



Luxembourg,
ESTAT-DG/MK/eo/D(2020)

**NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF
DIRECTORS-GENERAL AND PRESIDENTS OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL INSTITUTES
OF THE EUROPEAN STATISTICAL SYSTEM**

Subject: European Statistical System's response to COVID-19 / number 4

Dear colleagues,

Let me first thank you again for the very inspiring discussion last Friday and the rich set of proposals on how the ESS could further respond to the challenges triggered by the COVID-19 outbreak, including proposals on a more active coordination role of Eurostat.

In response to your request for providing regular information about COVID-19 related actions, I would like to let you know the following:

43rd ESSC meeting on 13 and 14 May 2020

I can confirm that the 43rd meeting of the ESSC will be held as a videoconference in two sessions. Session I will start at 14.30 and will end at 16.30 on 13 May 2020. Session II will start at 9.30 and will end at 11.30 on 14 May 2020. The draft ESSC agenda is presented in Annex I to this letter. You can find all documents on CIRCABC/Eurostat/European Statistical System Committee (ESSC) and you can express your opinion in the related exchange of views before the meeting. The comitology items that were foreseen on the May ESSC agenda will be handled via a separate written procedure. Therefore, no comitology vote will be carried out in the meeting, only discussions will take place. You will receive shortly a formal invitation with technical details on the ESSC meeting.

New Covid-19 related initiatives and projects at national level

Following the discussions last Friday, with this letter Eurostat would like to launch the collection of information on initiatives and projects that you have already launched or planned for the next months at national level to measure better the economic and social consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak. Based on that information Eurostat will suggest actions to facilitate the exchange of good practices, support innovations and promote those initiatives at EU level. A special focus will be given to the use of new data sources with the view to ensure sustainable data access for statistical purposes and continuation of the projects beyond the period of the pandemic.

In that regard, I would kindly like to invite you to:

- list and describe in brief flash estimates, new statistics and statistical products that you have launched as well as statistics that you have started to publish more frequently, to measure the COVID-19 economic and social impact;
- describe in brief any dedicated COVID-19 surveys for businesses and households that you have initiated or planned to do so in the coming months;
- summarise the new data sources you have gained access to; specify whether the data are aggregates, confidential or anonymised microdata; indicate for how long the access has been granted (e.g. for the period of lockdown, until the end of the pandemic, permanently) and whether it has been free of charge.

In addition, feel free to provide any link or document concerning those new initiatives and projects that you consider useful to be shared within the ESS.

In order to be able to put together the replies and provide them as an input to the Covid-19 discussions at the ESSC on 14 May, I would like to ask you **to send your replies by 10.00 am Monday, 11 May 2020**. Please send your replies to the functional mail box: ESTAT-ESSC_DGINS_PG@ec.europa.eu

Grant on gender based violence survey

In my letter of 26 March 2020, I informed you that only a very limited number of calls for new grants with a higher priority will be launched before the middle of June 2020, in order to take into account the capacity difficulties you are currently facing. Exceptionally, a call for proposals covering the implementation of the gender based and interpersonal violence survey (**GBV survey**) in 2021 or 2022 was launched on 29 April 2020 with a deadline for submission 8 July 2020. This grant concerns mostly ONAs, is part of a grant programme spread over three years and is organized in three waves due to the gradual funds availability. It is important to launch this call for proposals now to allow the costs eligibility period to start early, and thus to support the preparatory work needed for the national surveys that are scheduled for next year.

Weekly deaths reporting

Thanks to the high commitment and efforts by your teams, the weekly [data](#) on deaths in 2020 and back series over past years are now available in [the COVID-19 section](#) of the Eurostat website. This allows specialists to analyse the deaths time series, independently from their causes, in order to assess the additional direct or indirect mortality in the current period. These data, collected on a voluntary basis, are highly demanded by users. Therefore, Eurostat warmly thanks the participating countries and reiterates the invitation to the NSIs to participate. For, those already participating, Eurostat invites them to improve the length of the series by including progressively the most recent weeks and by extending the breakdowns they provide.

Guidelines and methodological notes

Eurostat has pursued the development of guidelines and methodological notes in the context of the COVID-19 in cooperation with NSI experts. The documents are published in the [COVID-19: support for statisticians](#) section of the Eurostat website as and when they are ready. Eurostat is investigating a quick way of informing DGs when new notes are released to support their implementation.

New dedicated COVID-19 section on Eurostat website

Finally, I would like to inform you that today Eurostat has launched a dedicated COVID-19 section on its website that covers a range of topics related to the economy, society and work, population and health as well as agriculture, energy, transport and tourism. For each topic, users can find the latest releases, an interactive data visualisation, links to more in-depth information in Statistics Explained and a list of relevant datasets. The dedicated COVID-19 section contains links to the similar sections on the websites of the NSIs.

Yours sincerely,

(eSigned)
Mariana Kotzeva

Annex: Draft ESSC agenda

DRAFT AGENDA
43RD MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN STATISTICAL SYSTEM COMMITTEE
(ESSC)

101ST EEA CONFERENCE
LUXEMBOURG, 13 AND 14 MAY 2020

FIRST DAY, 13 MAY, AFTERNOON

VIDEOCONFERENCE

STARTING: 14H30

	Time	Duration
Introduction by the Chair	14h30	5
Comitology items		
/		
Items for opinion during the virtual meeting		
1. Draft 2021 Financing Decision / Annual Work Programme <i>The ESSC will be invited to give its opinion on the draft 2021 Financing Decision / Annual Work Programme.</i>	14h35 ESSC 2020/43/1	30
2. Detailed methodology for the next round of peer reviews <i>Based on several discussions in the ESSC, the work of the ESS Task Force on peer reviews and the quality working group, a first part of the full package of the methodology for the third round of peer reviews will be presented to the ESSC for opinion. This part of the package will contain the overall methodology for the peer reviews (adjusted version of the general methodology presented to the ESSC in October 2019), some of the supporting tools and instruments (the self-assessment questionnaires for the NSIs/Eurostat and the ONAs, the information and list of core documents to be provided by the NSIs/ONAs/Eurostat together with these self-assessment questionnaires, the procedure to select the ONAs for participation in the peer review, the structure of the peer review report) as well as a proposal for a coordinated communication strategy</i>	15h05 ESSC 2020/43/2	30

for the third round of peer reviews.

This part of the package of the methodology for the peer reviews as endorsed by the ESSC meeting and the second part of the package (the guides or the NSIs/ONAs and for the peer reviewers together with their annexes) to be endorsed in written procedure in June 2020 will constitute the basis for implementing the third round of peer reviews in the ESS in 2021-2023.

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| 3. | High-value datasets | 15h35
ESSC 2020/43/3 | 45 |
| | <i>Eurostat will present a first draft proposal for a list of high-value datasets for statistics. The ESSC will be invited to discuss and provide its opinion on the list.</i> | | |
| 4. | Actions enabling the use of privately held data for official statistics | 16h20
ESSC 2020/43/4 | 30 |
| | <i>Following the discussion in May 2019 on Trusted Smart Statistic, during which the ESSC stressed the importance of access to new data sources, the DIME/ITDG had in July 2019 set up a “Group on using privately held data for official statistics”. This document will present the outcome of the Group’s work and propose a framework of actions. The ESS Committee will be invited to discuss and provide its opinion, taking into account the recommendations of the Expert Group on B2G data sharing.</i> | | |

End foreseen

Approx. 16h50

DRAFT AGENDA
43RD MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN STATISTICAL SYSTEM COMMITTEE (ESSC)
101ST EEA CONFERENCE
LUXEMBOURG, 13 AND 14 MAY 2020
SECOND DAY, 14 MAY, MORNING
VIDEOCONFERENCE
STARTING: 9H30

	Time	Duration
Items for opinion during the virtual meeting (continued)		
5. ESS response to Covid-19 including an update from the Task Force on ESS Strategic Communication	09h30 ESSC 2020/43/5	60
<i>Exchange of views on the implications of the Covid-19 outbreak on the ESS's statistical production, including an update on the work of the Task Force on ESS Strategic Communication.</i>		

Report during the virtual meeting

6. Oral report to the ESSC on the results of the Exchange of Views	10h30	30
<i>Eurostat will report on the results of the Exchange of Views related to items 7 to 13 of the agenda.</i>		

Any other business

The ESSC will be invited to endorse the results of the election of a new PG member.	11h00	5
Discussion/approval of the opinions	11h05	15
Acknowledgments by the Chair		

End foreseen

Approx. 11h20

Items for discussion via Exchange of Views - summary and conclusions during the virtual meeting under Item 6

7. Eurostat monitoring report on NSI compliance with the European statistics Code of Practice: situation as of 31 December 2019 ESSC 2020/43/7

Every year Eurostat reports on the implementation of the European statistics Code of Practice by the NSIs of the EU Member States/EFTA countries, based on the improvement actions designed after the second round of peer reviews (2013-2015). This is the fifth annual monitoring report; it will take stock of the already implemented improvements and highlight those improvement actions posing particular problems for the NSIs.

Reports to the Committee

Comments via Exchange of Views - summary and conclusions during the virtual meeting under Item 6

8. Presidency ESSC 2020/42/8
Plans for the next Presidency (Germany)

9. Second Report on Commitments on Confidence in Statistics ESSC 2020/43/9

ESSC Members are informed about the upcoming 2nd Report on Commitments on Confidence in Statistics, which is scheduled for June 2020. The Commission shall report for the second time to the European Parliament and the Council on the Commitments on Confidence in Statistics by 9 June 2020. The first report was published in 2018. The Commitments are monitored regularly by the Commission, based on annual reports sent by Member States.

10. 2020 DGINS Conference in Warsaw, Poland – state of play ESSC 2020/43/10

The ESS will be informed about the preparation of the 2020 DGINS Conference to be held on 7-8 October,

including the agenda for the event, jointly prepared by Eurostat and Statistics Poland.

11. European Statistics Day 2020 ESSC 2020/43/11
The ESSC will be briefed about the initiatives that Eurostat intends to take to celebrate the 2020 European Statistics Day.

12. Partnership Group ESSC 2020/43/12a
ESSC 2020/43/12b
ESSC 2020/43/12c
 - a) Report from the meeting on 20/03/2020
 - b) Report from the virtual PG meeting 17/04/2020
 - c) Draft agenda of the next meeting, 11/09/2020

13. Reports from Directors' Groups ESSC 2020/42/13
The ESSC will be informed about the strategic activities of the Directors' Groups.
DSS (Directorate F)