey and the Alert Mechanism Report (AMR) based on the MIP Scoreboard. A Statistical Annex, covering the Scoreboard indicators and a set of auxiliary indicators, is produced by Eurostat and published at the same time. Moreover, at the beginning of the following year the Commission publishes in-depth reviews (IDRs), which allow the Commission to conclude on the possible existence of macroeconomic imbalances and on their severity.

Having timely statistics of the highest quality for the analysis of MIP issues is of utmost importance and maintaining a robust quality assurance framework for MIP relevant data is essential to ensure that the MIP is based on sound and reliable data, is comparable between Member States and produced according to high quality standards.

In line with the Memorandum of Understanding on the quality assurance of statistics underlying the MIP, Eurostat and the Directorate General Statistics of the ECB work together on the improvement of data quality, including joint visits to Member States.

The statistics underlying the MIP indicators are based on EU legislation and compiled by the European Statistical System (ESS) and the European System of Central Banks (ESCB). Following the three-level approach providing the frame for the work on quality assurance of the MIP indicators, the work performed contained the following actions on:

- Level 1: Preparation of an annual ESS-ESCB quality assessment report on statistics underlying the Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure by Eurostat and the ECB aimed at policy makers and the public at large addressing the reliability and comparability of the MIP related statistics and actions to address the most relevant quality issues. In 2023, the level 1 report (ninth report of its kind) was published in July.<sup>4</sup>
- Level 2: The level 2 quality reports of Eurostat and the ECB on Balance of Payments (BOP)/International Investment Position (IIP) have been aligned and follow the basic principles set out in the 'European Statistics Code of Practice' and the 'Public commitment on European statistics by the ESCB'. The reports lay down, in a special section, country-specific recommendations for Member States to address notable quality issues and scope for improvements. Both reports cover rest of the world figures, Eurostat additionally analyses data from outside the EU, while the ECB analyses data from outside the euro-area. Eurostat's report includes annual ITSS and FDI datasets which are not covered by the ECB. The ECB report also contains a dedicated box focusing on the specific BOP and IIP quality dimensions of relevance for the MIP. The Eurostat report also presents a box "Quality indicators on BOP and IIP statistics underlying the macroeconomic imbalances procedure" and describes country-specific situation. The latest report of Eurostat covers data up until Q3 of 2022, with starting reference periods that vary according to different quality criteria. Eurostat intends to send its report to the European Parliament and European Council in September 2023. Since 2020, the ECB disseminates the ESCB report on a biennial basis. The latest report on Euro area and national BOP and IIP statistics<sup>5</sup> was published in May 2022. Albeit international investment position quality data remain very closely monitored, Eurostat intends to change to a biennial quality reporting, alternating with ECB. From year 2025, Member States shall supply on a biennial basis a national quality report.

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/16624/8465494/2023-ESS-ESCB-quality-report.pdf/ba5d100a-4b72-92f4-75f5-f92eebd9775c%20>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ecb.europa.eu/pub/pdf/bopips/ecb.bopips202205~d69af262de.en.pdf>

For Eurostat, the assessment of the quality of the national accounts data submitted pursuant Regulation (EU) No 549/2013 (under the ESA 2010 Transmission Programme) follows the Commission implementing Regulation (EU) No 2016/2304; quality reports on Member States' data are being produced annually<sup>6</sup> and they also comprise of the quality assessment on annual national financial and non-financial accounts. The ECB produces a quality report on quarterly financial sector accounts supplied under the ECB guideline<sup>7</sup>.

- Level 2 quality reports on the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and Housing Price Statistics are regularly produced, with the Housing Price Statistics report recently published<sup>8</sup>. In addition, the Commission (DG ECFIN), in its capacity as the compiler of the Real Effective Exchange Rate (REER) indicator, publishes quality information on real effective exchange rate indicators on its website<sup>9</sup> and in 2022, additionally published metadata according to the new Reference Quality Framework (RQF)<sup>10</sup>.
- Level 3: Member States prepare condensed country-specific self-assessment reports on the quality and statistical processes for statistics underlying the MIP indicators, which are easily understandable by users. They provide the basis for assuring the quality of the statistics and their comparability between countries. Member States publish such reports nationally and/or on the website of the CMFB<sup>11</sup> among all MIP quality assessment reports. The information for the statistical domains underlying the MIP is published for all Member States, while 26 are covered for housing price statistics.
- In compliance with Regulation (EC) No 184/2005<sup>12</sup>, Eurostat prepares on an annual basis, national quality reports for the Member States and EFTA countries, covering balance of payments, international investment position, international trade in services and foreign direct investment statistics. Furthermore, Eurostat shares its BOP national quality reports with the ECB. In the context of the Memorandum of Understanding, the ECB prepares national metadata reports, aiming at providing a succinct assessment on the quality issues of the BOP/IIP data of a particular Member State, and regularly transmits these reports to Eurostat.

Some ongoing developments in the different statistical domains relevant for the MIP should be noted. Cooperation between Member States, Eurostat and the ECB has been established in the context of the 'Early Warning System', and the 'Asymmetry Resolution meetings'. They aim at timely detecting relocations and restructuring events of multi-national enterprise groups and ensuring a consistent cross-country and cross-domain treatment. They bring the relevant national compilers together on a quarterly basis to discuss the largest bilateral asymmetries in foreign direct investment. Further, an Asymmetry Resolution Mechanism to address intra-EU asymmetries related to international trade in services was set up by Eurostat and started with its first trilateral meeting in April 2022. 15 pairs of countries were selected in 2022.

Overall, the EPC welcomes the contributions made by the statistical community, both at national and at EU level, concerning MIP relevant statistics (i.e. the scoreboard and other relevant statistics for the implementation of the MIP). The EPC also stresses the need to support the ongoing revision of the scoreboard and continue the work to provide reliable and

---

<sup>6</sup> Information on quality reporting and assessment is available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/esa-2010/esa-2010-implementation-and-data-quality>, the last quality report published at <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/7870049/15714457/KS-FT-22-008-EN-N.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ecb.europa.eu/pub/euroareafinancialaccounts/html/ecb.eaqfa202305~1d44e20907.en.html>

<sup>8</sup> [Microsoft Word - House Price Index Level 2 Quality Report 2023 \(europa.eu\)](https://www.ecb.europa.eu/press/pr/2023/04/230401_en.htm)

<sup>9</sup> [https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-research-and-databases/economic-databases/price-and-cost-competitiveness\\_en](https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-research-and-databases/economic-databases/price-and-cost-competitiveness_en)

<sup>10</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2022-05/quality\\_report\\_reer\\_2021\\_en.pdf](https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2022-05/quality_report_reer_2021_en.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.cmfb.org/main-topics/mip-quality>

<sup>12</sup> Regulation (EC) No 184/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 January 2005 on Community statistics concerning balance of payments, international trade in services and foreign direct investment.

comparable MIP relevant statistics in support of all the stages of the MIP and considers that the statistics included in the scoreboard should be a priority. In particular, the EPC highlights the importance of continuing to improve the consistency and symmetry of BOP and national accounts data.

The EPC underlines that the procedures ensuring reliability of all MIP indicators should continue to be based on active cooperation within the statistical community.

### 3. Statistics for EU Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) monitoring

Eurostat has led the development of a reference indicator framework<sup>13</sup> for monitoring progress towards the SDGs in an EU context in close cooperation with other Commission services and Member States, involving also Council Committees and Working Parties as well as civil society. The EU SDG indicators have been selected taking into account their policy relevance from an EU perspective, availability, country coverage, data freshness and quality. Many of the selected indicators are used to monitor existing policies, such as the European Green Deal<sup>14</sup>, the 8th Environment Action Programme<sup>15</sup>, the set of impact indicators for the 2020-2024 strategic plans<sup>16</sup>, the main indicators of the Social Scoreboard for the European Pillar of Social Rights<sup>17</sup>, and the target indicators of the European Education Area<sup>18</sup> and the European Skills Agenda<sup>19</sup>.

The set is open to annual reviews to incorporate indicators from new data sources and to take into account new EU policy priorities<sup>20</sup>. The set is structured along the 17 SDGs and covers the social, economic, environmental and institutional dimensions of sustainability as outlined by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development<sup>21</sup>. Each SDG is covered by at most six main indicators, which have been selected to reflect the SDGs broad objectives and ambitions.

On the basis of this indicator set, Eurostat publishes an annual series of monitoring reports. The latest edition, “*Sustainable development in the European Union — Monitoring report on progress towards the SDGs in an EU context — 2023 edition*”, was published on 24 May 2023<sup>22</sup>. This publication provides an assessment of indicator trends against SDG-related EU objectives and policy targets. The assessment method considers whether an indicator has moved towards or away from the sustainable development objective or EU target, as well as the speed of this movement. The 2023 edition also analyses the impacts of Russia’s military aggression against Ukraine and of the COVID-19 pandemic during 2022 and the beginning of 2023 that are visible in Eurostat’s official statistics.

The SDGs are integrated into all Commission proposals, policies and strategies. Since 2022, the European Semester Spring Package Communication and the Country Reports include a specific annex, based on the Eurostat assessment of progress towards the SDGs.

The year 2023 is the half-way mark of the 2030 Agenda, which was adopted in 2015. This is why the EU has decided to present its first Voluntary Review at the United Nations’ High-Level Political Forum in July this year, for which Eurostat provided the statistical basis. Eurostat has published the statistical annex to the EU Voluntary Review as a separate publication, showing

---

<sup>13</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/sdi/indicators>

<sup>14</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en)

<sup>15</sup> [https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/environment-action-programme-2030\\_en](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/environment-action-programme-2030_en)

<sup>16</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/strategic-plans-2020-2024\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/strategic-plans-2020-2024_en)

<sup>17</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/european-pillar-of-social-rights/indicators/social-scoreboard-indicators>

<sup>18</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/education/resources-and-tools/document-library/eea-communication-sept2020\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/resources-and-tools/document-library/eea-communication-sept2020_en)

<sup>19</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223>

<sup>20</sup> [Result of the review in preparation of the 2023 edition of the EU SDG monitoring report](#)

<sup>21</sup> <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>

<sup>22</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/sdi/publications>

the developments of EU SDG indicators from 2015 until the latest available data point (usually 2022 or 2021)<sup>23</sup>.

## **4. Progress on underlying structural statistical data**

### **4.1 Cross-cutting issues**

The ESS is exploring and experimenting the use of new data sources and innovative approaches to statistical production, within its “Trusted Smart Statistics” approach. To this end Eurostat – in collaboration with ESS members – is developing for each data source dedicated frameworks to address methodological, technical and quality aspects as well as procedures to integrate these data sources in a multi-source and multi-purpose production environment. The ESS has an innovation agenda, and is taking forward a portfolio of projects across many statistical domains, with regular monitoring at Director General level.

The EPC asks Member States to actively reinforce the generation of trusted smart statistics, building capacities and orienting the ESS towards innovation and harnessing the potential of a datafied society. The EPC recognises that sustainable access to privately held data is relevant for the production and dissemination of reliable independent official statistics and encourages the ESS in its efforts to provide for such access.

In this context, the EPC welcomes the Commission’s proposal for a targeted revision of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European statistics, in order to seize opportunities provided by digital transformation, in terms of new data sources, technologies and data ecosystem players for timelier, more granular and responsive European statistics to support EU policies and the public debate. In this respect the EPC appreciates attempts to legally regulate the access to privately held data for statistical purposes and underlines the need for transparent and simple procedures which would fit the current rules of the European statistics production.

### **4.2 European System of National Accounts**

#### *Amending ESA 2010 regulation adopted after mid-term review*

National Accounts are fundamental for economic analysis. Within Europe the current 2010 European system of national and regional accounts (ESA 2010) sets out the national accounts standards and the ways in which key economic aggregates are calculated in the EU, in line with the world-wide 2008 System of National Accounts (SNA) methodology. Eurostat’s ESA 2010 website<sup>24</sup> contains information for stakeholders about national accounts standards: links to the legal documents; various explanatory documents (explanations of methodological changes, explanations of changes in the transmission programme, transmission calendar, etc.); list of frequently asked questions, with Eurostat’s replies; links to supporting manuals.

Since ESA 2010 was first implemented by Member States in 2014, a mid-term review of the ESA 2010 regulation and transmission programme was made in order to implement some adjustments, notably:

- Integration of the new COICOP<sup>25</sup> classification,
- the addition of a limited set of compulsory variables in response to user needs – notably for transactions with the institutions and bodies of the EU and for the structure of general government gross debt,
- integration of voluntary data,

---

<sup>23</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-statistical-reports/w/ks-05-23-188>

<sup>24</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/esa-2010/overview>

<sup>25</sup> Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose



- shortening of ESA table 11 – COFOG and ESA tables 6 and 7 – Financial Accounts and Balance Sheets – deadline in order to facilitate their policy use), and
- provisions to increase the consistency of data among the different domains.

Following the adoption of the proposal by the Commission at the end of 2021, Regulation (EU) 2023/734 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2023 amending Regulation (EU) No 549/2013 on the European system of national and regional accounts in the European Union came into effect on 25 April 2023 and is applicable from 1 September 2024 onwards, so that Member States need to implement new requirements in 2024, unless they submit well-justified requests for derogations that can be granted for a maximum of three years. The application of the Regulation coincides with the next coordinated benchmark revision of national accounts.

A more robust approach to report structural and data specific metadata is embedded in the amending Regulation<sup>26</sup>. The Regulation also resolves some non-substantial textual inconsistencies in the ESA 2010 methodology and repeals 11 obsolete legal acts.

### *ESA 2010 reports*

Based on the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 2016/2304 of 19 December 2016 specifying the modalities, structure, periodicity and assessment indicators of the quality reports which countries have to provide in accordance with Article 4 of Regulation (EU) No 549/2013 (ESA 2010), Eurostat continued to publish regular quality reports on ESA 2010 transmissions. In December 2022, Eurostat published the sixth summary report on the quality of ESA 2010 data transmitted in 2021<sup>27</sup>. Since 2021, the fully-fledged implementation of Eurostat's framework for quality assessment is in accordance with the aforementioned Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2016/2304.

Article 12 of the ESA 2010 regulation requires that the Commission (Eurostat) reports every 5 years (starting from 2018) to the European Parliament and the Council on the application of this Regulation and on the quality of data on national and regional accounts. The report that satisfies the requirement to report in 2023 on the application of the ESA 2010 Regulation used information from the 2022 quality reporting and assessment exercise (2021 data) and was adopted by the Commission on 13 June 2023.<sup>28</sup>

### *2024 benchmark revision*

While the 2020 benchmark revision for Greece is not yet completed for years before 2010 (for more detailed information on past benchmark revisions see Eurostat's website<sup>29</sup>), the next fully coordinated benchmark revision of national accounts and balance of payments for all Member States is scheduled for 2024. Besides a general review of sources and methods and the implementation of changes required by the amending ESA 2010 Regulation, further improvements are expected regarding the addressing of GNI reservations and the implementation of the 2022 update of the Eurostat Manual on Government Deficit and Debt (MGDD). A number of recommendations for improvements in different areas (notably further harmonisation of fixed capital and depreciation estimates – see section 4.4) should also be considered and implemented where needed. Practical guidance on good practices for revising ESA 2010 data<sup>30</sup> and a handbook on the consistency of ESA 2010 based national accounts<sup>31</sup>

<sup>26</sup> [EUR-Lex - 52021PC0776 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#) [EUR-Lex - 52021PC0776 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>27</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-statistical-reports/w/ks-ft-22-008>

<sup>28</sup> COM/2023/308 final ([EUR-Lex - 52023DC0308 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#))

<sup>29</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/esa-2010/>

<sup>30</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-manuals-and-guidelines/-/KS-GQ-18-012>

<sup>31</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3859598/10758445/KS-GQ-20-004-EN-N.pdf/d650560e-11c5-f1e4-cb84-953f6c56c7c3>

remain valid to help compilers of national accounts to implement revisions and measures to improve the numerical consistency of data.

### *Timeliness*

National contributions to Eurostat's euro area/EU preliminary GDP flash estimates at T+30 days were improved, as in January 2023 Ireland started publishing its flash GDP estimate at T+30 days. The national contributions to the euro area/EU flash estimates of employment, as well as to T+45 days flash estimate of GDP, were maintained. Further improvements in both domains are expected as the Netherlands are working on advancing their flash employment estimate at T+30 days and Estonia is working on producing a GDP flash estimate (at T+30 or T+45 days), supported by grants received from Eurostat. The Netherlands and Finland are also exploring the feasibility of advancing their flash GDP estimate from T+45 to T+30 days. France and Austria are exploring the feasibility of producing flash estimates of employment data at T+30. Eurostat is currently publishing national GDP flash estimates for 12 countries, (namely Belgium, Czechia, Germany, Ireland, Spain, France, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Austria, Portugal and Sweden) in its T+30 news release. All data are also published on Eurobase. The assessment of employment test estimates continued, aiming at publishing quarterly employment flash estimates after 30 days (T+30) once quality criteria are met. Data revisions have remained limited although the quality of estimates became more uncertain under COVID-19 conditions and larger than usual revisions have been observed for subsidies due to government measures mitigating the impacts of high energy prices and inflation. Further revisions could be expected for some Member States neighbouring Ukraine when more data on the number and economic activities of Ukrainian refugees fleeing Russia's military aggression become available.

### *Consistency*

In 2019, the ECB and Eurostat initiated a project on vertical discrepancies observed between non-financial and financial sector accounts with a view to developing guidelines on how to tackle them. The guidelines<sup>32</sup> were finalised and published on Eurostat's and ECB's websites in March 2022, while their implementation will be made progressively until the 2024 coordinated benchmark revision of national accounts. Financial support is provided to Member States to conduct work in this area in the form of grants. ECB and Eurostat are encouraging and supporting countries to publish metadata on the national reconciliation practices through a coordinated dissemination exercise that is currently under discussion with the respective relevant expert groups. Eurostat also provided guidance on the recording of Ukrainian refugees<sup>33</sup>.

### *Globalisation and digitalisation*

The globalisation and digitalisation of economies are two phenomena that affect national accounts and business statistics. Eurostat is giving high priority to deal with these issues in cooperation with policy users and international partners, also in view of a future update of the SNA, expected in 2025. This involves work at conceptual level (e.g. how to consistently record multinational enterprise groups (MNE groups) in national statistics of different countries, or how to monitor new digital products or services) as well as on communication (providing the information necessary for users to better understand the national and international economic performance).

Eurostat considers that the better measuring of the impact of globalisation of MNE groups requires the strengthening of the co-operation and data exchange in the European Statistical System. This was supported by the conclusions of the 2019 DGINS<sup>34</sup> Conference held in

---

<sup>32</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/499359/499434/Recommendations+on+Vertical+consistency.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/ukraine/support-for-statisticians>

<sup>34</sup> Directors General of the ESS National Statistical Institutes

Bratislava on the economic globalisation. As regards digitalisation, a number of initiatives are under way to better capture the digital economy (see sections 4.4 and 4.5 on Productivity and Business Statistics).

Cooperation at international level in the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on National Accounts and in the UN Expert Group on Business and Trade statistics is also important. As national accounts and business statistics are areas continuously evolving in line with economic changes and new policy and analytical needs, it is essential for Eurostat to express European needs in the context of international discussions on the future SNA. Future priorities to be taken forward include digitalisation (e.g. through giving visibility to data as an asset, artificial intelligence or cloud computing), reflecting environmental issues (in particular by considering depletion of natural resources as a cost of production or by considering renewable energy resources), globalisation and MNE restructuring. Eurostat and the Member States are already working intensively with the international community on these issues including with the ESCB and CMFB. In order to deal with restructuring events of MNEs in a timely manner, Eurostat operates an Early Warning System, that is a collaborative network that allows national correspondents in Member States to coordinate the methodological treatment of MNEs once a restructuring event has impact on statistics of more than one Member State. To exploit synergies with Business Statistics and Large Cases Units, the Early Warning System is now under the umbrella of the European Network of MNE group coordinators (MNEnet).

#### *Income, consumption and wealth*

Eurostat has been working on two work streams aimed at strengthening the household perspective by focusing on distributional aspects of income, consumption and wealth:

- Eurostat continues developing experimental statistics on the joint distribution of income, consumption and wealth, which is compiled using statistical matching of microdata from the EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), the Household Budget Survey (HBS) and the Household Finance and Consumption Survey (HFCS). The joint distribution statistics aim at describing the interaction of income, consumption and wealth at household level. The data and information on the methodology can be accessed on a dedicated section of Eurostat's website<sup>35</sup>. The data set includes statistics from 2010, 2015 and 2020. The 2020 data were published in June 2023 and include joint distributions of income and consumption. The wealth dimension will be incorporated once the 2020 HFCS data become available. Since August 2022, experimental indicators on the affordability of essential goods and services are released as well.
- In December 2020, Eurostat and the OECD published for the first time experimental results of the distribution of households income and consumption aligned with macroeconomic totals. The publication combined national estimates provided by a number of countries with data for other Member States estimated by Eurostat. The distributional data were accompanied by detailed methodological information, metadata, as well as sensitivity indicators. Moreover, the final report of the joint OECD-Eurostat Expert Group on Disparities in a National Accounts framework (EG DNA) was published in May 2022<sup>36</sup>.

Another data collection round was launched in autumn 2021. Updated national estimates by income quintile by three countries and Eurostat's estimates for remaining Member States by income decile for income (2015-2019) and consumption (updated 2015) were published in June 2022<sup>37</sup>. The latest data collection round was launched in March 2023.

---

<sup>35</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/experimental-statistics/income-consumption-and-wealth>

<sup>36</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=ks-tc-21-010>

<sup>37</sup> [New estimates on household distributional accounts - Products Eurostat News - Eurostat \(europa.eu\)](#)



Updated national estimates are expected from four countries<sup>38</sup> and there will also be updated Eurostat's estimates for 2015-2019 for income and 2015 for consumption, as well as the newly compiled results for 2020 both for income and consumption, based on survey and sector accounts data available at Eurostat as of March 2023.

Moreover, a new Task Force on Household Distributional Accounts (TF HDA) was launched in June 2022 with the participation of 12-16 Member States, the OECD and the ECB. The TF HDA had meetings in December 2022 and May 2023, in which methodological and practical discussions were had to support EU countries in the compilation of household distributional accounts.

Furthermore, Eurostat is providing financial support to countries for their work on household distributional accounts. A relevant call was published in December 2021. Four countries were successful in the grant applications and their work is currently on-going.

Finally, Eurostat is working together with the ECB and the OECD on creating a new global SDMX DSD for distributional accounts to transmit and share data (in the long run) that will belong to the NA DSD family.

The ECB has been leading an Expert Group on Distributional Financial Accounts (EG DFA) for several years, aiming to develop experimental distributional accounts on household wealth. The ECB expects to launch the regular publication of distributional financial accounts by the end of 2023.

In 2023 the OECD was reaching out to countries to seek nominations for the following two expert groups concerning Data Gaps Initiative Recommendations 8 (integrated into the existing EG DNA) and 9 on household distributional information (a new expert group – EG DHW). The EG DNA will focus on Recommendation 8, i.e., distributions of household income, consumption and saving. This work will benefit from work already done in the previous EG DNA exercises co-chaired by Eurostat and the OECD to update the existing templates and guidelines, further improving the methodology and assisting countries in compiling the relevant results. In addition, the OECD set up a new Expert Group on Distribution of Household Wealth (EG DHW) in close collaboration with the other international organisations involved, i.e., the ECB, Eurostat and UNSD. This expert group will focus on Recommendation 9, i.e., distribution of household wealth. This work will benefit from work already done in this area, e.g., by the EG DFA.

Eurostat contributes to all expert groups and closely cooperates with other International Agencies facing similar issues in the compilation process and learning from each other's experiences.

The EPC welcomes the progress made on the work related with the European System of National Accounts. In particular, the EPC calls on Member States to implement the amended ESA 2010 regulation corresponding to user needs. The EPC also welcomes the ongoing work to increase the coverage of Eurostat's GDP flash estimates at T+30 and/or T+45 in order to improve their reliability and calls on Member States to actively provide input to the process.

### **4.3 Government finance statistics**

#### *COFOG data*

The provisions in the ESA 2010 transmission programme, implemented as from 1 September 2014, imply that the compilation and transmission of COFOG (detailed government

---

<sup>38</sup> Four countries updated data are expected by May 2023 and one more country is also expected by the end of 2023.

expenditure data by function/purpose) level II data are compulsory for general government covering the time period from 2001 onwards.

All Member States as well as Iceland, Norway and Switzerland delivered timely COFOG level II data under ESA 2010 (end-December 2022 transmission). COFOG data was provided significantly in advance of the legal deadline by Bulgaria, Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, Slovakia, Sweden and Switzerland. While the overall consistency of initially transmitted data continued to improve, the need to implement further technical and methodological corrections to COFOG data continued to be the driving factor behind the high number of retransmissions still observed. All country data as well as EU and euro area aggregates were validated and disseminated in Eurostat's public database by 22 February 2023. The publication of COFOG data was accompanied by an online publication on COFOG<sup>39</sup> and a Eurostat infographic designed for general users<sup>40</sup>.

Further progress in data availability was observed since the last report, and currently 28 out of 30 reporting countries meet or exceed the legal requirements. As regards COFOG level II data, all Member States as well as Iceland, Norway and Switzerland sent a complete dataset from at least reference year 2001, with all Member States providing data from 1995 at COFOG level I. At subsector level, 25 Member States, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland provided complete detailed COFOG level II data for at least thirteen years on a voluntary basis. Overall, data availability has improved significantly compared to the first ESA 2010 based transmission at the end of December 2014.

As regards the quality of the data, further progress will be required for some Member States on the allocation of Research and Development (R&D) expenditure by detailed function. More generally, while overall consistency was assured for all countries at validation, further progress is needed in certain areas such as unexpected negative amounts, allocation of social transfers and subsidies, certain transactions in 'public debt transactions', individual and collective consumption expenditure, consistency of allocation over time and use of some smaller COFOG groups.

As regards the recording of measures to counter the economic and social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, a harmonised recording has been facilitated by discussions in the COFOG TF and GFS TF and subsequent written guidance. The harmonised recording of measures taken to mitigate the impact of high energy prices is being facilitated by published guidance notes and discussions in the COFOG TF on the allocation in COFOG. While significant efforts were made by compilers to ensure comparability, some further harmonisation of the recording is still expected and thus, the likelihood of future revisions is higher than usual.

#### *Structure of government debt / voluntary data transmissions*

In response to key user needs, Eurostat annually collects details on the structure of government debt, covering – among others – government debt by sector of debt holder, by detailed initial and remaining maturity as well as by currency of issuance. The coverage supplied by Member States as well as Norway has gradually expanded since 2014. A limited set of key indicators will become compulsory from 2024 onwards (see below).

From 2015 onwards, Eurostat has been collecting additional voluntary data on general government gross debt, quarterly financial accounts and annual non-financial accounts. All Member States as well as Norway now provide additional details of non-financial transactions. Notably, data on transactions with the EU needed in the context of the Stability and Growth Pact are provided by all Member States.

---

<sup>39</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Government\\_expenditure\\_by\\_function](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Government_expenditure_by_function)

<sup>40</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/cofog/>

### *Mid-term review of the ESA 2010 transmission programme*

As indicated in section 4.2, Regulation (EU) No 2023/734 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2023 amending Regulation (EU) No 549/2013 on the European system of national and regional accounts in the European Union came into effect on 25 April 2023 and is applicable from 1 September 2024 onwards. In this context, a number of changes were inserted in relation to government finance statistics in order to better meet user needs. Notably, the amending Regulation formally integrates existing voluntary collection to the transmission programme (mainly as voluntary data) and provides an updated legal basis for quarterly non-financial accounts for general government.

Some additional compulsory data were also inserted to meet user needs: data on transactions with the EU as well as some data on the structure of government debt.

Additionally, the legal deadline for transmission of COFOG data was shortened to T+11 months. The ESA 2010 COFOG data is used by a high number of policy Directorates General, inter alia in the context of the European Semester. Due to the current transmission deadline for COFOG data 12 months after the end of the reference period and the subsequent time necessary for validation and publication of the data, the COFOG transmission cycle is not optimally aligned with the needs of the European Semester. An earlier transmission (by one month) will enable the use of the freshest COFOG data in the context of the European Semester and is also expected to lead to a quicker alignment of relevant national accounts aggregates to the COFOG data.

### *Contingent liabilities and non-performing loans*

In the context of the last financial crisis, the importance of access to reliable data on public corporations has become evident, notably where difficulties in public corporations have impacted on government finances. In 2012, Eurostat introduced an annual questionnaire on government-controlled units classified outside the government sector. This questionnaire is compulsory and covers annual data, including total liabilities of corporations as well as the market/non-market performances of the companies having total liabilities exceeding 0.01% of GDP. The timeliness of the data transmission is each year at 12 months after the end of the reference period.

In addition, and as a direct result of the Eurostat-organised Task Force on the implications of Council Directive 85/2011 on requirements for budgetary frameworks of the Member States, on 22 July 2013, Eurostat issued a decision on a “supplement on contingent liabilities and potential obligations to the EDP questionnaire”. This provides for the compulsory provision of a supplement to the EDP questionnaire covering total outstanding liabilities related to public-private partnerships (PPPs) recorded off-balance sheet of general government; non-performing loans of general government (government assets); total stock of government guarantees, including government guarantees provided to public corporations, split by sub-sector of general government.

Data have been provided annually by the Member States to Eurostat since 2014 and have been published on Eurostat's website, together with supporting information. Eurostat has also created a special section for data on contingent liabilities on its website.

### *Work on quality and methodology in the context of Excessive Deficit Procedure Statistics and government finance statistics*

Eurostat last published an update to the manual on COFOG in 2019. An update of the Manual on Government Deficit and Debt<sup>41</sup> was published in February 2023. In order to support transparency and to follow the establishment of procedures to publish outcomes of the

---

<sup>41</sup> [Manual on Government Deficit and Debt - Implementation of ESA 2010 - 2022 edition \(europa.eu\)](#)

methodological work of the GFS TF, Eurostat has proceeded with the publication of the GFS interpretations since 2019 - during 2022, four GFS interpretations were published.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Member States' governments engaged in major operations to counter the economic and social impact of the pandemic and containment measures. Eurostat discussed such operations with Member States in the relevant expert groups in order to ensure an appropriate and accurate recording of fiscal data: a harmonised recording was ensured by the publication of guidance notes<sup>42</sup> and the update of the Manual on Government Deficit and Debt. A dedicated temporary internal reporting template to report measures undertaken in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic was first reported by all Member States in April 2021<sup>43</sup>. In addition, a statistical reporting table developed for RRF-related expenditure was first reported by the Member States in April 2022. On the recording of RRF, extensive guidance was issued in the context of the EDP statistics. Users are kept informed through country-specific metadata published alongside quarterly government finance statistics data.

Additionally, in view of challenges to record appropriately and in a harmonised way large schemes to mitigate the impact of high energy prices, three guidance notes on the recording of these government schemes were discussed with and approved by the related expert groups and subsequently published. More specifically these are guidance notes on:

- i. 'the recording of government expenditure measures on high energy prices'<sup>44</sup>;
- ii. 'the recording of reversible caps on energy prices with final compensation';<sup>45</sup>
- iii. 'the recording of Member States' interventions to alleviate high energy prices via revenue measures (tax reductions, tax deferrals, tax credits and taxes on exceptional profits)'.<sup>46</sup>

In autumn 2022, Eurostat developed a template to collect information on government interventions to mitigate the impact of high energy prices. Following discussion in the expert group, a pilot exercise in late 2022 and a positive opinion of the CMFB, the *supplementary table for reporting government interventions to mitigate the impact of high energy prices* was reported by all Member States in April 2023, facilitating *inter alia* the validation of quarterly GFS.

In 2021, Eurostat initiated a project on development of ESA accounts of EU institutions with a view to capture the impact on the net lending/net borrowing and debt of the EU institutions from the post COVID-19 economic development support measures introduced on the European level. The project is expected to yield results in the course of 2023.

The EPC welcomes the progress made on the work related with government finance statistics in terms of efforts to increase data availability and accuracy, notably for developing the accounts of the EU institutions and the structure of government debt and ensuring a harmonised recording through the development of guidance on measures to mitigate the impact of high energy prices.

The EPC welcomes the shortening of the legal deadline for COFOG data to T+11 months which will facilitate key policy uses, for example in the context of the European Semester.

The EPC welcomes future work to increase availability of government finance statistics data of Member States.

---

<sup>42</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/government-finance-statistics/methodology/guidance-on-accounting-rules>

<sup>43</sup> Following earlier pilot exercises.

<sup>44</sup> [9754d3e9-71ac-f1d2-080a-10722a509dc3 \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/government-finance-statistics/methodology/guidance-on-accounting-rules/9754d3e9-71ac-f1d2-080a-10722a509dc3)

<sup>45</sup> [46a4d9b5-2993-6cb1-1e73-ed0a530d307c \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/government-finance-statistics/methodology/guidance-on-accounting-rules/46a4d9b5-2993-6cb1-1e73-ed0a530d307c)

<sup>46</sup> [Guidance note on the recording of MS' interventions to alleviate high energy prices via revenue measures \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/government-finance-statistics/methodology/guidance-on-accounting-rules/guidance-note-on-the-recording-of-ms-interventions-to-alleviate-high-energy-prices-via-revenue-measures)

The EPC welcomes further the work undertaken to harmonise the recording of government interventions to mitigate the impact of high energy prices.

#### 4.4 Productivity

Following the publication of additional annual labour and capital productivity indicators (LPis and CAPis) in the online database (nama\_10\_prod), accompanied by metadata information<sup>47</sup> as an achievement of the Eurostat Growth and Productivity Accounts Project (GPA) at the end of 2021, Eurostat's activities concentrated on improving several aspects of the underlying national accounts data, reviewing notably the comparability of fixed asset and depreciation estimates, gross value added volume and employment estimates.

For fixed assets and depreciation estimates, the Task Force Fixed Assets and Estimation of Consumption of Fixed Capital under ESA 2010 (TF FIXCAP) concluded its work at the end of 2022 with a number of recommendations, regarding notably more harmonized average service lives and depreciation and retirement rates, initial capital stocks and deflators. At the same time, a detailed review of national accounts volume estimates using (mainly) implicit deflators was also completed. It focused on the quality and comparability of detailed volume estimates, including output and gross value added by NACE A\*64 industry breakdowns that are used for productivity analysis, and made country specific recommendations. Finally, Eurostat launched an initiative to review the methodology for estimation of employment in national accounts in mid-2022, to identify potential improvement areas to ensure consistency with monetary national accounts aggregates. While this work is still ongoing, countries are expected to review detected issues and improve estimates in all three areas relevant for productivity analysis with the forthcoming next coordinated benchmark revision of national accounts in 2024.

Concerning promotion of the results achieved under the GPA project and awareness raising, Eurostat updated its Statistics Explained article<sup>48</sup> on main productivity trends using the productivity indicators in 2023.

Preliminary estimates of European aggregates for fixed assets were used to compute productivity indicators based on capital stock at European level for total economy and the results of this activity were presented at the 7th World KLEMS conference in October 2022 in Manchester. Work is ongoing in 2023 to automatise the estimations of European aggregates for total economy and by industry by main assets type to add them to dissemination.

With respect to more experimental productivity indicators, Eurostat also published a 'crude' multifactor productivity indicator<sup>49</sup> based directly on national accounts data at the end of 2021 that will be updated in 2024. With respect to the quality adjusted labour input indicators (QALI)<sup>50</sup>, which have been published since June 2018 as experimental statistics, Eurostat plans to launch a review of the compilation process and investigate feasibility of publishing them as regular statistics in the future.

The EPC welcomes the activities carried out by Eurostat to support the analysis of productivity trends and encourages continued good cooperation with national compilers and users to

---

<sup>47</sup> Statistical data and metadata providing summary information useful for assessing methodology, coverage and comparability are available at the following links:

[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/explore/all/economy?lang=en&subtheme=na10.nama10.nama\\_10\\_prod&display=list&sort=category](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/explore/all/economy?lang=en&subtheme=na10.nama10.nama_10_prod&display=list&sort=category)

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/national-accounts/methodology/european-accounts/productivity-indicators>

<sup>48</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Productivity_trends_using_key_national_accounts_indicators)

[explained/index.php?title=Productivity trends using key national accounts indicators](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Productivity_trends_using_key_national_accounts_indicators)

<sup>49</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/experimental-statistics/multifactor-productivity>

<sup>50</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/experimental-statistics/qali>



further improve and harmonise underlying employment, output and gross value added in volume terms and fixed assets data with the next benchmark revision in 2024.

#### 4.5 Business and international trade statistics

In 2021, 2022, and 2023, first data required under Regulation (EU) No 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European business statistics<sup>51</sup> (EBS Regulation) were published. This includes the monthly index on services production for which first estimates for European Union and euro area were disseminated in May 2022 (with full Member State coverage to be reached in 2024 when the transitional arrangements expire).

By the end of 2022, the last of the 10 implementing and delegated acts needed for the first implementation of the EBS Basic Act, was adopted. This included the first implementing acts specifying the data requirements for global value chains statistics (Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 2022/918), and for innovation statistics (Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 2022/1092). The implementing act laying down the PRODCOM list 2022 (the first update of the PRODCOM list under the EBS Regulation<sup>52</sup>) was also adopted in December 2022 introducing additional codes for primary and secondary raw materials. Starting in 2021, a series of European business statistics manuals<sup>53</sup> (including methodological manuals, compilers' and users' manuals) has been published.

The EBS Regulation also governs the production of national statistical business registers and of the EuroGroups Register (EGR) and strengthens their essential infrastructure role as authoritative sources for business statistics. The EGR is produced on the basis of an ESS and EFTA NSI's exchange and output of confidential micro data of MNE groups to be used for the production of business and macroeconomic statistics (in particular related to globalisation). The final EGR output is made available to the producers of Foreign Affiliates Statistics and other business and globalisation statistics producers. In 2023, this output contains information on around 155 thousand MNE groups active in Europe comprising around one million enterprises and more than 1.4 million legal units. In addition, a large majority of Member States and EFTA countries voluntarily participate to the European Profiling programme, a collaborative and interactive activity to analyse the legal and economic structure of the largest and most significant MNE groups and delineate their statistical units. Eurostat continues to co-finance Member States in their European profiling activity, and the results of this activity are now integrated into the EGR and made available to the national business registers. In 2023, Eurostat continued to publish experimental statistics on MNEs as aggregated data on MNEs extracted from the EGR for the EU-27 and EFTA countries.

In the context of Structural Business Statistics (SBS) and Business Demography statistics, Member States together with Eurostat have improved the methodology to better capture the contribution of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to the economy. This allows to support better targeted SME policies and improves the capacity to assess their policy impact. For example, since the entry into force of the EBS Regulation, more timely SBS data for different size classes (including for SMEs) have been published (currently as preliminary data).

Looking at the economy from the regional point of view, SMEs contribute to local economies by promoting growth and innovation in local communities. In this context, business demography statistics provide particularly relevant data on business births and closures as

---

<sup>51</sup> Regulation (EU) No 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2019 on European business statistics, repealing 10 legal acts in the field of business statistics ([EUR-Lex - 32019R2152 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#))

<sup>52</sup> For the first PRODCOM data collected under the EBS Regulation on the reference year 2021 the PRODCOM list adopted in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 3924/91 was still used.

<sup>53</sup> [European business statistics manuals](#)

well as for high-growth enterprises, based on regional breakdowns that have become mandatory under the EBS Regulation.

In 2023, some preliminary results on micro data linking in business and trade statistics and MNEs will be published to provide new insight to measure the contribution of MNEs to the EU economies. The rapidly emerging new possibilities of micro data linking methodology will considerably enrich the SME related database with regard to areas such as trade, business characteristics, innovativeness, performance indicators. This will provide completely new possibilities for expanding the economic analysis of SMEs. For example, it might become possible to focus on genuine SMEs by taking into account an enterprise group's structure. Moreover, information will become available that relates data about business innovation in enterprises to their economic performance.

Furthermore, in the area of business demography statistics, first official statistics on quarterly registrations and bankruptcies of businesses were disseminated in 2021. In February 2023, voluntary monthly registrations and bankruptcies data was also published for the first time. The aim will be to further extend the MS coverage in the course of 2023.

In addition, the development project on high-growth enterprises largely reflects the policy needs of the key DGs dealing with enterprise policy. The project has broadened the scope and measurement of high growth enterprises to also include micro enterprises, which are not covered by the regular data production. The project has also assessed the sustainability of growth after the high-growth period.

The Global value chains Implementing Act, mentioned above, regulates, for the first time, the data collection for the reference period 2021-2023 (data to be transmitted in 2025).

The ESS is also working on the full implementation of the statistical unit 'enterprise' increasing comparability. Given its significant impact on European business statistics, the harmonised definition of the 'enterprise' across statistical domains, sectors and countries will increase the quality of the ESS business statistics output. In most domains, Member States will fully implement it for the reference year 2021 at the latest.

In the context of foreign direct investment statistics and in close cooperation with the ECB, Eurostat continued piloting the development of statistics on 'Ultimate Investing Economy', 'Ultimate Host Economy' and 'Greenfield investment'. Eurostat published data for the first time on the Ultimate Investing Economy in 2022 from 13 Member States and this voluntary data collection continues on annual basis.

International trade in services by mode of supply are an important element of trade negotiations. Eurostat published a compilers' guide for European statistics on international supply of services by mode of supply (MoS)<sup>54</sup> in December 2021. Data are already available for eight Member States. Eurostat continues to work on further developing the methodology in cooperation with several Member States. The second area of international trade in services relates to the services trade by enterprise characteristics (STEC). In this area the methodology was developed (Eurostat-OECD Compilers Guide for statistics on Services Trade by Enterprise Characteristics (STEC)<sup>55</sup>) and data are already available for 15 Member States. The collection of international trade in services by mode of supply and STEC become mandatory under the provisions of the EBS General Implementing Act (GIA).

Statistics on R&D, including government budget allocations for R&D (GBARD), are used to monitor the EU objective to promote investment in research in order to promote competitiveness, resilience and prosperity. Eurostat is continuing the cooperation with

---

<sup>54</sup> [European business statistics compilers guide for European statistics on international supply of services by mode of supply – 2021 edition.](#)

<sup>55</sup> [Compilers Guide for statistics on Services Trade by Enterprise Characteristics \(STEC\) - Products Manuals and Guidelines - Eurostat \(europa.eu\)](#)

Member States to produce additional breakdowns on a voluntary basis. In addition, a pilot project linking the data with structural business statistics and the Community Innovation Survey is ongoing. This will show whether it is feasible to produce richer datasets containing additional variables that would provide a more comprehensive view of the enterprises that work on R&D and innovation.

Eurostat provides data for monitoring the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) and e-commerce in the business and household sectors in the context of implementation of the Digital Single Market. Eurostat continued developing, producing and publishing statistics in the area of the digital economy and society through ICT surveys updated on an annual basis. Data collected in the surveys on ICT use in households, by individuals and enterprises are needed for developing and monitoring the EU policy initiatives in the digital area. The ICT data disseminated cover a whole range of topics, such as digital connectivity, e-commerce, e-government, robotics, cloud computing, data analysis, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, Internet of Things, digital skills and digital intensity of enterprises.

Having in mind digitalisation and its tremendous impact on and potential for the society, businesses and the economy, even further accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, in October 2021, the ESSC endorsed an action plan setting a way forward for the ESS towards better measurement of digitalisation. The initiative will also facilitate monitoring of the digital transformation in Europe, one of the main political priorities of the European Commission for the coming years, with specific targets set out in the Digital Decade Communication<sup>56</sup>.

The action plan evolves around three points:

- **Advancing the measurement agenda** includes statistical initiatives, which are set to meet the identified data needs and gaps (e.g. exploring additional sources and enlarging the scope, measure the environmental impact of digitalisation, measure the size and activity of collaborative economy, compile digital supply and use tables, demand for digital skills, explore new sources of data)
- **ESS contribution to the Digital Decade** (monitor the Digital Decade targets)
- **Enhancing the communication and coordination** (new publications, coordinated dissemination of data on digitalisation).

The ESS action plan aiming to enhance the measurement of digitalisation has a timeline set until 2030, with some initiatives already completed or ongoing. New statistics complementing the data from the two ICT surveys have been added to Eurostat database, which include data on broadband internet coverage by technology and by speed, coming from DG CNECT and based on survey of National Regulatory Authorities and operators, published in August 2022, and new indicators on cyber-crime – recorded offences based on police data on acts against computer systems, published in Eurostat in May 2023. New indicators on the impact of ICT uptake on the environment, in particular green behaviours of people and business with regards to digital technologies, their disposal and acquisition, coming from the two ICT surveys, have been disseminated in December 2022. Additionally, methodology is currently being developed for collecting new data on the environmental impact of the ICT sector, namely on energy consumption of data centres, under the amended Energy Statistics Regulation (ESR, Regulation (EC) No 1099/2008), for which the first mandatory reference year is 2024. Furthermore, work is ongoing towards a potential extension of the scope of the two ICT surveys. The discussions with the NSIs on enlarging the age scope of the household/individual ICT survey have started in February 2022 and its implementation methodology was discussed in June 2023.

---

<sup>56</sup> [EUR-Lex - 52021DC0118 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#) [EUR-Lex - 52021DC0118 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

Similarly, discussion with the NSIs on extending the economic activity scope of the ICT enterprises survey started in 2022, with more technical discussions on feasibility and methodology foreseen for September 2023. Work is ongoing on making digitalisation more visible in macroeconomic statistics, with EU grants to carry out experimental work on Digital Supply and Use Tables, Digital Intermediation Platforms and Data as an asset (see section 4.2). To further facilitate measuring the digital economy in national accounts, discussions have been launched with the NSIs, to include an additional question in the ICT enterprise survey on the expenditure of enterprises on cloud computing services, with a potential implementation in 2025.

Additionally, beyond the initiatives foreseen in the action plan, work has been initiated to produce digital trade statistics. This could be based on the new statistics on international trade in services by mode of supply (mentioned above), supplemented by potential new data on digitally ordered trade, for which the discussions with the NSIs on developing the methodology started in June 2023. Moreover, work is ongoing on deriving new experimental statistics on labour market demand for ICT specialists, based on big data collected from webscraping of Online Job Advertisements (OJAs), by the end of 2023.

The EPC calls upon Member States to support these developments with a view to upgrade the quality of the ESS business statistics and cross-border information, thus better capturing globalisation as well as digitalisation phenomena. The EPC welcomes the progress towards improving compliance when reporting on enterprises. In doing so, the EPC stresses the importance to maintain the consistency of business statistics with national accounts, where relevant, as well as feasibility and cost-effectiveness of the proposed developments.

In the globalisation context, the EPC welcomes the integration of new data requirements on international trade in services in the implementing act of EBS, in particular for MoS and STEC, as well as the adoption of the Implementing Act laying down the data requirements for global value chains statistics. Beyond their analytical value, both elements provide important input to the free trade agreement negotiations by the EU. On the technical side, STEC will be used as an input in the area of global input-output tables.

As regards digitalisation, the EPC supports the digitalisation action plan.

In line with the ECOFIN Council recommendations<sup>57</sup> to substantially reduce the response burden on enterprises by redeveloping intra-EU trade in goods statistics while maintaining a sound level of quality, international trade in goods statistics (ITGS) have been in the spotlight of modernisation activities over the last years.

The new EBS Regulation became applicable for international trade in goods statistics in 2022. The EBS Regulation gives the Member States more flexibility to use new data sources and compilation methods. In this respect, the most innovative new technical feature is the compulsory micro data exchange on intra-EU exports between the Member States which started in March 2022. The purpose of this exchange is to make available an additional data source to compile intra-EU imports. This will help to meet the end goals of modernisation of intra-EU trade in goods statistics: reduction of the reporting burden while maintaining quality in international trade in goods statistics.

As regards the extra-EU trade in goods statistics, the exchange of customs data between the Member States also started in 2022. EU customs rules allow traders to lodge a customs declaration in another Member State than where the goods are located. In such cases, customs data are exchanged so that the Member State where goods are located has access to customs data. This helps to improve quality of extra-EU trade in goods statistics.

---

<sup>57</sup> Economic and Financial Affairs Council meetings of 30 November 2011 and of 13 November 2012.

The EPC welcomes the work, accomplished successfully thanks to the collaborative work between Eurostat and the Member States. The EPC calls upon the ESS to maintain its commitment in deploying and implementing modernised intra-EU trade in goods statistics.

#### 4.6 Agricultural statistics

Eurostat supports the Common Agricultural Policy, Farm to Fork strategy and other EU policies and strategies by collecting and publishing a large array of agricultural statistics: farm structure, agricultural production, nutrients, pesticides, prices and economic accounts for agriculture.

The regulation on Integrated Farm Statistics (IFS)<sup>58</sup> forms a framework for European statistics based on farm-level data by integrating core information on the farm manager, the land and the livestock with thematic modules (labour force and other gainful activities, soil management practices, animal housing and manure management, irrigation, machinery and equipment, orchards, vineyards, rural development). The publishing of the results of the 2020 agricultural census is under way, and the next data collection for reference year 2023 is ongoing. The secondary legislation is being prepared for the 2026 data collection.

The Regulation on Statistics of Agricultural Input and Output (SAIO)<sup>59</sup> covering animal and crop production statistics, statistics on plant protection products and nutrients and agricultural price statistics was adopted in 2022. The following implementing regulations have been adopted:

- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/1579 of 31 July 2023 laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EU) 2022/2379 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards agricultural price statistics
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/1537 of 25 July 2023 laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EU) 2022/2379 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards statistics on the use of plant protection products to be transmitted for the reference year 2026 during the transitional regime 2025-2027 and as regards statistics on plant protection products placed on the market
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/1538 of 25 July 2023 laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EU) 2022/2379 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards crop production statistics

Three further implementing regulations will be proposed in 2023-2024:

- Animal production statistics
- Nutrient statistics
- Quality reporting

The data collection under SAIO will start for the reference year 2025. SAIO will considerably improve the data availability on agricultural inputs and outputs by bringing under legislation a large number of voluntary data collections.

---

<sup>58</sup> Regulation (EU) No 2018/1091 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on integrated farm statistics and repealing Regulations (EC) No 1166/2008 and (EU) No 1337/2011

<sup>59</sup> Regulation (EU) 2022/2379 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 November 2022 on statistics on agricultural input and output, amending Commission Regulation (EC) No 617/2008 and repealing Regulations (EC) No 1165/2008, (EC) No 543/2009 and (EC) No 1185/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Directive 96/16/EC (Text with EEA relevance), OJ L 315, 7.12.2022, p. 1–29



The EPC welcomes the progress made in improving the provision of agricultural statistics. This will also contribute to a better comprehension and enable a more detailed analysis of agricultural price trends along the supply chain.

#### 4.7 Fisheries statistics

The project 'Streamlining and simplification of European Fisheries Statistics' is progressing. After the finalisation of the impact assessment, the Commission is working on a legal proposal for European fisheries and aquaculture statistics. The aim is to streamline the fisheries statistics under a new regulation so that they bring a substantial added value as European Statistics in the complex data architecture necessary for the management and monitoring of fisheries under the Common Fisheries Policy.

The EPC takes note of the progress made on the project 'Streamlining and simplification of European Fisheries Statistics'.

#### 4.8 Energy statistics

Energy statistics are used for monitoring progress towards Europe's 2030 environmental, energy and climate targets, the objectives of the Green Deal, the Energy Union and the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN's 2030 Agenda. This includes the share of energy from renewable sources, indicators on energy efficiency, energy dependence, energy security, energy intensity, transparency of the energy market, energy infrastructure, and more.

On 28 January 2022 the Commission adopted the most encompassing amendment of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2008 (Commission Regulation (EU) No 2022/132<sup>60</sup>) on energy statistics in order to meet the increased demand for data arising from the European Green Deal and the Energy Union. The aim of this amendment is to provide earlier data and better monitor the evolution of renewable energy, energy efficiency, new fuels and energy storage.

The scope of Eurostat's energy statistics also includes the Energy Community (EnC) Contracting Parties. In total, annual energy statistics are now reported and disseminated in a harmonised way for around 40 countries (Ukraine stopped reporting for the time being due to its Martial Law<sup>61</sup>). The Contracting Parties adopted the latest amendment of the Energy Statistics Regulation<sup>62</sup> and will implement this Regulation at the same time as the Member States (first reporting will come in October 2023 for reference year 2022).

Owing to the disruption of gas supply in the EU triggered by the energy crisis after the Russian military aggression against Ukraine, Council Regulation (EU) No 2022/1369 introduced a reduction target of 15% of gas consumption. The ESS organised the related data collection in a short period of time and has provided the necessary data for monitoring gas consumption reduction in all Member States. The first data transmissions on monthly gas consumption from Member States were successfully accomplished on a T+15 days basis (compared to the regular T+55 days monthly reporting after the reference period). Council Regulation (EU) No 2023/706 of 30 March 2023 prolonged for one more year the initiative introduced by Council Regulation (EU) No 2022/1369 on coordinated demand-reduction measures for gas. This prolongation affects the corresponding statistical data collection, which will continue to be carried out every two months during the period April 2023 – March 2024. On a voluntary basis, countries are encouraged to report monthly and, when possible, provide some details on

---

<sup>60</sup> [EUR-Lex - 32022R0132 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#) [EUR-Lex - 32022R0132 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>61</sup> Закон України від 03.03.2022 № 2115-IX про захист інтересів суб'єктів подання звітності та інших документів у період дії воєнного стану або стану війни. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2115-20><https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2115-20>

<sup>62</sup> [EUR-Lex - 32022R0132 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#) [EUR-Lex - 32022R0132 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

consumption. The Commission will carry out a review of this legislation by 1 March 2024. Starting December 2022, Eurostat has introduced a series of news items<sup>63</sup> on the gas demand reduction, which are published right after the data collection is released. The latest compulsory due submission was 15 June 2023 (for April-May 2023).

As regards oil, the Commission issued the Recommendation of 6 December 2022 on strengthened security of supply of crude oil and petroleum products, according to which, the Member States should bring their emergency oil stocks back to the minimum levels required under Article 3 of Directive 2009/119/EC, by 31 March 2023 at the latest. The monitoring of the stocks levels is based on data reported by Member States to Eurostat. Monthly data on crude oil and petroleum products, provided by the ESS are also used to monitor the EU embargo on oil imports from Russia as part of the 6th package of EU sanctions that was adopted in June 2022. It consisted of the import ban of Russian seaborne crude oil as of 5 December 2022 and of petroleum products as of 5 February 2023.

New indicators were developed for import dependency for all fuels, as part of the upcoming National Energy and Climate Progress Reports (NECPR), which Member States were requested to submit to the Commission by 15 March 2023. In those cases where national statistical institutes or other national authorities had already submitted these data to Eurostat, the Commission used them to prefill the NECPR templates. Eurostat has been supporting the NSIs and ONAs with methodological guidance as well as procedures and data prefilling to minimize the additional workload from the new reporting requirements.

As monitoring the development of hydrogen in the EU energy market has become essential, Eurostat has been leading the developments of data collection for hydrogen and is guiding the harmonization of methodology with international partners such as the International Energy Agency (IEA) and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), leading to comparability of data virtually worldwide.

Eurostat just finalised the consultations at technical level for the next amendment of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2008 on energy statistics. This update is of technical nature with a very limited scope. The main objective is to complement hydrogen reporting by including its relations with other fuels.

Finally, to make the complex processes of energy more understandable for data users, the first Eurostat's digital publication<sup>64</sup> "Shedding light on energy in the EU" was updated in 2023 with the new corporate style. In addition, Eurostat created a set of interactive dissemination tools<sup>65</sup> to allow users to access energy data in a user-friendly way.

The EPC appreciates the progress made on energy statistics and commends the rapid response to new monitoring needs owing to the Russian military aggression against Ukraine.

#### **4.9 Environmental Economic Accounts**

Environmental economic accounts analyse the links between the environment and the economy by organising the environmental information in a way that is consistent with the accounting principles of national accounts. Environmental economic accounts can be used, for example, to identify: efficiency and productivity in use of natural resources and energy (carbon, materials, water, etc.); how circular is our economy; estimate environmental footprints; which are the most polluting activities or the ones that most deplete natural

---

<sup>63</sup> [EU gas consumption down by 20.1%, EU gas consumption decreased by 19%, and EU gas consumption decreased by 17.7%](#)

<sup>64</sup> [Shedding light on energy in the EU – A guided tour of energy statistics \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>65</sup> [Energy Visualisation Portal \(europa.eu\)](#) [Energy Visualisation Portal \(europa.eu\)](#)

resources; what is the role of government and households; how expensive it is to protect the environment and who pays for it; growth and jobs in the environmental economy.

The environmental economic accounts methodology is based on the system of integrated environmental and economic accounting (SEEA CF 2012 and SEEA EA 2021), published by the United Nations, the European Commission, the International Monetary Fund, the OECD and the World Bank.

Currently, Eurostat collects data for six accounts: air emission accounts, economy-wide material flow accounts, environmental taxes, environmental goods and services sector accounts, environmental protection expenditure accounts and physical energy flow accounts<sup>66</sup>. In addition to those mandatory data collections, Eurostat runs voluntary annual data collections on forest accounts and environmental subsidies and similar transfers.

In the context of the European Green Deal, there is a high demand to increase the quality of environmental accounts data and to produce environmental accounts on new topics. Therefore, the Commission has proposed (COM/2022/329 final) developing the following new accounts: forest accounts, ecosystem accounts and environmental subsidies and similar transfers. The file is currently discussed in Council and Parliament, with the trilogue starting presumably in November 2023.

In particular, ecosystem accounts are an area under fast development. Ecosystem accounts measure the benefits that ecosystems (natural capital) produce for businesses and society, most of them being beyond the SNA production boundary (e.g. climate regulation, pollination) but also within the SNA production boundary (timber, nature-based tourism). Quantifying those service flows allows estimating the value of the underlying ecosystem assets (natural capital) as well as their depletion. Furthermore, ecosystem accounts also measure ecosystem extension ('extent') and degradation ('condition'), and their links with the volume and value of ecosystem services.

In 2023, Eurostat launched the first data collection on potentially environmentally damaging subsidies, including fossil fuel subsidies. Moreover, the questionnaire for air emissions accounts includes for the first time voluntary tables on road transport (mobile sources). Eurostat has also new measures of (private) investments in circular economy, climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation as well as bioeconomy. Those measures of expenditure for climate change are being reviewed for recommendation 7 of the G20 Data Gaps Initiative.

Eurostat publishes annual estimates of air emissions footprints, material footprints and energy footprints for the EU and Member States. Some Member States transmit on voluntary basis material footprint estimates, and Eurostat produces material footprint estimates for all other countries. Environmental footprint estimates are based on input-output modelling. Environmentally extended Supply-Use and Input-Output tables are regularly produced to investigate the 'consumer perspective' of global climate change, air pollution and material use. This allows calculating footprint type indicators to show the global impact of consumption within the EU. Eurostat is improving the quality of its air emissions footprint and energy footprint estimates using the FIGARO datasets.

Since November 2021, Eurostat also publishes quarterly estimates of greenhouse gases. Those estimates are model-based and benchmarked to the annual estimates transmitted by the Member States. Those estimates are published 4 ½ months after the reference quarter and significantly improve the timeliness of the data.<sup>67</sup>

Eurostat promotes the use of official statistics for climate change information purposes with several activities. Eurostat is member of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES)

---

<sup>66</sup> [Regulation \(EU\) No 691/2011](#) [Regulation \(EU\) No 691/2011](#)

<sup>67</sup> [Statistics | Eurostat \(europa.eu\)](#) [Statistics | Eurostat \(europa.eu\)](#)

steering group and task force supporting the implementation of the CES Recommendations on climate change related statistics. Eurostat also participates in the task force focused on measuring extreme events and disasters and the role of official statistics in providing data and support in this domain.

In May 2023, the Commission adopted a revised EU monitoring framework for the circular economy<sup>68</sup>. It includes a new dimension on global sustainability and resilience, in addition to the already existing four dimensions: production and consumption; waste management; secondary raw materials; competitiveness and innovation. The new monitoring framework includes new indicators, in particular: material footprint, resource productivity, consumption footprint, greenhouse gas emissions from production activities and material dependency<sup>69</sup>. Eurostat also publishes an online interactive Sankey diagram of material flows.

The EPC welcomes the progress in the area of environmental economic accounts as a tool to develop reliable energy-environmental economic models and wishes to continue to be regularly informed of progress.

#### **4.10 Transport statistics**

A fundamental freedom of the European Union (EU) and its single market is the free movement of people and goods across its internal borders. However, mobility benefits are not without costs: greenhouse gas emissions; air and water pollution; noise, accidents; congestion; and biodiversity loss. Changes require a transition to sustainable alternatives within a multimodal transport system, along with incentives to drive this transition.

Eurostat supports EU transport policies through statistics for aviation, inland waterway, maritime, rail and road transport. Statistical data are mainly collected in the framework of five Commission regulations and are complemented by voluntary data collections at national and regional level, and by results of statistical projects. An important voluntary data collection is the 'Common Questionnaire on Inland Transport Statistics', a joint product of Eurostat, the International Transport Forum (ITF/OECD), and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

Passenger mobility in urban areas by different means of transport is a statistical field with high policy relevance. With an increasing need for monitoring passenger mobility, Eurostat and the Member States have developed a harmonised methodology and guidelines for collecting relevant statistics. However, Eurostat is also exploring innovative data sources for the production of statistics on passenger mobility. In this context, a 3-year project was launched in 2022, aiming to produce experimental statistics on traffic and mobility. The first part of the project identified innovative data sources and potential indicators, such as congestion indexes, accessibility and efficiency of public transport, and availability of infrastructure for charging electric vehicles. Work on the most promising use cases is continued in 2023, aiming to produce experimental statistics.

In the framework of exploring innovative data sources, Eurostat will develop more timely maritime statistics and indicators at EU level using the Automatic Identification System (AIS) data for maritime vessels. To this end, an ongoing project between Eurostat and the European Maritime Safety Agency is looking into the use of AIS data for early estimates of EU maritime traffic.

The exploration of publicly available data sources or privately held data for experimental transport statistics is of high importance to Eurostat. Within another project with international organisations, Eurostat is participating in the preparation of a handbook on transport indicators

---

<sup>68</sup> [EUR-Lex - 52023DC0306 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#) [EUR-Lex - 52023DC0306 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>69</sup> [Monitoring framework - Circular economy - Eurostat \(europa.eu\)](#)

based on GSM (Global System for Mobile communication) data. Additionally, the further development of statistics on intermodal freight transport, i.e. transport of containers over changing modes, will be tested if access to data from international transport companies is made possible. Furthermore, the use of real time data on railway transport and public transport schedules will be considered for new rail transport indicators.

Eurostat has been cooperating with DG MOVE to increase efficiency by streamlining Member States' reporting. In this context, the maritime transport statistics Directive (EC) 2009/42 has been listed as one of the reporting obligations in the annex to Regulation (EU) No 2019/1239 on the European Maritime Single Window environment. The Regulation will apply from 15 August 2025 onwards.

Split of transport performance statistics among different modes (modal split) helps monitor the shift of passenger and goods transport to more environment-friendly modes. After completing the methodology for modal split statistics, in 2022, new modal split indicators were published including for maritime transport.

The increased usage of light utility vehicles, especially in urban areas, is of interest to the Member States and to transport statisticians, due to the high number of vehicles operating in this segment. Eurostat and several national statistical institutes have jointly developed a draft methodological manual for statistics on transport by light utility vehicles. Such statistics will complement the well-established road freight transport statistics on goods movements by heavy trucks. In 2023, Eurostat funded a new round of pilot studies by Member States on light utility vehicle statistics.

Inland waterways are an efficient and less polluting mode of transport. In this context, Eurostat and the Member States are discussing a future data collection on passenger transport by inland waterways and are well advanced in developing a methodology on relevant statistics. In 2023, Eurostat funded a new round of pilot studies by Member States on statistics for passenger transport by inland waterways.

Increased demand for data on air transport resulted in Eurostat disseminating monthly Eurocontrol data on the number of commercial flights per country and airport within 2 weeks after the end of each month. Such data are also included in the European Statistical Recovery Dashboard, which monitors the recovery of the EU economy from the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, data on air passengers are published with improved timeliness, namely every quarter instead of biannually, and are accompanied by newly produced data on air transport of goods and passengers by distance class.

Delivery services aim to use drone technology for delivering goods to consumers. Drone delivery may prove faster and more environmentally friendly than ground delivery but will also have an impact on local air traffic. In cooperation with the European Union Aviation Safety Agency and DG MOVE, Eurostat will explore possibilities for developing statistics on this new mode of transport.

Statistical data on the European Rail Traffic Management System and on numbers of stations with access facilities for people with reduced mobility were identified by the European Parliament as essential for the implementation of the EU transport policy. In cooperation with the European Union Agency for Railways, Eurostat disseminates data on the length of railway lines equipped with the European Rail Traffic Management System. Following the implementation of the regulation on the European Vehicle Register in 2021 and the subsequent data collection, Eurostat plans to disseminate data on stations with access facilities for people with reduced mobility as soon as such data are available.

The EPC welcomes the work accomplished successfully thanks to the collaborative work between Eurostat and the Member States and calls upon the European Statistical System to maintain its commitment to transport statistics.



#### 4.11 Real estate statistics

Among the data gaps underscored by the past financial and economic crisis, real estate statistics have been considered as one of the areas to be urgently developed to provide appropriate price, volume and other important physical indicators for residential and commercial property markets.

Particular attention has been devoted to developing internationally comparable house price indices and statistics on house sales. House Price Indices (HPIs) and Owner-Occupied Housing Price Indices (OOHPIs) have been regularly produced and published based on Regulation (EU) No 2016/792 of the European Parliament and of the Council. Commission regulation 2023/1470 of 17 July 2023 laying down methodological and technical specifications for the HPI and the OOHPI<sup>70</sup> will increase the quality and comparability of these two indicators as of 2024.

Since 2015, Eurostat has been publishing an annual index of the total value of housing transactions, now covering 21 Member States.

Since 2020, Eurostat has been publishing quarterly indicators of the total value and number of housing transactions. Together with the HPI and the OOHPI, this statistic forms a coherent and conceptually meaningful data set to inform policy makers and other users. The data now covers 16 Member States, one more than reported last year.

The development of commercial real estate statistics in Europe has had a strong push with recommendations provided by the European Systemic Risk Board (ESRB) in 2016 and 2019 on closing real estate data gaps<sup>71</sup>. To support the development of official statistics in this domain, Eurostat has set up a number of task forces and other initiatives under three work streams, whose results were documented in a progress report published in December 2021<sup>72</sup>. A final report on the ESRB recommendations will be published at the end of 2023.

The Task Force on Commercial Real Estate Indicators (TF CREI) provides inputs to the first work stream, which encompasses the development of price indices, rental indices and rental yield indicators. The TF CREI discusses the results of the ongoing pilot projects in the participating countries and addresses methodological and practical challenges faced when developing these indicators (e.g. choice of most appropriate data sources). Other actions, such as the development of a technical manual on CREI, for which some chapters have been drafted, are also used as inputs in the discussions of the TF CREI.

The Short-term Statistics Commercial Real Estate Indicators Task Force (STS CREI TF) initially covered construction starts and vacancy rates indicators, but later building permits and works completions were also included. The latter two indicators complement the request of the ESRB for the construction starts indicator as not all building permits granted will result in construction starting and not all construction work is completed. Building permits are already covered by the European Business Statistics regulation and the indicators were available to users as indices. Since 2022, building permits of all Member States have been released annually in absolute values (number of dwellings and usable floor area) for years starting from 2005. The task force made good progress on developing common definitions, methodology, measurement units and classifications. It also drafted detailed data requirements for the indicators on construction starts and works completions. A few countries have started transmitting pilot data on these indicators.

---

<sup>70</sup> [EUR-Lex - 32023R1470 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>71</sup> Recommendations [ESRB/2016/14](#) and [ESRB/2019/3](#), respectively.

<sup>72</sup> Commission staff working document [progress report on commercial real estate statistics](#).

The third and last work stream covers the development of vacancy rates, for which a specific task force was set up in spring 2021. The Task Force on Vacancy rates of Commercial Real Estate (TF VRCREI) produced a draft set of recommendations aiming at standardising the compilation of vacancy rates for CREI in 2021. These recommendations would serve as a basis for the development of these statistics that remain, together with rental yields, subject to far less progress than price indices, rental indices and construction starts.

The EPC welcomes the publication of quarterly house sales indicators as well as the work done under the above-mentioned work streams. The EPC encourages the Member States who do not yet transmit quarterly indicators of the total value and number of housing transactions to speed up their efforts to produce these indicators and to continue and strengthen their efforts to build new or further develop already existing commercial real estate indicators.

## 4.12 Demographic statistics and population projections

### *Demography*

Responding to the demographic change in the EU is a priority of the Commission as proved by the mission letter of President von der Leyen to Vice-president Šuica, in which demography has an outstanding role.

On 17 January 2023, the European Commission published the Staff Working Document “The impact of demographic change in a changing environment”<sup>73</sup>. This report presents the drivers of demographic change and their impact across Europe, updating and developing the Demography Report issued in 2020<sup>74</sup>. It discusses both firmly established long-term trends and more recent developments caused by sudden crises, notably the COVID-19 pandemic. Eurostat worked extensively on the report, not only as one of the main data providers but also on the drafting of part of the text and preparation of tables and graphs.

In 2023, Eurostat continued collecting and publishing weekly deaths data<sup>75</sup> regularly submitted by the national statistical institutes, up to the latest available week. This voluntary data collection, triggered in April 2020 by the urgent need for statistical information to monitor mortality linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, was a big success in the ESS. Additionally, Eurostat continued releasing the indicator of “excess mortality”<sup>76</sup>, based on the weekly deaths statistics, produced for European Recovery Statistical Dashboard<sup>77</sup> as one of the most useful indicators for assessing additional deaths.

On 11 May 2023, Eurostat released the third edition of the Interactive publication “Demography of Europe”<sup>78</sup>, which was produced for the first time in July 2021: in this publication population structure, population change, population diversity and marital status for the EU, for the Member States and for the EFTA countries are described with dynamic visualisations and short texts. Data in this publication show yearly figures up to the year 2022 at the most.

---

<sup>73</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2023-01/Demography\\_report\\_2022\\_0.pdf](https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2023-01/Demography_report_2022_0.pdf)

<sup>74</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2020-06/demography\\_report\\_2020\\_n.pdf](https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2020-06/demography_report_2020_n.pdf) and [https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2020-06/commission-staff-working-document-impact-demographic-change-17june2020\\_en.pdf](https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2020-06/commission-staff-working-document-impact-demographic-change-17june2020_en.pdf)

<sup>75</sup> For a complete overview please see the article [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Weekly\\_death\\_statistics](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Weekly_death_statistics)

<sup>76</sup> For a complete overview please see the article [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Excess\\_mortality\\_-\\_statistics](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Excess_mortality_-_statistics)

<sup>77</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/recovery-dashboard/>

<sup>78</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/interactive-publications/demography-2023>

### *Statistical response to support decisions on Ukraine*

On 12 April 2022, Eurostat invited countries to transmit voluntarily monthly data on grants of temporary protection to persons fleeing Ukraine due to the Russian military aggression. The purpose of this request was to ensure the timely availability of official statistics in this area. Thanks to contributions from most countries, Eurostat was able to publish the first monthly data on temporary protection granted in March and April 2022 on 19 May 2022. These data<sup>79</sup> refer to the number of temporary protection statuses granted at first instance during the reference month to persons fleeing Ukraine, as well as the stock of beneficiaries of temporary protection statuses at the end of the month. Countries are invited to send data to Eurostat within one month following the end of the reference period. This is earlier than the deadline foreseen in the Regulation (EC) No 862/2007<sup>80</sup> for the quarterly data on decisions granting temporary protection under Article 4.2(d).

To ensure comparability of statistics, on 16 January 2023, after consultations with the national statistical institutes, Eurostat released a methodological note on “Guidance on the inclusion of refugees from Ukraine who benefit from temporary protection in the EU in the usually resident population”<sup>81</sup>. This document provides practical guidance for official statisticians on the issues triggered by the war against Ukraine and ensures accuracy of the population figures used for administrative purposes such as the majority voting in the Council.

To provide baseline information on Ukrainian citizens who were already resident in the EU and EFTA before the Russian military aggression against Ukraine, Eurostat also invited countries to provide preliminary data from the 2021 population censuses. These data<sup>82</sup> are available for NUTS3 regions, and cover the age, sex, marital status and year of arrival of Ukrainian citizens. Further data on current activity status and household status will be disseminated when available from countries.

### *Redevelopment of European statistics on population*

Population statistics are the backbone of social statistics and have many statistical and policy uses. They are undergoing a period of major changes, in particular, related to the increased use of administrative and other new data sources. In parallel, the demand for these statistics is growing and changing in the context of increased migration flows, impact of ageing and needs for more regional and local information for the assessment of the impact of population changes. Also the recent disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia’s military aggression against Ukraine called for more timely and relevant data on population and demographic changes.

Since 2015, as part of the ongoing discussions on the modernisation of social statistics, Eurostat has been working on a long-term comprehensive redevelopment of European population statistics following the 2021 EU census round. An important aim of this redevelopment is to integrate these different population data collections under a single legal basis, allowing for better harmonisation, reduced duplication of work, and a more efficient use of resources in Eurostat and in NSIs – while providing more relevant and better-quality data for policy and other public needs. A new legal basis is also necessary because the current Regulation (EU) No 1260/2013<sup>83</sup> on European demographic statistics will cease to apply on 31 August 2028.

---

<sup>79</sup> For a complete overview please see the article Temporary protection for persons fleeing Ukraine - monthly statistics: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Temporary\\_protection\\_for\\_persons\\_fleeing\\_Ukraine\\_-\\_monthly\\_statistics](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Temporary_protection_for_persons_fleeing_Ukraine_-_monthly_statistics)

<sup>80</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02007R0862-20210701>

<sup>81</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/14916382/15042455/Guidance+on+the+inclusion+of+refugees+from+Ukraine+who+benefit+from+temporary+protection+in+the+EU+in+the+usually+resident+population.pdf>

<sup>82</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database?node\\_code=cens\\_21ua](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database?node_code=cens_21ua)

<sup>83</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:330:0039:0043:EN:PDF>

The Commission completed its initiative on redeveloping European statistics on population (ESOP) which aims at a new regulatory framework to bring together demographic, migration and population and housing census data and ensure greater regional detail. Based on an evaluation of the status quo and a forward-looking impact assessment supported by a dedicated stakeholder consultation, on 20 January 2023, the Commission adopted a proposal for a new framework regulation on European statistics on population and housing<sup>84</sup> that is currently undergoing the ordinary legislative procedure.

The legislative proposal aims to address four main problems. The current legal framework:

1. does not fully ensure complete, coherent, and comparable statistics, especially when voluntary datasets covering relevant policy needs are factored in, which may lead to sub-optimal statistical evidence for decision making;
2. does not ensure sufficient availability of population data in terms of frequencies and timeliness of data publications;
3. fails to capture characteristics and details of topics or groups that have become politically and societally relevant during the past decade;
4. is not flexible enough to adapt to evolving policy needs and to enable exploitation of data from administrative and other new sources in the Member States and at EU level.

The findings from the stakeholder consultation have largely confirmed these problems. However, another clear uptake from the consultation is that there is a deep division between statistics producers (mostly national statistical institutes) and professional statistics users (in policy, research and other professional contexts) on the perception of these problems. While users generally see them as critical gaps that need to be lifted substantially and with due priority, statistics producers' opinions are largely driven by additional costs and burden implied. This is a broad line also recurring during the ongoing legislative procedure.

#### *Population projections*

On 18 June 2021, the ECOFIN Council invited Eurostat to treat the population projections as a priority and release the next results by no later than March 2023. The implementation plan for the release of long-term population projections EUROPOP2023 was discussed with the national statistical institutes and endorsed by the European Directors of Social Statistics. The European Statistical System Committee and the EPC's Working Group on Ageing Populations and Sustainability (AWG) were informed. The long-term projections at European and national levels were published as planned in March 2023, and all relevant scenarios related to this baseline publication were available by end of May 2023. The assumptions for mortality and fertility took the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic into account; as well as the inflows and outflows of refugees from Ukraine under temporary protection which were included in the baseline and modelled taking into account the latest available information at the time of publication.

Furthermore, Eurostat published a short-term update of the population projections EUROPOP2019 in September 2022 covering the period 2022-2032 for the purpose of the Commission's economic forecast and in support of the work of the Output Gaps Working Group. Such short-term updates are published annually, in between the releases of the long-term projections.

#### *Population and housing census*

The 2021 population and housing censuses have been undertaken in all Member States and EFTA countries in line with Regulation (EC) No 763/2008 and its implementing regulations. As a result of delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Ireland, Hungary and Germany carried

---

<sup>84</sup> [COM\(2023\) 31](#).

out their national censuses in 2022 but are adjusting data to a reference date in 2021, thereby fulfilling the requirements of the EU census programme.

All Member States and three EFTA countries have provided census data on the total population at the level of a 1 km square grid. These data were published by Eurostat on 30 March 2023<sup>85</sup>.

To ensure more timely publication of preliminary population data from the 2021 censuses, Eurostat requested that countries provide, on a voluntary basis, provisional data on population at all NUTS regional levels, by sex and broad age group. These provisional data were disseminated on 30 March 2023 in parallel with the initial data on total population for 1 km square grid cells. These data are available for all Member States and all except one EFTA country.

The full data required under the 2021 EU census programme are planned for dissemination in the 2nd quarter of 2024. This will include detailed and flexibly defined multidimensional tables on the population, families, households and housing published on the Census Hub, and pre-defined tables on Eurostat's online dissemination database. Further data at 1km square grid level will be published covering age, sex, place of birth, place of residence one year ago and employment.

The EPC welcomes the progress made on demographic statistics, the population and housing censuses and population projections.

#### **4.13 Statistics on persons and households**

Regulation (EU) No 2019/1700<sup>86</sup> of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a common framework for European statistics relating to persons and households, based on data at individual level collected from samples, was adopted on 10 October 2019. The Regulation is part of a major programme for the modernisation of social statistics undertaken in close cooperation with the Member States. It aims at developing new, integrated ways to collect and use data from social surveys so as to better support policy making in general and social policy in particular. It streamlines the European social statistics collected from samples as well as makes the data collection process more efficient and the statistical output more relevant. First data under Regulation (EU) No 2019/1700 were received for reference periods from 1 January 2021 onwards.

Following the adoption of Regulation (EU) No 2019/1700, a series of implementing and delegated acts were adopted in the following years, in the domains 'labour force', 'income and living conditions' and 'consumption'. For the domain 'use of information and communication technologies' implementing and delegated acts were adopted for survey years 2021, 2022 and 2023, the draft legal acts for survey year 2024 are in the legal process.

The EPC welcomes the further implementation of Regulation (EU) No 2019/1700.

#### **4.14 Labour market statistics and wage indicators**

Labour market developments are of key importance to the work of the EPC. At the centre of interest are the effects of the business cycle on employment and unemployment, the impact of crises and the war in Ukraine, wage developments and the longer-term evolution of labour demand and supply, in particular with a view to structural features and possible mismatches.

In particular, inflation has reached levels unprecedented since several decades, raising concerns on a possible price/wage spiral. This emphasizes the importance of the quarterly

---

<sup>85</sup> [Population and housing census 2021: first EU results - Products Eurostat News - Eurostat \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&plugin=1)

<sup>86</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32019R1700&qid=1656429309912>



labour cost index as an indicator of possible wage pressures. In this context, Eurostat collects pilot data with a view to develop an early estimate for the labour cost indices of the euro area and of the European Union that should be available 50 days after the reference quarter instead of 77 days for the final data. All countries whose number of employees represents more than 3% of the EA and of the EU totals now participate in the test transmissions. As the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has faded out, Eurostat is now in position to assess the accuracy of the early estimates on a quarterly basis. The assessment will continue until all quarters of 2023 will have been evaluated. If the accuracy will be deemed sufficient, Eurostat will envisage publishing early estimates for the euro area and the EU.

Concerning the impact of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine, Eurostat has continued collecting, on a voluntary basis, and publishing information regarding the number of migrants from Ukraine that are registered as unemployed in the 22 host countries and Switzerland that participate in the data collection.

Having information on the number and working conditions of platform workers is also of key importance. In this context, the EPC takes note that a pilot data collection on platform workers took place in 18 countries, over the whole year 2022. First results are expected in Autumn 2023.

In the field of LFS methodology, Eurostat is working on the implementation of the new International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-18) according to the standards set up in the Resolution concerning statistics on work relationships, adopted by the 20<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS). The purpose is to identify the intermediate situations, between self-employment and work as an employee, that present some characteristics of each work arrangement. The status in employment is seen as a multidimensional phenomenon that mainly depends on the kind of remuneration (for pay or for profit) and on the degree of autonomy at work (i.e. the capacity to decide on the tasks organisation, working time, working place as well as on price setting). A task force is working on this implementation and has initiated pilot studies to refine the data collection tools, in particular, the questionnaire and its information flow.

Moreover, Eurostat has made progress in reviewing the legal basis for labour market statistics collected from businesses ('LMB review'), which includes data collections on wages, labour costs, job vacancies and gender pay gap. The evaluation of the existing LMB legislation and an impact assessment of the proposed changes have been submitted to the Regulatory Scrutiny Board, which gave a positive opinion. A draft proposal for a Regulation was prepared on this basis and discussed by the European Statistical System Committee (ESSC) in May 2023. The Commission adopted a proposal for a new framework regulation on European Union labour market statistics on businesses<sup>87</sup> that is currently undergoing the ordinary legislative procedure.

Under the LMB review, Eurostat envisages, in particular, to extend the scope of the Structure of Earnings Survey to small firms (with 1 to 9 employees) and NACE Rev. 2 section 'Public administration, defence, social security', which would correct the existing biases in hourly earnings. As concerns the Labour Cost Survey, the scope would be extended to 'Public administration, defence, social security' only. An early estimate at 45 days after the end of the quarter would also be implemented for the labour cost index and the timeliness of the Structure of Earnings Survey would be slightly improved. Eurostat also proposes to fill the remaining gaps in the coverage of the whole economy by job vacancy statistics. Finally, the LMB review is an opportunity to foster the use of administrative data and new sources, to improve quality reporting, and to regulate the collection and submission of the annual gender pay gap data. Better harmonisation of definitions, concepts and approaches and their alignment with related

---

<sup>87</sup> COM(2023)459 [EUR-Lex - 52023PC0459 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

statistical domains as well as an overall planning would be set up through one integrated framework regulation, Finally, Eurostat proposes more flexibility for adapting to future needs, for ad hoc or more structural requirements.

The EPC welcomes the progress made in labour market statistics.

#### **4.15 Income, living conditions and consumption**

Eurostat continued to strengthen the data collection in the field of income and living conditions (data collected through the EU-SILC – Statistics on Income and Living Conditions - survey). Timeliness has been substantially increased with the dissemination of the EU-SILC 2022 data (income reference period 2021) in June 2023, three months earlier than the year before. Comparability of data at regional level is being improved.

In line with important policy needs, Eurostat released in 2023 data from the 2020 module on over-indebtedness, consumption and wealth and from the 2021 module on children's health and deprivation. Modules on health and quality of life were implemented in 2022 on labour market and housing, intergenerational transmission of disadvantages and housing difficulties and on energy efficiency/poverty in 2023 according to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 2021/2052<sup>88</sup>.

Eurostat also developed a legal framework for the Household Budget Survey (HBS) data collection which was adopted in 2023. For the first time ever, the 2026 wave of the HBS will be based on a statistical law allowing for data comparability to be substantially improved.

The EPC welcomes the progress made in the income, living conditions and consumption domains.

#### **4.16 Health statistics and statistics on long-term care**

Eurostat continued to strengthen the data collections in the field of public health and health and safety at work. Through the adoption of an implementing regulation<sup>89</sup> under Regulation (EC) No 1338/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on Community statistics on public health and health and safety at work, the data collection on healthcare resources and healthcare activities became partly mandatory as of 2023. Further variables will become mandatory in 2025 under the same regulation.

Statistics on the Causes of Death were also improved through dissemination of monthly data for the years 2019 and 2020 for 21 Member States and 2 EFTA countries. Eurostat intends to continue dissemination of the monthly data in the future to enable a more detailed health related analysis.

In the area of accidents at work and occupational diseases, Eurostat continued the work of updating the statistical report<sup>90</sup>, which provides information about the possibility of recognising COVID-19 with occupational origin, for improved analysis of accidents at work and occupational diseases data. In the 2023 edition of the report, Eurostat intends to develop further the topic by including a new chapter dedicated to Long COVID.

---

<sup>88</sup> [EUR-Lex - 32021R2052 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>89</sup> Regulation (EU) 2022/2294 on statistics on healthcare facilities, healthcare human resources and healthcare utilisation. OJ L 304 pp .42-52

<sup>90</sup> [Possibility of recognising COVID-19 as being of occupational origin at national level in EU and EFTA countries - 2022 edition - Products Statistical reports - Eurostat \(europa.eu\)](#)

In line with important policy needs, Eurostat will develop new indicators based on European Occupational Diseases Statistics, which will show the data on the recognised occupational cancers at the level of the EU participating countries.

In 2023, the Member States submitted for the first time data based on the new implementing Commission Regulation (EU) No 2021/1901 as regards statistics on health care expenditure and financing. Work is ongoing in view of publishing a set of indicators with improved timeliness (T+1 year, instead of T+2 years).

In 2023, Eurostat started developing EU statistics on long-term care (LTC). The work is supported by a Task Force on Long-Term Care statistics, led by Eurostat and composed by representatives of 12 Member States plus observers from international organisations (OECD, WHO, ILO, Eurofound) and Commission services. The initial focus has been on the estimation of the population need of long-term care and estimation of the LTC workforce, including informal care. The work of the Task Force will progressively be extended to cover several other areas pertinent to long-term care, such as improving coverage in LTC-related variables of the System of Health Accounts (SHA) and estimating the number and characteristics of recipients of long-term care.

The comprehensive review of health-related statistics launched by Eurostat is underway and the final report is expected in 2024.

The EPC welcomes the progress made in health statistics and long-term care statistics and calls upon the ESS to maintain its commitment to further develop these statistics.