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►B REGULATION (EU) No 99/2013 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

of 15 January 2013

on the European statistical programme 2013-17

(Text with relevance for the EEA and for Switzerland)

(OJ L 39, 9.2.2013, p. 12)

Amended by:

		Official Journal		
		No	page	date
►M1	Regulation (EU) No 1383/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013	L 354	84	28.12.2013
►M2	Regulation (EU) 2017/1951 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2017	L 284	1	31.10.2017

▼B

REGULATION (EU) No 99/2013 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

of 15 January 2013

on the European statistical programme 2013-17

(Text with relevance for the EEA and for Switzerland)

Article 1

Establishment of the European statistical programme

The European statistical programme for the period from 2013 to 2017 ('the programme') is hereby established.

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The programme shall be extended to cover the period from 2018 to 2020.

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Article 2

Added value

The programme represents the added value of ensuring that European statistics are focused on the information needed to design, implement, monitor and evaluate Union policies. In addition, it contributes to the effective use of resources by fostering actions which provide an essential contribution to the development, production and dissemination of harmonised, comparable, reliable, user-friendly and accessible statistical information based on uniform standards and common principles set out in the European Statistics Code of Practice ('Code of Practice'), as adopted by the European Statistical System Committee (ESSC), in particular the quality criteria of relevance, accuracy and reliability, timeliness and punctuality, accessibility and clarity, and coherence and comparability.

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Article 3

Scope

This Regulation provides the programming framework for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics, the main fields and the objectives of the actions envisaged for the period from 2013 to 2020, in accordance with Articles 13 and 14 of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009.

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Article 4

Objectives

1. The general objective of the programme is for the European Statistical System (ESS) to continue to be the leading provider of high-quality statistics on Europe.

2. Bearing in mind the available resources both at national and Union level as well as the response burden, the following specific objectives shall be pursued in statistical actions undertaken for the implementation of the programme:

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— Objective 1: provide statistical information, in a timely manner, to support the development, monitoring and evaluation of the policies of the Union properly reflecting priorities, while keeping a balance between economic, social and environmental fields and serving the needs of the wide range of users of European statistics, including other decision-makers, researchers, businesses and European citizens in general, in a cost-effective manner without unnecessary duplication of effort,

— Objective 2: implement new methods of production of European statistics aiming at efficiency gains and quality improvements,

— Objective 3: strengthen the partnership within the ESS and beyond in order to further enhance its productivity and its leading role in official statistics worldwide, and

— Objective 4: ensure that delivery of such statistics is kept consistent throughout the whole duration of the programme, provided that this does not interfere with the priority-setting mechanisms of the ESS.

3. The general and specific objectives referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 are elaborated further in the Annex, together with the indicators used for monitoring the implementation of the programme. In accordance with Articles 13 and 14 of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009, the programme shall be subject to detailed annual planning which will include a priority-setting mechanism as an integral part of the process. The objectives of the programme shall be achieved through close and coordinated cooperation in the ESS. The programme shall include the development of appropriate instruments resulting in enhanced quality, a greater flexibility of the ESS and the increased ability to satisfy users' needs in a timely manner. It shall also pioneer the development of reliable indicators able to meet the challenges of the 21st century, namely measuring environmental sustainability, quality of life and social cohesion, and record economic activity in the tertiary sector and the social economy.

Article 5

Statistical governance, independence, transparency and quality

1. European statistics shall be produced in a professionally independent and transparent manner.

2. The programme shall be implemented in accordance with the principles of the Code of Practice with a view to producing and disseminating high-quality, harmonised and comparable European statistics in accordance with Article 12 of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009, and ensuring the proper functioning of the ESS as a whole. The national statistical institutes and the Union statistical authority (Commission (Eurostat)) shall ensure, through their professional independence, that European statistics comply with the Code of Practice.

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3. The national statistical institutes and other national authorities as designated by the Member States (collectively, 'national statistical authorities'), and the Commission (Eurostat), which are responsible for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics, shall:

— aim to reinforce an institutional and organisational environment which promotes the coordination, effectiveness and credibility of national statistical authorities and the Commission (Eurostat) producing and disseminating European statistics,

— place emphasis on the statistical principles set out in Article 2(1) of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 and the needs of users,

— serve the needs of Union institutional users in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 223/2009, and seek to develop statistics which serve a wide range of users of European statistics, including other decision-makers, researchers, businesses and European citizens in general, and

— cooperate with statistical bodies at international level in order to promote the use of international concepts, classifications, methods and other standards, in particular, with a view to ensuring more coherence and better comparability at global level.

4. Each Member State shall endeavour to ensure that its statistical production processes are set up in a standardised manner and are enhanced, to the extent possible, by audit mechanisms.

5. In the interest of transparency, the Commission (Eurostat) shall, where appropriate, disclose publicly its assessment of the quality of national contributions to European statistics as part of the quality reporting and compliance monitoring exercise.

6. The Commission (Eurostat) shall consider how to make its publications, particularly those which are accessible via its website, more user-friendly to non-professionals, and shall allow easy access to complete data series and include intuitive comparative graphs in order to give more added value to citizens. The periodic updates of the Commission (Eurostat) shall provide, where possible, information on each Member State and shall offer annual, monthly and long-term data series, where appropriate, and where the benefits are greater than the costs of collection.

Article 6

Statistical priority-setting

1. The programme shall ensure statistical initiatives underpinning the development, implementation and monitoring of current Union policies and shall provide statistical support for important requirements resulting from new Union policy initiatives.

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2. The Commission shall, in the preparation of the annual work programmes referred to in Article 9, ensure effective priority-setting and an annual review of, and report on, statistical priorities. The annual work programmes will thereby aim to ensure that European statistics can be produced within the available resources at the national and the Union level. Prioritisation shall contribute to the reduction of costs and burdens for new statistical requirements by reducing statistical requirements in existing domains of European statistics and shall be pursued in close cooperation with the Member States.

3. The Commission shall ensure the development and implementation of instruments to annually review the priorities of statistical activities in order to contribute to the reduction of costs and burdens on data providers and producers of statistics.

4. When putting forward new actions or introducing major revisions of existing statistics, the Commission shall duly justify such actions or revisions and shall provide information with input from Member States on response burden and production costs in accordance with Article 14(3) of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009.

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Article 7

Financing

1. The Union financial envelope for the implementation of the programme for 2013 shall be EUR 57,3 million, covered by the programming period 2007 to 2013. The Union financial envelope for the implementation of the programme for 2014 to 2017 shall be EUR 234,8 million, covered by the programming period 2014 to 2020.

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The financial envelope for the implementation of the programme for 2018 to 2020 shall be EUR 218,1 million, covered by the programming period 2014 to 2020.

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2. The Commission shall implement the Union financial support in accordance with the Financial Regulation.

3. The Commission shall adopt its decision on annual appropriations in compliance with the prerogatives of the European Parliament and of the Council.

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Article 8

Administrative and technical assistance

The financial allocation for the programme may cover expenses pertaining to preparatory, monitoring, control, audit and evaluation activities which are required for the management of the programme and the achievement of its objectives; in particular, studies, meetings of experts, expenses linked to the reimbursement of statistical experts, information and communication actions, expenses linked to IT networks focusing on information processing and exchange, together with all other technical and administrative assistance expenses incurred by the Commission for the management of the programme. The allocation may also cover technical assistance and expertise provided to Member States which are unable to produce certain European statistics or statistics of the required quality due to specific circumstances.

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Article 9

Annual work programmes

In order to implement the programme, the Commission shall adopt annual work programmes which shall satisfy the requirements laid down in Article 17 of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 and which shall set out the objectives pursued and the expected results, in accordance with the general and specific objectives referred to in Article 4(1) and (2) of this Regulation. The Commission shall ensure that an appropriate emphasis is placed on actions aimed at promoting compliance with the Code of Practice. Each annual work programme shall be communicated to the European Parliament for information purposes.

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Article 10

Types of intervention

Financial contributions by the Union may take the form of grants, public procurement contracts or any other interventions needed for the purposes of achieving the general and specific objectives referred to in Article 4(1) and (2).

Article 11

Eligible actions

1. A financial contribution by the Union shall support actions for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics needed for the purposes of achieving the general and specific objectives referred to in Article 4(1) and (2). Priority shall be given to actions with high added value for the Union in accordance with Article 2.

2. A financial contribution to support collaborative networks as referred to in Article 15 of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 may take the form of grants for an action and may cover up to 95 % of the eligible costs.

3. Where appropriate, operating grants, not exceeding 50 % of the eligible costs, may be awarded for the functioning of organisations referred to in Article 12(3).

4. As a contribution to expenses incurred by the Member States in carrying out actions based on data collection, a lump sum per set of data, the complete results of which are to be forwarded to the Commission, may be paid up to a maximum threshold defined per data collection. The amount of the lump sum shall be defined by the Commission taking due account of the complexity of the data collection.

Article 12

Beneficiaries eligible for grants

1. In accordance with the second subparagraph of Article 128(1) of the Financial Regulation, grants to the national statistical authorities identified in Article 5(2) of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 may be awarded without a call for proposals.

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2. Collaborative networks may involve beneficiaries referred to in paragraph 1 and other bodies without a call for proposals in accordance with Article 128(1) of the Financial Regulation.

3. The operating grants referred to in Article 11(3) may be awarded to organisations which comply with both of the following criteria:

(a) they are non-profit making, are independent of industry, commercial and business or other conflicting interests, and have as their primary objectives and activities the promotion and support of the implementation of the Code of Practice and the implementation of new methods of production of European statistics aiming at efficiency gains and quality improvements at Union level; and

(b) they have provided the Commission with satisfactory accounts of their membership, internal rules and sources of funding.

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Article 13

Protection of the financial interests of the Union

1. The Commission shall take appropriate measures to ensure that, when activities financed under this Regulation are implemented, the financial interests of the Union are protected by the application of preventive measures against fraud, corruption and any other illegal activities, by effective checks and, if irregularities are detected, by the recovery of the amounts wrongly paid and, where appropriate, by effective, proportionate and dissuasive administrative and financial penalties.

2. The Commission or its representatives and the Court of Auditors shall have the power of audit, on the basis of documents and of on-the-spot inspections, over all grant beneficiaries, contractors and subcontractors who have received Union funds under the programme.

3. The European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) may carry out investigations, including on-the-spot checks and inspections, in accordance with the provisions and procedures laid down in Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council [1] and Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96 [2], with a view to establishing whether there has been fraud, corruption or any other illegal activity affecting the financial interests of the Union in connection with a grant agreement or grant decision or a contract funded under the programme.

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[1] Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 September 2013 concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1073/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulation (Euratom) No 1074/1999 (OJ L 248, 18.9.2013, p. 1).

[2] Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96 of 11 November 1996 concerning on-the-spot checks and inspections carried out by the Commission in order to protect the European Communities' financial interests against fraud and other irregularities (OJ L 292, 15.11.1996, p. 2).

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4. Without prejudice to paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, cooperation agreements with third countries and with international organisations, contracts, grant agreements and grant decisions resulting from the implementation of this Regulation shall contain provisions expressly empowering the Commission, the Court of Auditors and OLAF to conduct such audits and investigations, in accordance with their respective competence.

5. Without prejudice to paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, where the implementation of an action is outsourced or sub-delegated, in whole or in part, or where it requires the award of a procurement contract or financial support to be given to a third party, the contract, grant agreement or grant decision shall include the contractor's or beneficiary's obligation to impose on any third party involved the explicit acceptance of those powers of the Commission, the Court of Auditors and OLAF.

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Article 14

Participation in the programme by third countries

Participation in the programme shall be open to:

(a) the EEA/EFTA countries, in accordance with the conditions established in the Agreement on the European Economic Area;

(b) Switzerland, in accordance with the conditions established in the Agreement of 26 October 2004 between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on cooperation in the field of statistics ([1]); and

(c) countries to which the European Neighbourhood Policy applies, countries which have applied for membership of the Union, candidate and acceding countries, and the western Balkan countries included in the stabilisation and association process, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the respective bilateral or multilateral agreements with those countries establishing the general principles for their participation in Union programmes.

Article 15

Evaluation and review of the programme

1. The Commission shall, after consulting the ESSC, submit an intermediate progress report on the implementation of the programme to the European Parliament and to the Council by 30 June 2015.

2. No later than 31 December 2016, the Commission may, on the basis of the intermediate progress report referred to in paragraph 1, and after consulting the ESSC, submit to the European Parliament and to the Council a proposal for the extension of the programme for the period from 2018 to 2020, while complying with the MFF 2014 to 2020.

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2a. By 31 December 2019, the Commission (Eurostat) shall submit a progress report on the implementation of the programme to the ESSC. That report shall detail the Commission's (Eurostat) view on the outlook for the programme within the multiannual financial framework starting in 2021. That report shall also be submitted to the European Parliament and to the Council.

([1]) OJ L 90, 28.3.2006, p. 2.

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3. By 31 December 2021, the Commission shall, after consulting the ESSC and the European Statistical Advisory Committee, submit a final evaluation report on the implementation of the programme to the European Parliament and to the Council. The report shall in particular evaluate:

(a) the outcome of the reprioritisation and cost evaluation of statistical products;

(b) the actions taken by the ESS to reduce the implementation and production costs for Member States and to limit the overall burden stemming from the statistical projects and fields covered by the programme;

(c) the progress on rendering access to official statistics easier and more user-friendly, including the provision of data on the Eurostat website; and

(d) the progress on the improvement of data availability, including on social economy activities and on the Europe 2020 indicators.

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Article 16

Entry into force

This Regulation shall enter into force on the day of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

It shall apply from 1 January 2013.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

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ANNEX

▼M2

Statistical infrastructure and objectives of the European statistical programme 2013 to 2020

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Introduction

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The implementation of Union policies requires high-quality, comparable and reliable statistical information about the economic, social, territorial and environmental situation in the Union and its components at national and regional level. European statistics are also indispensable for the Union, allowing the general public and European citizens to understand and to participate in the democratic process and debate about the present state and future of the Union.

The programme provides for the legislative framework for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics over the period from 2013 to 2020.

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European statistics are developed, produced and disseminated under that legislative framework through close and coordinated cooperation within the European Statistical System (ESS).

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Statistics developed, produced and disseminated under the programme contribute to the implementation of the Union's policies as reflected in the TFEU and Europe 2020 and its respective flagship initiatives, as well as other policies set out in the Commission's strategic priorities.

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Given the fact that the programme is a multiannual programme covering a period of five years, and that the ESS aims to maintain its role as a key player in the statistical field, the programme is ambitious in terms of scope and objectives, but the implementation of the programme will follow a step-wise approach. The development of an effective priority-setting and simplification mechanism will be an objective of the programme.

Statistical infrastructure

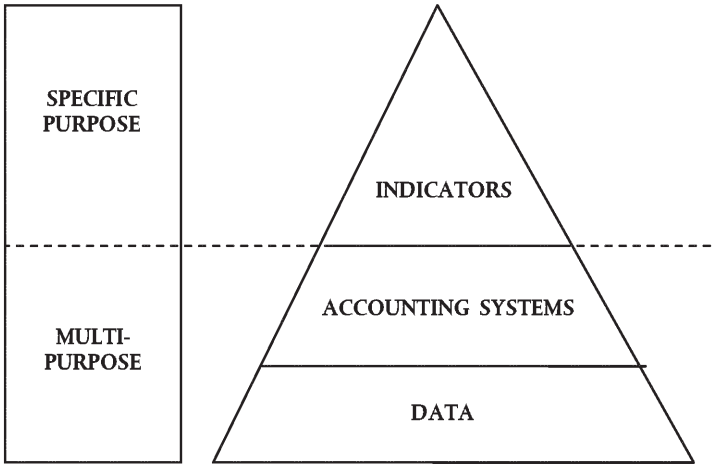
The programme will strive to establish a statistical information infrastructure. This infrastructure has to be prepared for the wide and intensive use of various applications.

Policy-making drives the decisions to produce European statistics. However, those statistics should also be available and easily accessible to other decision-makers, researchers, businesses and European citizens in general as they constitute a public good and are paid for by European citizens and businesses, who should benefit equally from the services provided. For the infrastructure to fulfil this role it has to be designed according to a sound conceptual framework which, on the one hand, ensures fitness for a range of purposes and, on the other hand, allows flexible adaptation to evolving users' needs in the years ahead.

The infrastructure of statistical information is presented below:

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STATISTICAL INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE



Legend

Data: information compiled by national statistical authorities, on the basis of traditional statistical activities (sample surveys, censuses, etc.) and data from other sources that are reused for statistical purposes. This information is tailored to serve needs in specific policy areas, e.g. the labour market, migration or agriculture.

The term also includes data collected for administrative purposes but used by national statistical authorities for statistical purposes (usually referred to as data from administrative sources).

Accounting systems: coherent and integrated accounts, balance sheets and tables based on a set of internationally agreed rules. An accounting framework ensures a high profile of consistency and comparability; statistical data can be compiled and presented in a format that is designed for the purposes of analysis and policy-making.

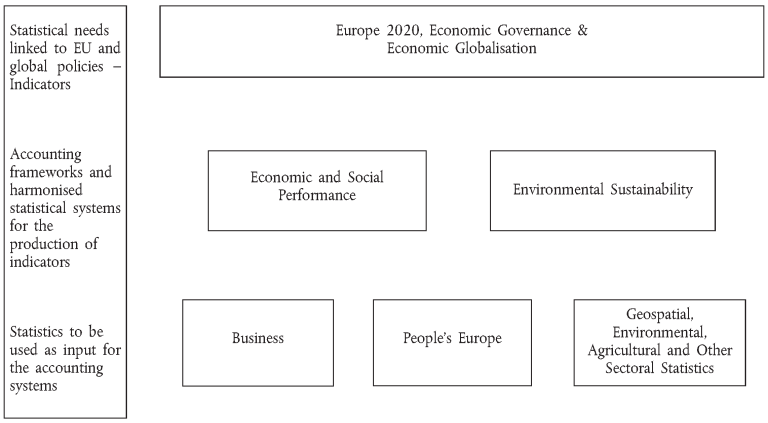
Indicators: an indicator is a summary measure related to a key issue or phenomenon and derived from a series of observed facts. Indicators can be used to reveal relative positions or show positive or negative change. Indicators are usually a direct input into Union and global policies. In strategic policy fields they are important for setting targets and monitoring their achievement.

Within this overarching scheme, the programme will further distinguish three pillars of statistical information: Business; People's Europe; and Geospatial, Environmental, Agricultural and Other Sectoral Statistics.

Union and relevant global policies are the instruments that specify the statistical requirements to which the programme will respond through the re-engineered structure and corresponding production processes. Therefore, each individual Union and global policy is reflected in the different components of the statistical infrastructure and is covered by specific activities in the programme. New policies identified in the years ahead will be covered by establishing new derivation paths of indicators/accounts based on the statistical data produced within the three pillars.

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STATISTICAL INFORMATION — STRUCTURE AND DYNAMICS



Objectives

The general objective of the programme is for the ESS to continue to be the leading provider of high-quality statistics on Europe.

Bearing in mind the available resources both at national and Union level as well as the response burden, the following specific objectives shall be pursued in statistical actions undertaken for the implementation of the programme:

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— Objective 1: provide statistical information in a timely and cost-effective manner, without unnecessary duplication of effort, to support the development, monitoring and evaluation of the policies of the Union properly reflecting priorities, while keeping a balance between economic, social, territorial and environmental fields and serving the needs of the wide range of users of European statistics, including other decision-makers, researchers, businesses and European citizens in general;

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— Objective 2: implement new methods of production of European statistics aiming at efficiency gains and quality improvements;

— Objective 3: strengthen the partnership within the ESS and beyond in order to further enhance its productivity and its leading role in official statistics worldwide; and

— Objective 4: ensure that delivery of such statistics is kept consistent throughout the whole duration of the programme, provided that this does not interfere with the priority-setting mechanisms of the ESS.

Those specific objectives are split into different priority areas described below. Objectives 1 and 4 are covered by ‘I. Statistical outputs’, Objective 2 by ‘II. Production methods of European statistics’ and Objective 3 by ‘III. Partnership’.

I. **STATISTICAL OUTPUTS**

1. **Indicators**

1.1. *Europe 2020*

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Endorsement of Europe 2020 has to a large extent shaped the strategic agenda for Union and national policies in the years ahead. Within that agenda, a number of targets and initiatives for which statistical indicators have to be delivered by the ESS have been agreed in a number of areas, such as: improving the conditions for innovation; research and development; promoting decent jobs; promoting

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gender equality; meeting Union climate change and energy objectives; resource efficiency; improving education levels, including reducing early school leaving; increasing lifelong vocational training and learning mobility; healthy and active ageing; promoting social inclusion; and reducing poverty. Where appropriate, gender-disaggregated statistics are needed in order to understand what gender-based discrimination involves, with a focus on gender-based violence.

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Objective 1.1.1

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Provide high-quality statistical information, which shall be made available in a timely manner for the European Semester, to monitor the implementation of Europe 2020. New indicators shall, to the extent possible, be based on available statistical data.

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The objective will be implemented by the making available of:

— updated headline target indicators for Europe 2020 (in the areas of employment, research and development, innovation, energy/climate change, education, environment, social protection, social inclusion and poverty) on the Commission (Eurostat) website;

— statistics to support the monitoring of the implementation of Europe 2020 flagship initiatives;

— additional indicators as an input for the *ex-ante* and *ex-post* evaluations of the economic, social and environmental policies of the Union; and

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— employment indicators distinguishing between part-time and full-time employment and between fixed-term contracts and permanent contracts, as well as indicators on unemployment that take into account people in activation policies such as training. These indicators should also include data on gender divides.

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1.2. *Economic governance*

The crisis and the tensions in the financial markets have highlighted the need to strengthen the economic governance of the Union. Decisive steps in economic governance and coordination have already been taken by the Union, some of which will have major statistical implications, in addition to ongoing statistical activities.

Objective 1.2.1

Develop new and enhance existing statistical information relevant for Union decision-makers and the public at large in relation to the strengthened and integrated economic governance of the Union and the surveillance cycle integrating the Stability and Growth Pact and the economic policy.

The objective will be implemented by:

— providing statistical input for the macroeconomic imbalances scoreboard and the underlying analysis;

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— providing statistical input for an enhanced Stability and Growth Pact specifically aimed at the production and provision of high-quality statistics on government deficit and debt;

— providing statistical input for efficiently monitoring economic inequalities;

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— developing and producing a set of indicators to measure competitiveness; and

— implementing a robust quality management in the production chain, also covering upstream public finance data and the underlying workflows in Member States.

Objective 1.2.2

Provide Union decision-makers with reliable statistics and indicators for administrative and regulatory purposes and for monitoring specific Union policy commitments.

The objective will be implemented by:

— the definition of the scope of statistics for administrative and regulatory purposes and the agreement with users on such scope; and

— the definition, as appropriate, implementation and explanation of a robust quality management framework for those indicators.

1.3. *Economic globalisation*

The social, economic and other effects of the financial crisis, the increase in cross-border flows and the fragmentation of production processes have highlighted the need for a more coherent framework and enhanced measurement of globalised production.

Objective 1.3.1

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Enhance the indicators and statistical information available on economic globalisation and global value chains for Union decision-makers and for the public. That information should make for a better understanding of the economic, social and environmental impact of globalisation.

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The objective will be implemented by:

— the updating of existing indicators on economic globalisation available on the Commission (Eurostat) website;

— the development of new indicators on global value chains, including flows of and dependency on natural resources;

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— the provision of data that allow for an analysis of the positive and negative consequences for the Union market, in particular the Union labour market;

— the analysis of the global value chains, possibly through appropriate input/output tables, and foreign trade and business statistics, including micro-data linking; and the coordination of outputs of this analysis with the international initiatives of Union interest; and

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— the examination of the need to reform the calculation and allocation of financial intermediation services.

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2. **Accounting frameworks**

The Commission Communication of 20 August 2009 entitled 'GDP and beyond: Measuring progress in a changing world' ('GDP and beyond'), and the publication of the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Report on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress, have given new impetus to the key challenge for the ESS, namely how to achieve better statistics on cross-cutting issues and more integrated statistics to describe complex social, environmental and economic phenomena beyond the traditional measures of economic output. Work on GDP and beyond within the ESS focuses on three priority areas: statistics on the household sector and statistics measuring the distribution of income, consumption and wealth; measuring quality of life in a multidimensional way; and measuring environmental sustainability. The new worldwide Sustainable Development Goals adopted in 2015 provide further impetus. The European System of National and Regional Accounts (ESA) offers an integrated and consistent framework for all economic statistics that should be complemented by other indicators in order to provide more comprehensive information for policy- and decision-making. Full implementation of the ESA 2010 will be supported by regular quality and compliance assessments, taking into account the progressive expiry of derogations until 2020, leading to further improvements in the timeliness and availability of indicators.

2.1. *Economic and social performance*

The economic crisis has reinforced the need to have high-quality macroeconomic indicators in order to better understand and analyse economic fluctuations as well as to better understand and analyse the evolution of economic inequalities and their effects on society, thereby facilitating the decision-making process. Increasingly globalised production makes it necessary to develop a consistent framework that facilitates the interpretation and integration of statistics from different areas.

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Objective 2.1.1

Supplement measurement of economic performance by different dimensions of globalisation, the quality of life, access to goods and services, environmental sustainability, health, well-being, social cohesion and social inclusion. Develop a framework for the analysis of globalised production.

The objective will be implemented by:

— the implementation and compilation of annual and quarterly national accounts as well as annual regional accounts in accordance with ESA;

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— the production of indicators on income, consumption and wealth distribution across households, and the reconciliation of national accounts aggregates with household survey data or administrative data;

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— the compilation of timely and high-quality price statistics, notably the harmonised indices of consumer prices;

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— the reinforcement of links with national accounts in the areas of social protection, health and education;

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— the development of a framework for measuring quality of life, reinforcing the household perspective in national accounts;

— the development of GDP and beyond related indicators measuring environmental sustainability and external effects with a national account perspective;

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— the creation of a database for growth and productivity measurement, taking account of changes in productivity in the public sector as well as the private sector;

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— the further development of timely social indicators, including advanced techniques for nowcasting and flash estimates;

— the support for international data sharing for macroeconomic data to reduce the burden for data producers and improve the availability of comparable and consistent data to users;

— the development and fine-tuning of aggregated indicators of income and aspects of wealth inequality;

— the measurement and analysis of gender inequality, including the wage gap;

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— the development of a conceptual framework for the analysis of globalised production;

— the development of a conceptual framework for the measurement of quality of life and well-being; and

— the alignment of the corresponding accounting and statistical concepts to the extent possible.

Objective 2.1.2

Provide key macroeconomic and social indicators and Principal European Economic Indicators (PEEIs) as a coherent set of indicators addressing the Union and global statistical data requirements and adjust PEEIs to meet evolving users' needs.

The objective will be implemented by:

— the coordinated development of the dashboards of key macroeconomic, social and sustainable development indicators;

— the availability of a harmonised methodology for key macroeconomic and social indicators and PEEIs;

— the enhancement of international comparability of indicators;

— the provision of improved tools to facilitate the interpretation and communication of indicators; and

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— the availability and extension of harmonised housing price statistics for all Member States.

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2.2. *Environmental sustainability*

Protecting, preserving and improving the environment for present and future generations, as well as combating the effects of climate change, are very high on the European agenda and are objectives of the Treaties. Efficient policies in those domains require statistical information across various areas.

Objective 2.2.1

Provide environmental accounts and climate change-related statistics, taking into account international developments in this area.

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The objective will be implemented by:

— the further development of a coherent system of environmental accounts as ‘satellite accounts’ to the main national accounts, providing information on atmospheric emissions, energy consumption, flows of natural resources, trade in raw materials, environmental taxation and environmental protection expenditure, possibly including green growth/procurement;

— the further development of experimental ecosystem accounts that would allow the use of existing data, including those compiled by Union institutions, bodies, offices or agencies as part of a long-term data integration initiative;

— the further development work to better use existing data collections for climate change-related statistics; and

— the further development of indicators measuring environmental ‘footprints’ based on existing data.

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3. **Data**

3.1. *Business*

European enterprises are the focus of a large number of Union policies. In addition, they are responsible for the provision of basic data. Accordingly, business statistics in the broad sense are in heavy demand to support the decision-making process but also to help European citizens and businesses understand the impact of those policies, differentiating between large enterprises, mid-caps and small and medium-sized enterprises for which there is an increased need for detailed and harmonised statistics. There is simultaneously a need to reduce the administrative and reporting burden.

Objective 3.1.1

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Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of statistical production processes. In line with the Better Regulation Agenda, the existing legislation relating to the pillar of business statistics needs to be streamlined. In this context, due consideration should be given to the limited resources available to producers and to the overall burden on respondents in line with the Commission Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme (REFIT). Provide high-quality statistics on key areas where enterprises are the centre of interest, such as business statistics, short-term indicators, their investment in human capital and skills, international transactions, globalisation, internal market monitoring, research, development and

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innovation, and tourism. Special attention should be paid to the availability of data in high value-added industrial and services sectors, in particular in the green, digital, collaborative, health, education and social economies.

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The objective will be implemented by:

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— the reuse of data available in the statistical system or in society, the putting in place of a common legal basis for business statistics and the production of a common infrastructure and of common tools;

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— the provision of statistical information and indicators on business on an annual and infra-annual basis;

— the provision of statistical information describing the position of Europe in the world and the Union's relationships with the rest of the world;

— the provision of statistical information for the analysis of global value chains and the development of the euro Group Register as a backbone for collecting cross-domain information on globalisation;

— the rebalancing of statistical collections for trade in goods and trade in services with improved availability of data on services and actions to rebalance statistical information on services and goods;

— the development of internal market monitoring tools, such as the food price monitoring tool and related indicators;

— the provision of statistics on key areas of innovation and R & D performance through extended use of patent registers and extended research and statistical use of individual micro-data;

— the provision of statistics on tourism supply and demand through optimised data collection and better integrated data from tourism with other domains; and

— the provision of statistics on resource use and resource efficiency based to the extent possible on existing data collection.

3.2. *People's Europe*

European citizens are at the heart of Union policies. Consequently, social statistics in the broad sense are in heavy demand to support the decision-making process and to monitor the outcome of social policies, but also to help European citizens assess the impact of those policies on their lives and well-being.

Objective 3.2.1

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Provide statistics on the main areas of social policy where the citizen is the centre of interest, such as: well-being; sustainability; social cohesion; poverty; inequalities; demographic challenges, in particular population ageing, depopulation, population dispersion and migration; the labour market; education and training, including childhood education, adult learning, vocational training and learning mobility of young people; culture, physical activity; quality of life; safety; health; disability; consumption; free movement and the internal market; mobility of young people; technological innovation and new lifestyle choices. Where appropriate, those statistics shall be disaggregated by gender for groups that are of

▼M2

special interest to social policy-makers. Priorities shall be set in accordance with Article 6. In line with the Better Regulation Agenda, the existing legislation relating to the pillar of social statistics needs to be streamlined. In this context, due consideration should be given to the limited resources available to producers and to the overall burden on respondents in line with REFIT.

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The objective will be implemented by:

— the putting in place of a consolidated basic infrastructure for European Social Statistics, including survey and administrative-based data collections and a common set of core variables;

— the development of core social surveys providing data (including micro-data) on persons and households streamlined and complemented by additional and less frequent micro-data collections;

— the development of statistics provided on education and training, including a rationalisation and modernisation of the Adult Education Survey;

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— the provision of statistics on inequalities of income, with indicators such as the Gini index and the evolution of the top deciles of income distribution providing a comparable national headline indicator, as well as data on inequalities of access to basic goods and services;

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— methodological work on physical activity and cultural statistics;

— the provision of statistics on safety from crime; health, as agreed under the framework 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 ([1]); and disability;

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— the implementation of actions of the work programme on mainstreaming of migration statistics taking into account new challenges, in particular international developments;

— the provision of population projections and of their annual updates;

— the development of comprehensive indicators on the situation of migrants within the Union;

— further cooperation with specialised agencies and organisations concerning the situation of refugees;

— the development of a methodology for a voluntary survey on gender-based violence, in cooperation with the European institutions, bodies, offices and agencies acting in this field;

— the putting in place of a common legal basis for social statistics and the production of a common infrastructure and of common tools;

([1]) OJ L 354, 31.12.2008, p. 70.

▼B

— the provision of quality-of-life indicators to measure progress of societies; and

— the commencement of preparations of the next census round (scheduled for 2021).

3.3. *Geospatial, environmental, agricultural and other sectoral statistics*

The combination of statistics with spatially referenced data and geospatial analysis will offer new opportunities that the ESS will explore further. Specific issues, such as confidentiality and statistical validity of small area estimations, will need to be given particular attention.

Energy and transport statistics to support Europe 2020 and climate change policy will be of high importance in the future.

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Agriculture will remain an important Union policy area. The Common Agricultural Policy underlines the need for viable food production, for sustainable management of natural resources and climate action and for balanced territorial development, which are the main objectives of that policy. Focus will be on the environmental, biodiversity/ecosystem-related, economic, human health and safety and social dimensions.

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Objective 3.3.1

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Support evidence-based policy-making by a more flexible and increased use of spatial information combined with social, territorial, economic and environmental statistical information for regions, regional typologies, cities and the degree of urbanisation.

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The objective will be implemented by:

— the further development, maintenance and operation of the Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE), established by Directive 2007/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council ([1]), and in particular by the Union's geo-portal;

— the making available of a range of geographic information through cooperation with Union programmes for land use surveys and remote sensing;

— the integration of statistical data when relevant, thus creating a multisource flexible infrastructure for the provision of targeted spatio-temporal analysis;

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— the implementation of land use and land cover statistics; and

— the coordination of statistical data for regions, cities and territorial typologies.

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Objective 3.3.2

Provide environmental statistics to support the policy-making process of the Union.

([1]) OJ L 108, 25.4.2007, p. 1.

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The objective will be implemented by:

— A set of key environmental statistics on resources, such as on waste and recycling, water, raw materials deposits, ecosystems services and biodiversity at national and where possible regional level, and a set of key climate change-related statistics to support mitigation and adaptation actions and policies at all relevant levels from local to Union level.

Objective 3.3.3

Provide energy and transport statistics to support the policies of the Union.

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In line with the 'European Energy Union' priority of the Commission, and, to the greatest possible extent based on existing data, particular focus will be given to statistics related to energy consumption, energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, energy dependence, aspects of energy poverty and security of supply and the circular economy. Furthermore, energy statistics will need to support the 2030 climate and energy framework that aims to make the Union's economy and energy system more competitive, secure and sustainable.

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The objective will be implemented by the production and dissemination of statistics on:

— renewable energy;

— energy savings/energy efficiency;

— transport safety, passenger mobility, road traffic measurement and intermodal freight transport; and

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— energy dependence and security of supply.

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Objective 3.3.4

▼M2

Provide agriculture, fisheries and forestry statistics for the development and monitoring of the Common Agricultural and Fisheries Policies, reflecting key Union strategic objectives related to sustainability, as well as to rural development, by carrying out regular activities related to the development, production and dissemination of statistics. In line with the Better Regulation Agenda, the existing legislation relating to the agricultural statistics needs to be streamlined. In this context, due consideration should be given to the limited resources available to producers and to the overall burden on respondents in line with REFIT.

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The objective will be implemented by:

— the review and simplification of the agricultural data collection in line with the Common Agricultural Policy review post-2013;

— the redesign of agricultural data collection processes, in particular with the objective of improving quality and timeliness of the data provided;

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— the thorough review of the land use/cover data management system and the elaboration and implementation of a new system on that basis;

— the implementation of the data collection system for coherent agri-environmental indicators, based on existing data where possible;

— the provision of appropriate breakdowns by region;

— the implementation and dissemination of a set of key forestry data from Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting for Forestry, such as forest area, volume and value of standing timber and economic accounts for forestry and logging;

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— the preparation and implementation of the agricultural census scheduled for 2020; and

— the putting in place of a common legal basis for agriculture related statistics and the production of a common infrastructure and of common tools.

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II. **PRODUCTION METHODS OF EUROPEAN STATISTICS**

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The ESS is currently facing a number of challenges. The expectations on the scope, quality and comparability of European statistics are increasing. With globalisation, a complex reality has emerged that has to be captured by official statistics and raises methodological challenges. The ever increasing availability of data from private and public providers offers the potential to improve the timeliness and relevance of official statistics as well as to reduce response burden. To face these challenges, while at the same time confronted with constraints on resources, the ESS will gradually implement strategic goals defined in the ESS Vision 2020, building upon a holistic approach to reach quality and efficiency gains:

— to engage proactively in a regular dialogue with users to understand their needs more deeply, recognising that different user groups have different needs that need to be addressed correctly;

— to provide high quality products and services and apply a quality approach to the management, organisation, and governance of the ESS;

— to base statistical products and services on both traditional surveys and other sources, including administrative data, geospatial and, where possible, big data;

— to get access to new data sources, create methods and find suitable technology in order to use such data sources to produce European statistics in a reliable way;

— to improve the efficiency of statistical production by further intensifying the sharing of knowledge, experiences and methodologies but also by sharing tools, data, services and resources where appropriate and duly justified. The collaboration will be based on agreed standards and common elements of technological and statistical infrastructure;

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— to implement a dissemination and communication strategy for European statistics which is flexible enough to adapt to emerging technologies, gives guidance in a world of data revolution and serves as a reliable pillar of democracy.

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1. **ESS quality management**

Objective 1.1

Implement a quality management system in the ESS based on the Code of Practice.

Strengthen the sharing of good practices in the implementation of the Code of Practice and ensure that quality reporting is targeting different user needs.

The objective will be implemented by:

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— the introduction of new integrated, effective and fit-for purpose quality assurance mechanism based on the Code of Practice and the ESS Quality Assurance Framework;

— the assessment of compliance with the Code of Practice;

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— the alignment of the quality assurance frameworks of the ESS and the European System of Central Banks (ESCB);

— the meeting of the needs of users for quality reporting; and

— the standardisation of quality reports in various statistical domains at Union level.

2. **Priority-setting and simplification**

The ESS is facing a major challenge: how to provide high-quality European statistics to satisfy increasing needs for statistics in a context of substantially reduced budgets of Member States and a zero-growth human resource policy at the Commission and in Member States which, for some bodies, will result in a real reduction in human resources. Given those resource constraints at European and national level, it is important to strengthen priority-setting and simplification measures, which require the commitment of all ESS partners. A priority-setting mechanism has been introduced as an integrated part of the preparation of annual work programmes and will be implemented throughout the duration of the programme. This involves, among other things, an annual review of existing statistical requirements, taking as its point of departure initiatives proposed by the Commission for reducing statistical requirements considering the interests of users, producers and respondents. The process should be pursued in close co-operation with users and producers of European statistics.

Objective 2.1

Implement a priority-setting mechanism for the ESS in order to simplify reporting requirements and to adjust to new needs for statistics while taking into account the constraints on the producers, the response burden and the needs of users.

The objective will be implemented by:

— the definition of priorities and the allocation of resources in accordance with those priorities;

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— the definition of priorities for the ESS as part of the annual work programme referred to in Article 9;

— the taking into account of the results of user and producer consultations in the annual work programme; and

— the communication to users of the statistical areas to be simplified and of the data collection to be reduced/discontinued.

3. **Multi-purpose statistics and efficiency gains in production**

Objective 3.1

Put in place gradually, taking into account costs generated in the ESS by implementation, an ESS business architecture allowing more integrated production of European statistics; harmonise and standardise statistical production methods and metadata; enhance the horizontal (across statistical domains) and vertical (across ESS partners) integration of statistical production processes in the ESS in respect of the principle of subsidiarity; use and integrate multiple data sources; produce multi-purpose statistics. Particular attention will be given to confidentiality issues that will arise with increased use, reuse and exchange of micro-data and administrative records.

The objective will be implemented by:

— the greater use of appropriate administrative data in all statistical areas;

— the identification and use of new data sources for European statistics;

— the increased involvement of the Commission (Eurostat), and national statistical authorities in the design of administrative records;

— the wider use of statistical matching and data linking techniques for increasing the offer of European statistics;

— the use of the European approach to statistics for quick policy response in specific and duly justified cases;

— greater integration of European statistics production processes through ESS coordinated actions;

— further harmonisation of statistical concepts across statistical domains;

— the development and implementation of flexible IT reference infrastructure and technical standards for improving interoperability, sharing of data and metadata, and common data modelling;

— the use of standard IT tools across statistical business processes;

— the development of methodological standards in order to increase use and availability of harmonised methodologies (including mixed-mode approaches to data collection) and harmonised metadata;

— the strengthening of the role of statistical business registers as the place where the statistical units for all business-related statistics are maintained and used as a source for national accounts; and

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— the improvement of the provision of metadata, namely background information on how data are collected, the quality of data and how to render data more readily understandable to users.

Objective 3.2

Ensure the good functioning and coherence of the ESS through effective collaboration and communication.

The objective will be implemented by:

— the effective and efficient support for partnership within the ESS;

— the definition and implementation of processes for burden and work sharing within the ESS; and

— the further development and making operational of collaborative networks.

4. **Dissemination and communication**

Objective 4.1

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European citizens should be able to draw easily and without obstacles on European statistics to enable them to use such data for their education and decision-making. That objective will be implemented by enhancing the user-friendliness of European statistics and by facilitating access to data. Special attention should be paid to easy retrievability and convertibility of statistical data for practical use, including through graphs and maps. More citizens should benefit from European statistics, thereby contributing effectively to enhancing the dissemination of statistical information throughout society.

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Make the ESS the first data source on European statistics for all users and, in particular, for public and private decision-makers, by providing a high-quality statistical information service based on the principles of free and easy access to European statistics.

Intensifying and extending the dialogue between users and producers of statistics to meet user needs for high-quality statistics. An early involvement of users in new developments is key to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the ESS.

Extend and rationalise the range of dissemination products to meet the needs of users using new technologies.

Set up a cost-efficient, integrated and secure infrastructure within the ESS for access to confidential data for scientific purposes.

The objective will be implemented by:

— the recognition of the ESS as the first reference point for users of European statistics;

— the putting in place of an integrated secure infrastructure for access to Union micro-data;

— the putting in place of a system to address users' requests for immediate access and advice in interpretation of statistical information;

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— the adjustment of dissemination products to the users' needs using new technologies;

— an increased number of statistical outputs on cross-cutting issues;

— the increased use of new communication and dissemination technologies (e.g. SDMX-based);

— an increased offer of micro-data sets for statistical research purposes in accordance with Union and national law on data confidentiality;

— the preparation of data sets to facilitate the use of statistical data for educational and research purposes;

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— the identification of current and future data requirements to provide multi-purpose and customised end-user products and services.

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5. **Training, innovation and research**

Objective 5.1

Satisfy learning and development needs in the ESS based on a combination of training courses and learning and development opportunities.

Improve the collaboration between ESS members for the transfer of knowledge and sharing and implementation of best practices and common innovative approaches in the production of statistics.

Organise the activities, participation and contribution of the research communities in the improvement of the statistical production chains and of the quality of official statistical information.

The objective will be implemented by:

— the development of a postgraduate degree (e.g. Master in Official Statistics);

— the provision of training programmes addressing the user's and other citizen's needs;

— the wider application of results of research projects in statistical production and dissemination;

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— the analysis of needs for new skills related to data science and their integration into training programmes;

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— the recognition of the ESS as a reference point for the statistical research communities;

— the extensive involvement of the research communities in research activities in official statistics; and

— the putting in place of adequate instruments for the exchange of practices and implementation of common solutions in the ESS.

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III. **PARTNERSHIP**

1. **Partnership within the ESS and beyond**

In the spirit of partnership, the national statistical authorities and the Commission (Eurostat) are responsible for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics.

Objective 1.1

Implement the enhanced ESS governance framework.

The objective will be implemented by the implementation of the revision of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 and of Commission Decision 2012/504/EU of 17 September 2012 on Eurostat ([1]);

Objective 1.2

Enhance the coordinating role of the Commission (Eurostat) as the European Union's Statistical Office.

The objective will be implemented by:

— the association of the Commission (Eurostat) with all Commission initiatives with regard to statistical aspects at an early stage; and

— regular stakeholder dialogues at top management level.

Objective 1.3

Strengthen the cooperation with the ESCB and the European and international organisations involved in the production of data for statistical or administrative purposes through common projects and coordinated developments. Ensure consistency between Union and international standards.

The objective will be implemented by:

— implementing a common quality framework for the ESS and the ESCB;

— increasing involvement of the Commission (Eurostat) in international advisory groups;

— defining and implementing new ways of cooperation to ensure that statistical developments are well coordinated between international organisations and that work is allocated efficiently; and

— implementing the new United Nations System of National Accounts, ESA, the United Nations System of Environmental and Economic Accounts, the European Environmental Economic Accounts and the Balance of Payments manuals.

Objective 1.4

Promote and implement statistical advisory and statistical assistance activities in countries outside the Union in line with the priorities of the foreign policy of the Union, with particular emphasis on enlargement and the European Neighbourhood Policy.

The objective will be implemented by:

— exercising ESS leadership in the international arena;

— delivering data for Union foreign policy purposes;

([1]) OJ L 251, 18.9.2012, p. 49.

▼B

— supporting Commission services for the implementation of development and international cooperation policies, in their relations with international organisations and in matters of common statistical interest with third-country regions or third countries;

— disseminating relevant statistical data to support the enlargement process and negotiations;

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— raising European citizens' awareness of the importance of official statistics and the communication of these statistics to all stakeholders by celebrating European Statistics Day on 20 October each year;

— disseminating relevant statistical data to support the European Neighbourhood Policy and the respective Association Agreements;

— promoting European values and initiatives such as the Code of Practice, the ESS Quality Assurance Framework, and standardisation and harmonisation approaches to third countries and regions;

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— minimising requests for derogations from new Member States leading to unavailability of data;

— establishing agreements and Memoranda of Understanding with third countries;

— designing and implementing technical cooperation programmes;

— focusing technical assistance on data harmonisation and delivery; and

— improving cooperation and coordination activities among the members of the ESS.