



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 8 November 2022
(OR. en)

14274/22

STATIS 53
ECOFIN 1121
UEM 307

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
No. prev. doc.: 13870/22
Subject: Council conclusions on EU statistics

Delegations will find in annex the 2022 Council conclusions on EU Statistics as approved by the Council (ECOFIN) meeting held on 8 November 2022.

Council conclusions on EU statistics

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

Following the priorities set in the previous Council Conclusions on EU statistics of November 2021, notably on the EFC Status Report on Information Requirements in EMU, and taking into consideration the political guidelines for the Commission 2019-2024, the Council has reviewed the progress related to information requirements in EMU, statistics for the EDP, surveillance of macroeconomic imbalances and structural statistics.

The statistical response to crises

The Council WELCOMES that the European Statistical System (ESS) and the European System of Central Banks (ESCB) have ensured that high quality official statistics continued to be published to deadline during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a strong and growing demand from users. The Council further WELCOMES the involvement and efforts of Eurostat, in close cooperation with the Member States, for developing and implementing guidance on the statistical aspects of new policy measures to address the pandemic. The Council CALLS FOR the expansion of statistical accounts for European Union institutions to reflect the impact of these initiatives in their statistics.

Further, the Council WELCOMES the response of the ESS to the needs for new and timelier statistics created by the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, notably with respect to statistics on energy, supply chains, migration and the labour market, and ENCOURAGES the ESS to provide relevant support to the Ukrainian statistical authorities.

In this overall context, the Council ACKNOWLEDGES the continuing development by the ESS of new, highly relevant statistics, often on an experimental basis, in particular those that measure the impact of the war in Ukraine on the European economies and societies.

Access to data for the compilation of timelier and more detailed official statistics

The Council REITERATES the importance of increased and sustained access for producers of official statistics to new data sources. The Council TAKES NOTE of the ESS position paper on the future Data Act proposal, and TAKES NOTE of the discussion on the forthcoming Data Act to support the establishment of a sustained and legally framed access to privately held data for the compilation of timely and more detailed official statistics. Furthermore, the Council LOOKS FORWARD to a possible proposal by the Commission on the revision of Regulation No°223/2009 on European statistics, addressing in particular the issue of access to new data sources from the specific perspective of European statistics as well as ways to ensure increased agility and responsiveness of the ESS.

The Council ACKNOWLEDGES the importance of accurate and consistent financial and non-financial statistics. It calls upon the ESS and the ESCB to further enhance cooperation within and between the respective systems. In this context, the Council ENCOURAGES the ongoing reflections how to further facilitate the sharing of relevant information between statistical compilers.

Adequate resources for official statistics

The Council RECOGNIZES the need to ensure that human and financial resources are adequate for Eurostat and National Statistical Authorities, to address urgent data requirements including on the digital transformation, the green transition and climate change, as well as the aftermath of the pandemic and the impacts of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine.

The 2022 EFC Status Report on Information Requirements in EMU

The Council TAKES NOTE of the developments described in the 2022 EFC Status Report on Information Requirements in the EMU. In particular, the Council:

APPRECIATES the further improvements in country coverage, timeliness, length of time series and overall quality of the Principal European Economic Indicators (PEEIs).

UNDERLINES the continuing important role played by the PEEIs as a basis for monitoring short- term economic developments and LOOKS FORWARD TO further progress to close remaining gaps.

Statistics for the Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure (MIP) and the Stability and Growth Pact

The Council WELCOMES the quality assurance of statistics underlying the MIP, and APPRECIATES the annual ESS-ESCB quality assessment report on MIP statistics by Eurostat and the ECB, TAKING NOTE of the actions identified therein.

The Council REITERATES its call on Member States to ensure that all statistical data needed for the application of the expenditure benchmark of the Stability and Growth Pact, including data on government revenue in the form of EU funding, are reported to Eurostat, and underlines the importance of harmonisation and transparency of such data.

Statistics in relation to Sustainable Development Goals and the European Green Deal

The Council WELCOMES Eurostat's achievements regarding the provision of statistical indicators and information for the monitoring of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at European Union level in the context of the European Semester, and ENCOURAGES Eurostat to continue to monitor progress towards SDGs in cooperation with Member States.

The Council WELCOMES the efforts undertaken by the ESS to address information demands from the European Green Deal, notably in the fields of energy statistics, climate change related statistics, environmental economic accounts, transport statistics and sustainable finance. The Council WELCOMES the ECB Climate Agenda and the work towards improving the availability and quality of climate data to better identify and manage climate-related risks and opportunities, the Council LOOKS FORWARD to the release of first results in the areas of green financial instruments and transition and physical risks related to the portfolios of financial institutions.

TAKING NOTE of Commission proposals for expanding the range of environmental economic accounts, the Council ENCOURAGES exploring the further development of timely indicators, whilst taking into account the burden on national statistical authorities.

The Council UNDERLINES the high priority of timely energy statistics, and therefore ENCOURAGES the swift and complete implementation of the amended Energy Statistics Regulation. The Council WELCOMES the development of new indicators on energy, using new data sources where appropriate.

Housing and Real estate statistics

The Council WELCOMES the ongoing discussions within the ESS and the ESCB on how to better reflect the contribution of housing costs to inflation, and STRESSES the importance to carefully evaluate all the possible implications of the different options available.

The Council further WELCOMES the work of both the ESS and the ESCB to improve commercial real estate indicators.

The Council ENCOURAGES both the ESS and the ESCB to continue to attach the necessary importance and urgency to these issues.

Business statistics

The Council WELCOMES the improvements in European business statistics through the implementation of the European business statistics Regulation, in particular, with regard to the use of new data sources like the micro data on intra-EU exports of goods exchanged between Member States, which, in answer to the Council's earlier recommendations, should allow to substantially reduce the response burden on enterprises while maintaining a sound level of quality. The Council WELCOMES the development of a new index of services production. The Council ENCOURAGES the ESS to further develop statistics on the contribution of small and medium sized enterprises, regional breakdowns, microdata linking and measurement of high growth enterprises.

The Council ACKNOWLEDGES the progress made by the ESS on the better measurement of digitalisation, in the context of the Digital Decade Communication, and UNDERLINES the importance of full implementation of the ESS's action plan.

Demographic and social statistics

The Council WELCOMES the publication on 28 September 2022 by Eurostat of its updated population projections over a 10-year horizon. The Council REITERATES the importance of the publication by Eurostat of the long-term population projections by the end of March 2023.

The Council UNDERLINES the importance of timely labour cost statistics, and ENCOURAGES the ESS to make progress on statistics relating to digital platform workers.

The Council ENCOURAGES the ESS to use its ongoing review of health statistics to take forward improvements in these statistics.

Quality and classifications

The Council TAKES NOTE of the Peer Reviews accomplished so far within the third round of Peer Reviews of the ESS and its member institutions, and EXPECTS that the resulting recommendations from these and future reviews will be taken forward to improve the compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice and to enhance the quality of European statistics.

The Council WELCOMES the consensus reached by Member States in the revision process for the NACE classification of economic activities and TAKES NOTE of the Delegated Regulation adopted by the Commission to pave the way for the introduction of NACE Rev. 2.1 into statistical domains.