



Eurostat Communication and Dissemination Strategy 2021 - 2024



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1 Introduction

This document defines the strategy governing Eurostat’s communication and dissemination activities, in line with our overall mission to ‘provide high-quality statistics for Europe’.

In particular, as simple dissemination of data is no longer enough in today’s complex and evolving environment, this strategy covers both the communication of European statistics in general and also Eurostat’s specific data dissemination activities that need to be taken into account.

The strategy defines the operational framework for ensuring that trustworthy European statistics are widely accessible to users and also well understood by anyone looking for reliable data on Europe. The document describes the wide range of existing statistical products on offer, highlights the areas that will require further attention in the future, and lists the actions to be taken at different stages of the communication cycle.

The strategy is valid for the period up to 2024, and is in line with the objectives of the European Statistical Programme 2021-2027 and the Eurostat Strategic Plan 2020-2024. This Strategic Plan emphasises the need for Eurostat to remain the trusted source for statistics on Europe, to embrace new technologies and to better communicate and promote European statistics.

2 Background

Reliable, objective and accessible statistics are indispensable for the functioning of today’s democratic societies. As the statistical authority of the European Union and the leading producer of official statistics on the European Union (EU), Eurostat has a crucial role to play in this respect. Additionally, Eurostat has a responsibility to support and empower European policymakers, businesses, citizens as well as all other groups of existing and potential data users, so that they can make informed decisions in their professional and private lives.

Our role and responsibilities as a reference point for European statistics will grow in the future, as the spread of disinformation and its increasing sophistication continue.

The technological transformation that has changed the world in the past decade, has also directly affected the way official statistics are collected, produced, disseminated and communicated to their users. Their expectations and habits have evolved along with advances in IT technology and the abundance of easily accessible, new data sources. Today, users want to find relevant statistics faster than ever, often preferring them in a more concise and attractive format.

Additionally, there is a growing demand for new statistics to measure societal phenomena, such as globalisation, digitalisation and the emerging circular, social and collaborative economies.



The private sector has reacted to this new reality by providing a seemingly endless range of statistics, based on alternative, non-official data sources. Although such data may often be available more quickly and may offer more detail, their quality can vary considerably.

While the situation described above can make keeping up with user expectations quite challenging, it also offers official statistical producers numerous opportunities. They include the potential to adapt and accelerate their statistical production, provide a greater level of detail for many statistical domains, and reduce the burden on respondents. Efficient data dissemination as well as effective communication with users are among the key elements for the success of ongoing and future statistical initiatives.

Effective communication starts with the promotion of the quality of our data, compiled and validated according to the highest, internationally agreed standards, and comparable across the EU. These data make us the point of reference in terms of quality and are instrumental in the process of combating disinformation and myth busting.

Eurostat plays an important role in coordinating statistical activities across the different Directorates-General of the European Commission. We also cooperate closely with the members of the European Statistical System and leading international statistical organisations. We do this to further optimise the range of statistical products and services on offer, to keep up with digital technologies, and to improve communication with users of official statistics.

3 General Principles

Our strategy reflects the communication priorities of the European Commission. The general principles that guide our use of different communication channels and the development of specific communication and dissemination products and services are:

- We provide free access to the full range of our products and services via our website;
- Our communication products and services cover all users;
- Our communication is adapted to user needs and the current information environment;
- Our communication is attractive and visible in the public debate;
- Our communication is timely;
- We limit and monitor pre-release access under embargo;
- We are visible and present where the users are active;
- We prioritise digital services and products;
- We use and enforce a coherent visual identity;
- We empower and engage staff to act as ambassadors for Eurostat.



4 Strategic Communication

In addition to communicating about European statistics, Eurostat also carries out corporate communication activities, through which it promotes itself as an organisation and the European Statistical System (ESS) as a partnership.

Effective communication about our mission and the significance of our work for European citizens, policymakers and businesses is increasingly seen as crucial in the ESS.

Promoting our values and the principles governing our work, such as independence, objectivity and trustworthiness, further strengthens our image and reputation as a producer of reliable figures on Europe.

In 2020-2022, the Task Force on ESS strategic communication worked towards ensuring a coordinated communication approach to strategic topics, strengthening the exchange of best practice in the area of strategic communication, and ensuring a higher visibility and transparency of ongoing work across the ESS. The work of the Task Force will be taken forward by a new Expert Group on ESS strategic communication.

5 Strategic Objectives

Our communication and dissemination strategy has three principal objectives: informing users, promoting understanding, and raising awareness. A fourth objective is to empower and engage staff. In support of these objectives, we foster collaboration within the ESS, with other global statistical partners and with other Directorates-General, facilitating the exchange of best practices, the reuse of products and the translation of key products.

5.1 Informing users about our products and services

Our objective is to ensure that we inform users about the range and depth of statistics available, by being visible and present where the users are active.

5.2 Promoting understanding of our data among all users

Our objective is to increase statistical literacy amongst users and to help them turn data into knowledge.



5.3 Raising awareness of the value and trustworthiness of European statistics among users

Our objective is to increase awareness of the importance of European statistics, emphasising that they are reliable, objective and harmonised, and produced free from any pressures from political/interest groups or from EU or national authorities.

5.4 Empowering and engaging staff

Our objective is to ensure our staff are informed and engaged, to help them to do their jobs more effectively and to understand their individual role in Eurostat's mission, values, priorities and strategy.

6 Users and User Groups

We aim to serve all users and potential users, not only within the EU, but also worldwide. All our users have a right to free and easy access to European statistics.

In order to target our communication activities, we need to understand our various user groups, their current and future needs and their skills and experience. User analysis has shown that it is crucial to consider the behaviour and goals of the users, along with their statistical and IT literacy. Based on this analysis, we have developed a number of key user groups for European statistics:

- **Policymakers** need ready access to high quality statistics that only we can provide if policies are to be properly developed, monitored and assessed;
- **EU institutions and services** are key users of our statistics;
- **Citizens** are both providers and users of European statistics and need to be convinced about the value-added of official statistics;
- **Media** are key multipliers of our messages, ensuring the onwards transmission of our statistics to citizens;
- **Financial markets** make extensive use of the Euro-indicators (€-indicators);
- **Researchers** provide deeper insights into our data and promote their use in policy and public debate;
- The **education sector** is a key partner in developing statistical literacy among pupils and students;
- **Businesses** are both providers and users of our data;
- **Potential users** must be reached if we are to fulfil our aim of serving all those looking for reliable data on Europe.



7 Actions

In support of our objective of **informing users**, we will:


- Increase reach on each of the channels in which we are present by:
 - Drawing up communication plans for all key products and services;
 - Producing more multi-lingual products, by both making use of automatic translation tools and by utilising the support of our ESS partners;
 - Creating products that can be easily shared and adapted by our users, multipliers and ESS partners;
 - Further increase staff communication skills.
- Increase the number of potential users who are exposed to our products by:
 - Expanding the range of social media networks on which we are present;
 - Using carefully targeted promotion of our social media posts;
 - Actively reaching out to multipliers in particular media, to ensure wider distribution of our products.

In support of our objective of **promoting understanding**, we will:

- Expand the range of statistical literacy products available and increase their uptake by developing:
 - An increased number of visualisations and interactive products;
 - More explanatory tools for viewing and analysing data;
 - More products targeted at young people.
- Better meet the needs and expectations of users by:
 - Targeting products and services to match user characteristics;
 - Responding in a timely manner to topics of current concern;
 - Operating high quality and responsive support services.
- Ensure a clear on-line presentation of statistical results
- Interact directly with users.

In support of our objective of **increasing awareness of the value and trustworthiness of European statistics**, we will:

- Multiply the impact of communication through the ESS by:
 - Collaborating with ESS partners on common communication initiatives;
 - Raising awareness of European statistics by commemorating events such as European and World Statistics Day.

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- Regularly review the relevance, content and clarity of our products and services by:
 - Ensuring that the most effective channels for reaching our users are in place;
 - Ensuring statistics are easily accessible and presented clearly;
 - Providing information for users on our statistical independence.
 - Play an active role in combatting disinformation by:
 - Supporting Commission initiatives to tackle disinformation;
 - Providing rapid support services for fact checkers;
 - Responding appropriately to misuse of data.

In support of our objective of **ensuring staff are empowered and engaged**, we will:

- Use all available internal communication channels to inform, listen to and involve staff by:
 - Informing staff of developments in the workplace (organisational, practical and technical);
 - Facilitating and promoting regular opportunities to meet and talk to senior management;
 - Regularly ‘taking the pulse’ of staff with polls and surveys and acting upon the results;
 - Publishing outcomes of task forces, working groups and high-level meetings.
- Communicate the results of staff surveys and use them as a basis for follow-up actions
- Enable staff to act as Eurostat ‘ambassadors’, passing on our message to the outside world, by:
 - Raising staff awareness of Eurostat activities and products through: articles on the Eurostat intranet (Cybernews), features in the in-house *Eurostat-Infos* publication, staff information sessions, and publication of the weekly editorial calendar;
 - Providing staff with a set of standard PowerPoint slides on Eurostat, for use in their presentations;
 - Preparing leaflets (virtual and paper) that promote Eurostat products;
 - Providing Eurostat pins for staff to use;
 - Training for staff on the use of social media;
 - Encouraging active participation, particularly of young statisticians, in conferences and supporting the publication of articles in journals and magazines.



8 Channels, Products and Services

We implement our strategic objectives and actions through the development of an extensive range of products and services. We user test our solutions and are in continuous dialogue with our different users to know their requirements. We develop our products and services based on their behaviour and feedback.

8.1 Channels

The Eurostat Website is our primary channel for disseminating data, statistical analysis and methodology, including innovative products. We will ensure that it continues to provide an accessible, user-friendly entry point to all our products and services, from a range of different devices.

Social Media is a key channel for engaging with users, particularly those who would not normally visit our website. We will ensure that we expand our reach through regular visually appealing posts, responsive interactions with users and carefully targeted promotional activities.

Conferences and events, both physical and virtual, provide the opportunity for direct interactions with users. We will continue to promote European statistics by organising sessions and making presentations.

8.2 Products

The Eurostat Database is the tool for disseminating the statistical indicators that we produce. We will make our datasets easier to search and improve our data extraction tools.

€-indicators are traditional news releases. They contain timely, high quality, infra-annual indicators, linked to the Principal European Economic Indicators (PEEIs). They are issued simultaneously with data releases according to a set calendar, planned a year in advance. The Commission and the European Central Bank use them for the analysis of the euro area economy and they are of particular interest to economic journalists and the financial markets. We will improve the layout and content of these releases to ensure that they respond to changing media needs.

“First Release” News Items are short communications that highlight our new data. Just as for €-indicators, statistics covered must be of high quality. As the key news value of datasets lies in their timely release, the aim is to publish as soon as data are available for the majority of Member States and EU/euro area aggregates have been calculated. Ideally, the news is published simultaneously with the dissemination of the data in Eurobase, supported by an article in Statistics Explained (see below).



Other news items are used to announce a wide range of other Eurostat activities and products. These include, but are not limited to: new publications and Statistics Explained articles, data releases that do not meet the criteria for “First Release”, events open to external participants which Eurostat is organising/taking part in, promoting existing data/publications/products through a link to an issue of current interest or to a World/European day of... and additional promotion for a publication/event we have already announced.

Statistics Explained is our key dissemination product for presenting our data and statistical analysis. It presents statistics in an easily understandable way, integrating texts, graphics and visualisations and links to further information. We will continue to expand the number of articles to cover the full range of our data, in particular those focussed on statistical literacy.

Publications will be primarily interactive and web-based, combining texts, infographics, maps, videos, graphs, photos, etc. to provide a clear overview of a statistical field and engaging users. Only key flagship publications will be printed, to match the needs for promotion of European statistics, both at (physical) events and amongst interested key stakeholders. The topics will reflect EU policies and priorities. More specifically, we will continue to extend and improve our range of interactive digital publications and we will gradually develop a range of ‘Key Figures on Europe’ publications covering a large range of statistical areas with a more visual content. These will be complemented by promotional leaflets. Methodological and other background publications – manuals, reports, working papers etc. – will only be made available in digital formats.

Visualisations, either stand-alone or integrated into products, give users a simple, visual overview of data. They are crucial in the current information environment, in particular in social media and in attracting potential users.

Audio-visual content covers all types of audio recording, videos and animations. We will expand our use of these tools to match the way in which our users, particularly the younger age groups, consume information.

8.3 Services

Webinars are information sessions broadcast over the internet, accessible by anyone. We will expand our use of them in order to provide tailored information in a cost effective manner.

User support is given to different user groups: media, fact-checkers, colleagues from EU institutions and the public. We will continue to operate high quality and responsive support services to better serve users, taking advantage of developments in technology.

Competitions, such as the European Statistics Competition, Datathons and Hackathons, reach a large number of young people. We will continue to promote and participate in these initiatives.



9 Internal Communication Tools

The **intranet** is updated on a daily basis with news items, often proposed by staff, and has separate sections promoting employees and their initiatives. Interactive pulse polls and surveys are conducted on the intranet to gauge staff attitudes on different issues. Short videos are produced, giving brief summaries of management meetings and other events.

The **in-house magazine**, *Eurostat-Infos*, takes a closer look at Eurostat's work and staff. It is published regularly throughout the year.

An **in-house editors' network** coordinated by the internal communication team, encourages units and teams to keep their content up to date.

Informal meetings between staff and senior management, **lunchtime presentations** given by staff, the annual **General Assembly** and other events designed to bring staff together are organised by the internal communications team.

Eurostat's contribution to the **Commission staff opinion survey questionnaires**, including design, promotion, communication and follow-up, is led by the internal communication team.

10 Planning and Implementation

We have a comprehensive planning process for our communication and dissemination products and services. This takes account of Commission policies and priorities, and is flexible enough to accommodate new requirements as they arise.

The annual planning cycle for communication and dissemination products and services follows a three-step process: mapping existing products and services; identifying gaps in the offer; and proposing appropriate products and services to fill these gaps. The planning will also include a process for identifying the products that will no longer be updated.

To ensure an attractive and comprehensive programme of all upcoming products, to take advantage of synergies across the range of dissemination products and to react to ongoing events and user demands, regular editorial meetings are organised.

In line with the European Statistics Code of Practice, we develop and publish a release calendar for our key products.



11 Evaluating Progress

The key process underlying our monitoring of communication activities is:

Monitor – Evaluate – Adapt

and all monitoring should be actionable.

We conduct three kinds of monitoring – activity measurement, channel monitoring and qualitative analytical monitoring. This monitoring is carried out through a number of means – user surveys, user testing, user dialogue (Commission users, focus groups, European Statistical Advisory Committee, European Statistical Governance Advisory Board, peer reviews, user support, user feedback, social media, etc.), actively solicited feedback from key user groups and error reporting.

Using the results of this monitoring, we evaluate our communication activities by defining performance indicators clearly linked to communication objectives and assessing whether these objectives have been reached.

Based on these evaluations, we then adapt our communication products and services by providing feedback and conducting follow-ups with Eurostat directorates on their communication activities, reviewing and revising existing products and services and developing new products and services.

Internal communication is monitored by measuring hits and other feedback such as likes and comments. Polls and surveys are also part of the monitoring processes.