

# EUROSTAT – CODE OF PRACTICE COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

INDICATORS	ACTIVITIES
<b>Institutional environment</b>	
<b>Principle 1: Professional Independence</b>	
<i>The professional independence of <b>statistical</b> authorities from other policy, regulatory or administrative departments and bodies, as well as from private sector operators, ensures the credibility of European Statistics.</i>	
<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> The independence of the statistical authority from political and other external interference in producing and disseminating official statistics is specified in law.</p>	<p>In accordance with the new Regulation 223/2009 on European statistics (<a href="#">European Statistical Law</a>) which came into force in April 2009, Eurostat ensures that European statistics are produced according to agreed rules and statistical principles. In particular, Eurostat is responsible for decisions on statistical methods, standards and procedures to be used for European statistics. Eurostat also decides on the content and timing of statistical information to the public.</p> <p>In order to insure impartiality when European statistics are released to users, Eurostat has implemented the <a href="#">Protocol</a> on Impartial Access to Eurostat Data for Users (adopted in 2007). This Protocol defines the strictly limited conditions under which data will be made available to specified users before being released to the public.</p> <p>The Director-General of Eurostat reports directly to the European Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs. Details of the <a href="#">working arrangements</a> with the Commissioner's office in Brussels are regularly reviewed and are published on Eurostat's website.</p> <p>Moreover, the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (<a href="#">ESGAB</a>) provides an independent overview of Code of Practice compliance in the European Statistical System. ESGAB is composed of seven members and Eurostat as an observer. ESGAB's work aims at enhancing professional independence, integrity and accountability of the European Statistical System as well as at enhancing quality of European statistics.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 2:</b> The head of the statistical authority has sufficiently high hierarchical standing to ensure senior-level access to policy authorities and administrative public bodies. He/she should be of the highest professional calibre.</p>	<p>As a Director-General within the European Commission, the head of Eurostat ranks among the highest level of Commission staff.</p> <p>Under the Commission's personnel recruitment policy the procedure to appoint a Director-General can be carried out by selection following external and/or internal publication of the post or by transfer of a senior official from another post within the Commission. Selection is according to the Commission's guidelines on senior manager appointment procedures. The Commission policy is to appoint senior managers with the highest qualifications and merit and with a good track record in management at the appropriate level. Key requirements for a Director-General of Eurostat are high professional standing and credibility as Chief Statistician of the European Union, within the European and international statistical community. Removal of the Director-General from office is possible only by a decision of the Commission as the Appointing Authority and in accordance with the Staff Regulations.</p> <p>The current Director General was recruited through an external selection procedure.</p>

<p><b>Indicator 3:</b> The head of the statistical authority and, where appropriate, the heads of its statistical bodies have responsibility for ensuring that European Statistics are produced and disseminated in an independent manner.</p>	<p>Working arrangements between Eurostat and the Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs are agreed, which ensure consistency with the <a href="#">European Statistical Law</a>. Following the establishment of the new Commission in 2009, the working arrangements with the new Commissioner were updated and <a href="#">published</a> on the Eurostat website.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 4:</b> The head of the statistical authority and, where appropriate, the heads of its statistical bodies have the sole responsibility for deciding on statistical methods, standards and procedures, and on the content and timing of statistical releases.</p>	<p>Eurostat is responsible for decisions on statistical methods, standards and procedures to be used for European statistics. Eurostat also decides on the content and timing of statistical information to the public.</p> <p>The Director General of Eurostat acts as Chief Statistician of the European Union. In this function he is responsible for the coordination of development, production and dissemination of European Statistics.</p> <p>In the European Statistical System, standards, methods and procedures are defined and agreed through consultation with the national statistical institutes of Member States and of the <a href="#">European Free Trade Association</a> countries. Eurostat chairs the <a href="#">European Statistical System Committee</a>, which is composed of the Heads of Member States' national statistical institutes who are officially nominated as national coordinators of the statistical systems in Member States. This Committee provides professional guidance relating to the development, production and dissemination of European statistics.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 5:</b> The statistical work programmes are published and periodic reports describe progress made.</p>	<p>Eurostat prepares a European <a href="#">multi-annual</a> statistical programme for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics for a period of up to 5 years. This programme is adopted by the European Parliament and the Council.</p> <p>Under the <a href="#">European Statistical Law</a>, Eurostat must present an intermediate progress report and a final evaluation report to the European Statistical System Committee and then to the European Parliament and to the Council.</p> <p>Also each year, before the end of May, Eurostat prepares its <a href="#">annual work programme</a> for the following year. An annual work programme is also prepared for the Programme for the Modernisation of European Enterprise and Trade Statistics ( <a href="#">MEETS</a> ).</p> <p>The current annual and multi-annual work programmes are both published on Eurostat's website.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 6:</b> Statistical releases are clearly distinguished and issued separately from political/policy statements.</p>	<p>Statistical releases are published by Eurostat according to a pre-specified schedule and never include political statements. The identity of Eurostat publications is clearly distinguished by the Eurostat logo.</p>

<p><b>Indicator 7:</b> The statistical authority, when appropriate, comments publicly on statistical issues, including criticisms and misuses of official statistics.</p>	<p>Under Eurostat's <a href="#">Protocol</a> on Impartial Access to Eurostat Data for Users, Eurostat reserves the right to respond in an impartial manner to any misunderstandings or misleading interpretations of its outputs.</p>
<p><b>Principle 2: Mandate for Data Collection</b></p> <p><i>Statistical authorities must have a clear legal mandate to collect information for European statistical purposes. Administrations, enterprises and households, and the public at large may be compelled by law to allow access to or deliver data for European statistical purposes at the request of statistical authorities.</i></p>	
<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> The mandate to collect information for the production and dissemination of official statistics is specified in law.</p>	<p>Under the <a href="#">European Statistical Law</a> Eurostat is designated to develop, produce and disseminate European statistics, working as a partner with national statistical institutes and other national authorities within the European Statistical System. In practice, the data for European statistics are normally provided by Member States under the framework of the European multi-annual statistical programme, which is discussed first with Member States and then decided by the European Parliament and the Council. Eurostat is responsible for coordinating statistical activities at a European level, particularly in relation to data quality and minimising reporting burden. Under certain conditions, specified in the European Statistical Law, statistical collections can be carried out by Eurostat using sources that are already available or directly via a European survey.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 2:</b> The statistical authority is allowed by national legislation to use administrative records for statistical purposes.</p>	<p>In order to reduce the burden on respondents and for the specific purposes of developing, producing and dissemination of European statistics, Eurostat has access to administrative data sources within the European Commission.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 3:</b> On the basis of a legal act, the statistical authority may compel response to statistical surveys.</p>	<p>The type of statistical data which Member States must provide to the Commission is defined in EU legislation. If a Member State does not meet its legal obligations, Eurostat can initiate <a href="#">infringement proceedings</a> as a first step towards ensuring a compliance with EU law.</p> <p>Although the core statistical legislation is decided by the <a href="#">European Parliament</a> and by the <a href="#">European Council</a> on a proposal from the Commission, some statistical activities across the European Statistical System are defined by gentlemen's agreements that do not have legal obligations. Gentlemen's agreements are often used as a way to pilot new statistical activities. Under the <a href="#">European Statistical Law</a>, such agreements must be in writing and a standard template is now available to Eurostat departments to use when drafting gentlemen's agreements.</p>

### Principle 3 - Adequacy of Resources

*The resources available to statistical authorities must be sufficient to meet European Statistics requirements.*

**Indicator 1:** Staff, financial, and computing resources, adequate both in magnitude and in quality, are available to meet current European Statistics needs.

The multi-annual work programme establishes the financial envelope for European statistics for the period concerned. A key component of the preparation of the annual and multi-annual statistical programmes drafted by Eurostat is an assessment of the resources required. In particular, the annual work programme contains information on the source of resources for new work under each statistical theme. It is adopted by the Commission together with the corresponding financial decision.

A number of actions are under way that contribute to enhancing the quality and quantity of human resources:

- Reviews of training and development of resources and the allocation of resources between core statistical tasks and horizontal activities
- More regular programs of external recruitment of statistically qualified staff
- Annual system of re-allocating a proportion of existing posts to areas with higher statistical priorities
- Temporary secondment of staff by Eurostat and the national statistical offices
- Enhanced participation of Eurostat staff in European statistical training programmes

In addition, efficiency targets are being developed as inputs to a new human resource allocation initiative for 2010 onwards.

**Indicator 2:** The scope, detail and cost of European Statistics are commensurate with needs.

The decisions regarding the scope and detail of European statistics are defined in the legislation passed for different statistical areas. The proposed legislation is first carefully prepared and discussed with the partners in the European Statistical System before being submitted to the [European Statistical System Committee](#) (ESSC) for its opinion. The ESSC also gives its opinion on the Commission's annual statistical work programmes.

An important input to the discussions on user needs comes from the [European Statistical Advisory Committee](#), comprising 24 members who represent users, respondents and other stakeholders of European Statistics. This committee plays an important role in ensuring that user requirements as well as the response burden on information providers and producers are taken into account in developing the statistical work programmes.

The impact and cost of European statistics are taken into account in an assessment of the proposed multi-annual programme (ex-ante evaluation). The final version of the multi-annual programme is then approved by the European Parliament and the Council.

Eurostat has established a Task Force on Priority Setting, which has developed summary information sheets on cost-effectiveness. For new statistical projects, a pilot-test on the use of these sheets is scheduled for 2011, and a roadmap for the completion of summary information sheets for all fields covered by the current Community statistical programme (2008-2012) was discussed with Member States in 2010.

<p><b>Indicator 3:</b> Procedures exist to assess and justify demands for new European statistics against their cost.</p>	<p>The <a href="#">European Statistical System Committee</a> assesses demands for new statistics, taking into account their priority with regard to policy needs, financial constraints and the expected burden on respondents.</p> <p>In accordance with <a href="#">European Statistical Law</a>, the impact and cost of European statistics are taken into account in an assessment of the new statistical activities proposed in the multi-annual programme (ex-ante evaluation)</p> <p>In addition, summary information sheets, which provide details of the cost-effectiveness of statistical activities, have been developed for several legal acts and will provide the basis for further discussion in the European Statistical System Committee.</p> <p>The <a href="#">European Statistical Advisory Committee</a> (ESAC) is consulted at an early stage in the preparation of the European statistical programme about the proposed activities and in particular their relevance and their related costs. Eurostat must report annually how it has taken the ESAC opinion into account.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 4:</b> Procedures exist to assess the continuing need for all European Statistics, to see if any can be discontinued or curtailed to free up resources.</p>	<p>The multi-annual statistical programme defines the framework for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics for a period of up to 5 years. It is prepared in discussion with the Member States and identifies the priorities regarding the statistical needs at an EU level.</p> <p>The <a href="#">European Statistical Advisory Committee</a> (ESAC) is consulted at an early stage in the preparation of the European statistical programme about the proposed activities, including the balance regarding priorities and resources between the different statistical activities planned. Eurostat must report annually how it has taken the ESAC opinion into account. In addition, meetings with the policy Directorates General of the European Commission and with the European Central Bank provide an opportunity to assess the continuing need for specific European statistics. Furthermore, the need for specific European statistics is also assessed as part of Eurostat's internal evaluation of all its statistical processes.</p>
<p><b>Principle 4: Quality commitment</b></p>	
<p><i>All ESS members commit themselves to work and co-operate according to the principles fixed in the Quality Declaration of the European Statistical System.</i></p>	
<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> Product quality is regularly monitored according to the ESS quality components.</p>	<p>Under the <a href="#">European Statistical Law</a>, Member States must provide reports on the quality of the data transmitted. Using the quality reports received from Member States, Eurostat is required to publish a summary report on the quality of European statistics, including details on the extent to which concepts, definitions and classifications are consistently applied within the European Statistical System.</p> <p>The quality of European statistics is also described in the <a href="#">metadata</a> files, which accompany the data published by Eurostat. These files contain the descriptions of the concepts used and provide summary information on data quality and the production process.</p> <p>Eurostat publishes summaries, known as Quality Profiles, showing the main quality features for the indicators used to monitor the implementation of the <a href="#">Structural Indicators</a> and for the indicators used to monitor the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (<a href="#">Sustainable Development Indicators</a>). The quality profiles are issued by Eurostat in close co-operation with the National Statistical Institutes of the EU-Member States. Quality profiles are available for most of the Structural and Sustainable Development Indicators. In the <a href="#">European Statistical Law</a>, there is a requirement for sectoral legislation to specify a common structure and frequency for the quality reports.</p>

<p><b>Indicator 2:</b> Processes are in place to monitor the quality of the collection, processing and dissemination of statistics.</p>	<p>Eurostat implements a <a href="#">quality assurance framework</a> for its statistical processes and outputs, based upon Total Quality Management principles. Within this framework, all Eurostat statistical processes are assessed over a 3-4 year time span, to identify areas for improvement and to highlight good practices. There are approximately 125 statistical processes and around 40 processes are assessed each year. Two key outcomes of the assessment are the identification of improvements to the process and also of good practices that can be shared with other production teams. The first cycle of quality assessments will be completed in 2011.</p> <p>In addition, a group was established in 2009 to examine quality issues within the European Statistical System. Known as the Sponsorship Group on Quality, the group is reviewing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality framework for the European Statistical System, which includes the <a href="#">Quality Declaration</a> and the <a href="#">Code of Practice</a>)</li> <li>• How the quality framework should be implemented</li> <li>• How quality should be communicated across the European Statistical System.</li> </ul> <p>The Sponsorship Group on Quality reports to the <a href="#">European Statistical System Committee</a> and will complete its activities in 2011.</p> <p>Special attention is given to a subset of statistical products that have major importance as indicators used in the allocation of EU resources, in economic or fiscal surveillance or in other administrative procedures. The clearest example is the monitoring of the Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP) statistics, following a <a href="#">Council regulation</a> that attributes audit-like powers to Eurostat. This particular form of quality assurance by Eurostat is likely to be extended as part of emerging strategies like Europe 2020 and economic governance.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 3:</b> Processes are in place to deal with quality considerations, including tradeoffs within quality, and to guide planning for existing and emerging surveys.</p>	<p>The quality of statistical processes in different domains is discussed with representatives of the national statistical offices at the relevant Working Groups. In addition, as part of the follow-up to the results of the Eurostat quality assessments, strategic and recurring findings are fed into Eurostat's annual management plan.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 4:</b> Quality guidelines are documented and staff are well trained. These guidelines are spelled out in writing and made known to the public.</p>	<p>Full documentation on quality issues is available in the quality section of the Eurostat <a href="#">website</a>. Internal guidelines for the assessment of Eurostat statistical processes, including quality reporting, are available to all staff on Eurostat's intranet pages.</p> <p>Training courses for staff are run through the year covering different aspects of the Code of Practice. In 2009 Eurostat held a Quality Day to raise awareness of quality issues and launched a series of discussion sessions on aspects of the Code of Practice. In 2010 training on quality reporting was given to staff from Eurostat and national statistical institutes as part of the European Statistical Training Programme.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 5:</b> There is a regular and thorough review of the key statistical outputs using external experts where appropriate.</p>	<p>The key statistical outputs are examined in detail as part of the implementation of Eurostat's <a href="#">quality assurance framework</a>. External experts are systematically included in the evaluation of the multi-annual statistical programmes. External experts are also involved in assessments of statistical processes that demand considerable Eurostat resources. In the current cycle of quality assessments in Eurostat, over one third of the statistical processes involve an external expert.</p> <p>The <a href="#">European Statistical Governance Advisory Board</a> provides a further external view of Eurostat's activities and examines quality issues.</p>

### Principle 5: Statistical Confidentiality

*The privacy of data providers (households, enterprises, administrations and other respondents), the confidentiality of the information they provide and its use only for statistical purposes must be absolutely guaranteed.*

<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> Statistical confidentiality is guaranteed in law.</p>	<p>The rules for ensuring statistical confidentiality are clearly defined in the <a href="#">European Statistical Law</a>.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 2:</b> Statistical authority staff sign legal confidentiality commitments on appointment.</p>	<p>The staff regulations for all statutory staff include a commitment to confidentiality. In addition, special authorisation procedures apply for contractual workers who are required to work with confidential data.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 3:</b> Substantial penalties are prescribed for any wilful breaches of statistical confidentiality.</p>	<p>Internal disciplinary procedures apply to cases of wilful breach of statistical confidentiality, which may lead to suspension or dismissal from office.</p> <p>Luxembourgish law also includes provision for financial penalties and imprisonment arising from a breach of confidentiality.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 4:</b> Instructions and guidelines are provided on the protection of statistical confidentiality in the production and dissemination processes. These guidelines are spelled out in writing and made known to the public.</p>	<p>In addition to a comprehensive Eurostat internal manual on the protection of confidential data, the European Statistical System Working Group on Statistical Confidentiality is responsible for developing the strategy in this field with representatives from the EU Member States. In 2006 Eurostat supported an ESS project which included the development of a <a href="#">handbook</a> on statistical disclosure control.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 5:</b> Physical and technological provisions are in place to protect the security and integrity of statistical databases.</p>	<p>In addition to technical measures to restrict access to secure data, specified data 'custodians' are responsible for access to particular secure data sets and no access is given for longer than one year without renewal. There is also a system in place to prevent access to secure databases when staff are reassigned to different functions.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 6:</b> Strict protocols apply to external users accessing statistical microdata for research purposes.</p>	<p>External users are individually approved and sign agreements governing their access to microdata. For the most sensitive data, access is allowed only via a computer terminal in a secure environment. The microdata cannot be removed from this environment.</p>

## Principle 6: Impartiality and Objectivity

*Statistical authorities must produce and disseminate European Statistics respecting scientific independence and in an objective, professional and transparent manner in which all users are treated equitably.*

<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> Statistics are compiled on an objective basis determined by statistical considerations.</p>	<p>The principle of objectivity is defined in the <a href="#">European Statistical Law</a> and refers to the obligation to develop, produce and disseminate statistics in a systematic, reliable and unbiased manner.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 2:</b> Choices of sources and statistical techniques are informed by statistical considerations.</p>	<p>National statistical authorities decide the most appropriate data source to use for a statistical collection, unless a source is determined explicitly in European statistical legislation or in gentlemen's agreements. Details of the data sources used are published as metadata on the Eurostat website and the extent to which a data source conforms to statistical requirements is described in the quality reports that national statistical authorities are required to submit for each statistical collection. Eurostat publishes a summary of the quality practices, highlighting where there are divergences from standard statistical concepts and definitions.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 3:</b> Errors discovered in published statistics are corrected at the earliest possible date and publicised.</p>	<p>Eurostat has a standard procedure, accessible on its intranet site, for handling the discovery of serious errors in the published statistics. Under this procedure, staff are requested to provide details of the error, an assessment of its impact on the published results and the actions taken to correct the error and prevent its reoccurrence.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 4:</b> Information on the methods and procedures used by the statistical authority are publicly available.</p>	<p>Regulations describe the statistical requirements and general methodology for each statistical domain. More detailed information on Eurostat's methods and procedures are available on Eurostat's website and regularly updated. Additional information on specific statistical domains is available either via dedicated web pages or in the form of standardised metadata.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 5:</b> Statistical release dates and times are pre-announced.</p>	<p>Eurostat announces the timing of statistical releases in advance. For Euro-indicators, the publication dates are announced up to 12 months ahead. All other news releases are announced on the Friday before the week of publication. The publication dates for printed publications are announced one month ahead. The <a href="#">calendar</a> of release dates and times includes all Eurostat publications. Plans are underway to introduce a rolling 12-month calendar for Euro-indicators and to extend the notice given for other data releases.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 6:</b> All users have equal access to statistical releases at the same time and any privileged pre-release access to any outside user is limited, controlled and publicised. In the event that leaks occur, pre-release arrangements should be revised so as to ensure impartiality.</p>	<p>In 2007 Eurostat adopted a <a href="#">Protocol</a> on Impartial Access to Eurostat Data for Users, which defines the procedures to ensure that data users have impartial access to European statistics. The Protocol describes Eurostat's policy on free data dissemination and the conditions under which data are made available to a limited number of individuals or organisations before being released to the public. Pre-release access is granted for quality assurance purposes and, where relevant, for informing the relevant European Commission departments and the European Central Bank. A signed agreement is required. Details of the pre-release arrangements for a particular data set are given in the accompanying metadata on the Eurostat website.</p> <p>All news releases are transmitted under embargo to the office of the Commissioner responsible for Eurostat (the Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs) and the Commissioner's spokesperson, on the working day before publication, in order for them to prepare for questions from the media. Euro-indicator news releases are transmitted under embargo one hour before official release to accredited news agencies in Brussels.</p>

<p><b>Indicator 7:</b> Statistical releases and statements made in Press Conferences are objective and nonpartisan.</p>	<p>Press conferences are not held on a regular basis and media contacts are managed by the press unit in Eurostat. A separation between technical statements made by Eurostat and political conclusions made by the spokesperson of the Commissioner is specified in the <a href="#">working arrangements</a> with the Commissioner's office in Brussels and is applied in practice.</p>
<p><b>Statistical processes</b></p> <p><b>Principle 7: Sound Methodology</b></p> <p><i>Sound methodology must underpin quality statistics. This requires adequate tools, procedures and expertise.</i></p>	
<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> The overall methodological framework of the statistical authority follows European and other international standards, guidelines, and good practices.</p>	<p>Eurostat promotes the use of standards and methods for the production of European statistics that are consistent with international standards and guidelines. The relevant standards and classifications to be used for statistical data collections are specified in statistical legislation or by gentlemen's agreements.</p> <p>A number of methodological handbooks are also available for specific domains and are published on the Eurostat website.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 2:</b> Procedures are in place to ensure that standard concepts, definitions and classifications are consistently applied throughout the statistical authority.</p>	<p>The <a href="#">metadata</a> files which accompany the data published by Eurostat, contain the descriptions of the concepts, definitions and classifications used by the national statistical authorities to compile the data. In addition, under the <a href="#">European Statistical Law</a>, Member States must provide reports on the quality of the data transmitted and Eurostat has published <a href="#">guidelines</a> on how to draft these quality reports. In particular, the reports should indicate the concepts, definitions and classifications used in the Member State and should highlight any divergence from international standards or from the requirements of European regulations.</p> <p>Using the quality reports received from Member States, Eurostat is required to publish a summary report on the quality of European statistics, including details on the extent to which concepts, definitions and classifications are consistently applied within the European Statistical System.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 3:</b> The business register and the frame for population surveys are regularly evaluated and adjusted if necessary in order to ensure high quality.</p>	<p>In general, business and population registers are held and maintained by the Member States. The quality of these registers is the responsibility of the relevant national statistical authorities. Compliance with business register legislation is followed by Eurostat.</p> <p>Eurostat hosts the central system for the <a href="#">Euro Groups Register</a>, established in 2009, which will become a tool for producing coordinated statistics on multinational groups in Europe. The Euro Groups Register network consists of a central system and the national registers of 27 Member States and 2 <a href="#">European Free Trade Association</a> Countries.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 4:</b> Detailed concordance exists between national classifications and sectorisation systems and the corresponding European systems.</p>	<p>It is the responsibility of national statistical offices to ensure that their national systems for classifying data are consistent with the requirements of the European Statistical System, in particular those classification systems which are defined by EU legislation, covering e.g. economic activities, regions, and products.</p>

<p><b>Indicator 5:</b> Graduates in the relevant academic disciplines are recruited.</p>	<p>For permanent officials, Eurostat recruits through open competitions organised by the <a href="#">European Personnel Selection Office</a>. Minimum educational requirements vary according to the position. In general, a university degree is required for all Administrator level positions. Relevant work experience may be required in some cases.</p> <p>Open competitions for Administrators with a statistical or similar background are organised approximately every four to five years. For non-permanent staff, ad hoc recruitment of suitably qualified graduates, including professional statisticians is also possible.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 6:</b> Staff attend international relevant training courses and conferences, and liaise with statistician colleagues at international level in order to learn from the best and to improve their expertise.</p>	<p>Eurostat is actively involved in the international statistical world concerning methodological developments, including participation at conferences organised by the OECD, IMF, UN and the biannual World Statistics Congress of the International Statistical Institute. Eurostat staff take part in training courses organised under the European Statistical Training Programme. The programme is part of the European Statistical System – Learning and Development Framework and is managed by Eurostat. Through this programme, staff are also able to take part in European and international training courses at postgraduate level.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 7:</b> Co-operation with the scientific community to improve methodology is organised and external reviews assess the quality and effectiveness of the methods implemented and promote better tools, when feasible.</p>	<p>Cooperation with the scientific community is fostered through the organisation of conferences, seminars and workshops in different statistical domains including quality and methodology. For example, since 2004 a biennial <a href="#">international quality conference</a> has been funded by Eurostat to share knowledge and good practices in relation to the quality of official statistics. Eurostat also organizes a colloquium on modern methods for <a href="#">business cycle analysis</a> and an international conference on <a href="#">the impact of new technologies</a> on statistical collection, production and dissemination systems.</p>
<p><b>Principle 8: Appropriate Statistical Procedures</b></p>	
<p><i>Appropriate statistical procedures, implemented from data collection to data validation, must underpin quality statistics.</i></p>	
<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> Where European Statistics are based on administrative data, the definitions and concepts used for the administrative purpose must be a good approximation to those required for statistical purposes.</p>	<p>National statistical authorities decide the most appropriate data source to use for a statistical collection, unless a source is determined explicitly in European statistical legislation or in gentlemen's agreements. Details of the administrative data sources used are published as metadata on the Eurostat website. The extent to which an administrative data source conforms to statistical requirements is described in the quality reports that national statistical authorities are required to submit for each statistical collection. Eurostat then publishes a summary of the quality practices, highlighting where there are divergences from standard statistical concepts and definitions.</p> <p>The quality of statistical collections that involve administrative data is assessed as part of Eurostat's quality assurance framework. Specific guidelines have been produced to help Eurostat production teams assess how well administrative data conform to statistical requirements. In the area of business statistics, work is also being conducted in the framework of the programme on Modernisation of European Enterprise and Trade Statistics (<a href="#">MEETS</a>).</p>

<p><b>Indicator 2:</b> In case of statistical surveys, questionnaires are systematically tested prior to the data collection.</p>	<p>In line with the subsidiarity principle, only a small number of questionnaires used in European statistical surveys have been directly designed by Eurostat. For such questionnaires, it is standard practice to carry out pilot tests prior to implementation.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 3:</b> Survey designs, sample selections, and sample weights are well based and regularly reviewed, revised or updated as required.</p>	<p>The design, selection and weighting of national statistical surveys are the responsibility of national statistical authorities.</p> <p>However, in order to ensure a degree of consistency in the design of national statistical surveys used for European statistics, statistical legislation may contain specific sample survey design requirements e.g. relating to the degree of accuracy required or to the weighting structure used for population estimates.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 4:</b> Field operations, data entry, and coding are routinely monitored and revised as required.</p>	<p>The organisation of data collection and data entry procedures at a national level are the responsibility of national statistical authorities.</p> <p>For the transmission of data between Member States and Eurostat, Eurostat has developed a data reception system, known as eDAMIS. This system receives data securely through a single electronic entry point. Some basic validation rules are applied and the data are delivered to the target production team.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 5:</b> Appropriate editing and imputation computer systems are used and regularly reviewed, revised or updated as required.</p>	<p>Implementation of a Eurostat-wide data validation application is currently underway as part of Eurostat streamlining of its production processes along the <a href="#">Generic Statistical Business Process Model</a> developed jointly with the UNECE and the OECD.</p> <p>Eurostat is also currently testing a new way of storing, transmitting and disseminating European statistical information using the <a href="#">SDMX</a> transmission standard (the <a href="#">Census Hub Project</a>).</p>
<p><b>Indicator 6:</b> Revisions follow standard, well-established and transparent procedures.</p>	<p>Details on the way data revisions are made are described in the metadata published for each statistical collection, available on the Eurostat website. European Statistical System-wide guidelines on revisions policies are currently being prepared.</p> <p>In the area of national accounts, guidelines for major revisions have been developed.</p>

## Principle 9: Non-Excessive Burden on Respondents

*The reporting burden should be proportionate to the needs of the users and should not be excessive for respondents. The statistical authority monitors the response burden and sets targets for its reduction over time.*

<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> The range and detail of European Statistics demands is limited to what is absolutely necessary.</p>	<p>Eurostat prepares an Annual Work Programme which takes into account the prioritized statistical needs of the European Commission, as well as financial constraints and the response burden. A review of the process for preparing the Annual Work Programmes was carried out in 2009. The main change introduced was the early involvement of the Commission Directorates-General (main users), the <a href="#">European Statistical System Committee</a>, Directors' Groups (representing producers) and the <a href="#">European Statistical Advisory Committee</a> (representing the external user community), as part of the process to establish strategic priorities. On the basis of these strategic priorities the detailed Annual Work Programme is drafted and submitted to the European Statistical System Committee and the European Statistical Advisory Committee before the end of May each year.</p> <p>To avoid duplication of surveys at European and international level, Eurostat co-operates closely with other bodies at international level. Where appropriate, joint collections are undertaken e.g. for the joint questionnaire on education statistics, involving the UNESCO Institute of Statistics and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and development.</p> <p>The <a href="#">regulation</a> concerning the procedures for the collection of statistics by the European Central Bank and the <a href="#">European Statistical Law</a> emphasise close cooperation in the production of European statistics between the European System of Central Banks and the European Statistical System, in order to minimise the reporting burden and to guarantee the coherence necessary to produce European statistics. A <a href="#">Memorandum of Understanding</a> between Eurostat and the Statistics Directorate General of the European Central Bank has been signed to reinforce these principles.</p> <p>Furthermore, the reporting and frequency of European statistics were reviewed in a number of priority areas in line with the <a href="#">Communication</a> on reduction of the response burden, simplification and priority-setting and the <a href="#">Action Programme</a> for Reducing Administrative Burdens in the EU. These areas concern intra-EU trade (Intrastat), structural business statistics, industrial production (Prodcom), certain agriculture statistics, short-term statistics, information society, tourism, maritime and road transport statistics. A Modernisation Programme for European Enterprise and Trade Statistics (<a href="#">MEETS</a>) is currently under way to look at more efficient ways of collecting data.</p> <p>The annual work programme contains actions targeting the reduction of burden for each domain. In view of the results already achieved in the areas that have been identified as most burdensome, the focus has now shifted towards the modernisation of the whole production system. The more comprehensive and holistic strategy laid down in the "Communication on the production method of EU statistics: a <a href="#">vision for the next decade</a>" aims to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the production process. The implementation of this vision is currently supported by a number of specific projects such as the review of the national accounts production system, the modernisation of agriculture statistics, statistical matching in the area of social statistics, validation of statistics on income and living conditions and the infrastructure for decentralised access to and exchange of confidential data.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 2:</b> The reporting burden is spread as widely as possible over survey populations through appropriate sampling techniques.</p>	<p>The design of national surveys is the responsibility of national statistical authorities. However, in 2008, a pilot exercise to collect data on response burden and production costs was carried out. Based on the outcome of this pilot exercise, a response burden measurement exercise was launched in 2009, which focused on 24 EU basic legal acts involving enterprises either as respondents or as a major part of the respondents.</p>

<p><b>Indicator 3:</b> The information sought from businesses is, as far as possible, readily available from their accounts and electronic means are used where possible to facilitate its return.</p>	<p>Eurostat does not collect data directly from businesses as this is the responsibility of the national statistical authorities. However, in 2009, a European level project to study the possibility of using accounting data for statistical purposes was carried out. Before more variables can be drawn directly from the accounts of businesses, further alignment of definitions in the statistical regulations is necessary.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 4:</b> Best estimates and approximations are accepted when exact details are not readily available.</p>	<p>The data requirements in different statistical domains are defined in the relevant statistical legislation and in certain clearly-defined cases, estimates are acceptable. Details of any estimation or approximation procedures should be transmitted by the national statistical authorities to Eurostat as metadata and also described in the relevant national quality reports.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 5:</b> Administrative sources are used whenever possible to avoid duplicating requests for information.</p>	<p>Under the <a href="#">European Statistical Law</a>, Eurostat has access to administrative data sources within the European Commission for the production of European statistics. Eurostat advocates the use of appropriate administrative data sources in its discussions with Member States, as part of the <a href="#">Eurostat vision</a> for the production of European statistics for the next decade.</p> <p>Information on the sources used for national data collections is published on the Eurostat website as metadata and in the relevant data quality reports.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 6:</b> Data sharing within statistical authorities is generalised in order to avoid multiplication of surveys.</p>	<p>The sharing of data is also a key element of the <a href="#">Eurostat vision</a> for the production of European statistics for the next decade. In this vision, the development of collaborative networks is proposed to create and exploit ways of sharing statistical data across the European Statistical System.</p>
<p><b>Principle 10: Cost Effectiveness</b> <i>Resources must be effectively used.</i></p>	
<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> Internal and independent external measures monitor the statistical authority's use of resources.</p>	<p>Eurostat has an internal team to monitor and assess the way the human and financial resources are allocated. It periodically reviews individual staff performance. External resource monitoring is carried out by a different European Commission service.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 2:</b> Routine clerical operations (e.g. data capture, coding, validation) are automated to the extent possible.</p>	<p>Eurostat has developed a number of IT applications to streamline data compilation activities which are being incorporated into routine work. The standard electronic data entry software (eDAMIS) provides a single-entry point for receiving and tracking data transmitted to Eurostat.</p>

<p><b>Indicator 3:</b> The productivity potential of information and communications technology is being optimised for data collection, processing and dissemination.</p>	<p>A review of the entire IT architecture across the statistical value chain (collection, processing, analysis, dissemination) is carried out approximately every 5 years. In 2009 Eurostat launched an initiative to reform the method of producing European statistics (<a href="#">Eurostat vision</a> for the next decade), which includes proposals to maximise the use of relevant new technologies to compile, process and disseminate statistics.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 4:</b> Proactive efforts are being made to improve the statistical potential of administrative records and avoid costly direct surveys.</p>	<p>In line with the requirements of the multi-annual Community Statistical Programme <a href="#">2008-2012</a>, Summary Information Sheets on cost-effectiveness were developed for new statistical projects as well as for all fields covered by the Statistical Programme. These sheets will provide information on the use that is made of existing data sources for the compilation of both new statistics and existing data collections.</p>
<p><b>Statistical output</b></p>	
<p><b>Principle 11: Relevance</b></p>	
<p><i>European Statistics must meet the needs of users.</i></p>	
<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> Processes are in place to consult users, monitor the relevance and practical utility of existing statistics in meeting their needs, and advise on their emerging needs and priorities.</p>	<p>Eurostat consults users on their needs at different organisational levels - strategic and operational. At the strategic level, Eurostat prepares the annual and multiannual work programmes based on the current and future requirements of the policy divisions of the European Commission and based on the input of the <a href="#">European Statistical Advisory Committee</a>.</p> <p>At the operational level, each statistical production unit is responsible for establishing and maintaining contacts with its data users. This may be carried out through regular meetings (e.g. Working Groups) or through special user satisfaction surveys. Activities involving users are assessed as part of Eurostat's quality assurance framework, and where necessary improvements are implemented by the production units.</p> <p>Eurostat also carries out general user satisfaction surveys to obtain better knowledge about users, their needs and their satisfaction with the services which Eurostat provides. The most recent survey took place in 2009.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 2:</b> Priority needs are being met and reflected in the work programme.</p>	<p>A review of the process for preparing the Annual Work Programmes was carried out in 2009. The main change introduced was the early involvement of the Commission Directorates-General (main users), the <a href="#">European Statistical System Committee</a>, Directors' Groups (representing producers) and the <a href="#">European Statistical Advisory Committee</a> (representing the external user community) as part of the process to establish strategic priorities. In addition, Eurostat has signed Service Level Agreements with its key users.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 3:</b> User satisfaction surveys are undertaken periodically.</p>	<p>Since 2007, Eurostat has been carrying out general <a href="#">user satisfaction surveys</a> every two years and the findings are published on Eurostat's website.</p> <p>User satisfaction surveys are undertaken in specific statistical domains as part of Eurostat's <a href="#">quality assessment framework</a>.</p>

## Principle 12: Accuracy and Reliability

*European Statistics must accurately and reliably portray reality.*

<b>Indicator 1:</b> Source data, intermediate results and statistical outputs are assessed and validated.	The statistics collected by Eurostat from national data providers are validated by the relevant statistical production teams to check that the data have plausible values and are consistent with other available data. National data providers are asked to correct or explain data inconsistencies. The validation procedures are regularly reviewed and updated if required, as part of Eurostat's quality assurance framework. Under the <a href="#">European Statistical Law</a> , national data providers must provide reports on the quality of the data they transmit to Eurostat. This information is used by Eurostat to compile summary reports on the quality of the European statistics.
<b>Indicator 2:</b> Sampling errors and non-sampling errors are measured and systematically documented according to the framework of the European Statistical System quality components.	National data providers are required to report on the accuracy of the data they transmit, in the form of metadata and as part of national quality reports. The metadata are published on the Eurostat website and Eurostat uses the national quality reports to compile summary reports for the different data collections. If there is insufficient information on the sampling or non-sampling errors available from the national data providers, this will be identified for improvement in the relevant Eurostat summary report.  Eurostat has published standards and guidelines for producing quality reports, which include details on the types of error that national data providers should include in their quality reports.
<b>Indicator 3:</b> Studies and analyses of revisions are carried out routinely and used internally to inform statistical processes.	An assessment of the way in which data revisions are monitored and analysed is carried out with each statistical production team as part of the Eurostat's <a href="#">quality assurance framework</a> . The assessment looks at the amount of data subject to revision, the impact of the revisions on the published results and the extent to which users are kept informed about revisions. Where necessary, improvements are identified and scheduled for implementation. The <a href="#">Quarterly Quality Report</a> on the Principal European Economic Indicators contains a general analysis of revisions.

## Principle 13: Timeliness and Punctuality

*European Statistics must be disseminated in a timely and punctual manner.*

<b>Indicator 1:</b> Timeliness meets the highest European and international dissemination standards.	Details on the length of time between data publication and the reference period are published in the metadata on Eurostat's website. In addition, as part of the assessment of compliance with legal obligations relating to the transmission of national data, Eurostat carries out a comprehensive evaluation of the actual data transmission times achieved by Member States for the major statistical areas.  A study is currently underway to see how national and EU release calendars for early estimates of <a href="#">Principle European Economic Indicators</a> could be aligned.
<b>Indicator 2:</b> A standard daily time is set for the release of European Statistics.	All news releases and Euro-indicators are published on Eurostat's website between 11.00 am and 11.15 am (Central European Time) on the relevant day.
<b>Indicator 3:</b> Periodicity of European Statistics takes into account user requirements as much as possible.	Eurostat discusses with Member States how frequently the national statistics should be collected and published, taking into account the needs of the different data users. The frequency of data collection and publication is stipulated in legislation or gentlemen's agreements.

<p><b>Indicator 4:</b> Any divergence from the dissemination time schedule is publicised in advance, explained and a new release date set.</p>	<p>Eurostat publishes any changes to the pre-announced release calendar in advance, together with an explanation for the change and the revised release date.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 5:</b> Preliminary results of acceptable aggregate quality can be disseminated when considered useful.</p>	<p>Provisional results, based on early or incomplete data from Member States, are published for a number of statistical areas where this is considered by Eurostat to be sufficiently representative and useful to users.</p>
<p><b>Principle 14: Coherence and comparability</b></p>	
<p><i>European Statistics should be consistent internally, over time and comparable between regions and countries; it should be possible to combine and make joint use of related data from different sources.</i></p>	
<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> Statistics are internally coherent and consistent (e.g. arithmetic and accounting identities observed).</p>	<p>In addition to the editing and imputation procedures that national statistical authorities apply to the national data collections, Eurostat production units check the internal coherence and consistency of the data received. These procedures are regularly reviewed and updated if required, as part of Eurostat's <a href="#">quality assurance framework</a>.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 2:</b> Statistics are coherent or reconcilable over a reasonable period of time.</p>	<p>The coherence and consistency checks applied to the data by Eurostat production teams include analyses of data over time.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 3:</b> Statistics are compiled on the basis of common standards with respect to scope, definitions, units and classifications in the different surveys and sources.</p>	<p>Eurostat's task is to provide the European Union with statistics at European level that enable comparisons between countries and regions to be made. Eurostat therefore promotes the use of common standards for European statistics. These are specified either in the relevant legislation for the statistical collections or in gentlemen's agreements.</p> <p>The extent to which common standards are implemented in different statistical areas is regularly assessed as part of Eurostat's <a href="#">quality assurance framework</a>.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 4:</b> Statistics from the different surveys and sources are compared and reconciled.</p>	<p>In addition to the internal coherency checks applied to the data received from national data providers, analyses to reconcile data from different sources are also carried out – for example the regular monitoring of consistency between balance of payments data and foreign trade statistics.</p>

<p><b>Indicator 5:</b> Cross-national comparability of the data is ensured through periodical exchanges between the European Statistical System and other statistical systems; methodological studies are carried out in close co-operation between the Member States and Eurostat.</p>	<p>Eurostat develops and promotes common statistical standards and methods at an international level. There is a close coordination with the European System of Central Banks in the field of monetary and financial statistics, in addition to the statistical cooperation with the United Nations Statistical Division and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.</p>
<p><b>Principle 15: Accessibility and Clarity</b></p>	
<p><i>European Statistics should be presented in a clear and understandable form, disseminated in a suitable and convenient manner, available and accessible on an impartial basis with supporting metadata and guidance.</i></p>	
<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> Statistics are presented in a form that facilitates proper interpretation and meaningful comparisons.</p>	<p>To ensure the published statistics are properly interpreted by users, considerable effort is made to ensure that the content and style of publications is clear and consistent. Eurostat has produced an internal style guide defining the appropriate format and appearance for the different Eurostat publications. There is also guidance to authors of statistical publications, covering the content, linguistic style, presentation of statistical information and use of abbreviations.</p> <p>The statistics on the website are available free of charge and are published in the form of summary tables and as a database which can be analysed online.</p> <p>Details about the published statistics are made available on the Eurostat website, either in pages dedicated to particular <a href="#">statistical themes</a> or in the <a href="#">Statistics Explained</a> section. This section is updated regularly by Eurostat production units. In 2009 a system was put in place for the rigorous quality control of the "Statistics in Focus" publications and during 2010-2011 there will be a review, involving key users, of the layout, content, and quality of the analytical material presented in data releases.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 2:</b> Dissemination services use modern information and communication technology and, if appropriate, traditional hard copy.</p>	<p>European statistics are presented on the Eurostat website and in regular hard-copy documents such as the Eurostat Yearbook and the Eurostat Regional Yearbook. In addition, Statistics in Focus and Pocketbooks provide additional analyses on particular topics and the regular News Releases provide users with the latest results.</p> <p>The balance between electronic and paper publications is constantly being reviewed and as a result there has been a general move towards more electronic publications.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 3:</b> Custom-designed analyses are provided when feasible and are made public.</p>	<p>The flexibility of Eurostat's database analysis software enables users to generate their own data extracts from the Eurostat database free of charge. In addition, Eurostat production units may provide special analyses that are not possible using the Eurostat database. Details of such analyses are published on the Eurostat website together with information on how the results can be obtained.</p>

<p><b>Indicator 4:</b> Access to microdata can be allowed for research purposes. This access is subject to strict protocols.</p>	<p>Access to <a href="#">specific microdata sets</a> is granted to researchers under certain conditions laid down in Commission Regulation (EC) No 831/2002:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The research organisations the researchers belong to must be admissible. For example, EU and <a href="#">European Free Trade Association</a> research organisations are directly admissible. Other bodies carrying out research and research organisation from other countries have to follow admission procedures.</li> <li>• The research project for which the microdata are requested must be accepted. Among other conditions the “research proposal shall indicate in sufficient detail the set of data to be accessed, the methods of analysing them and an indication of the time needed” (<a href="#">Regulation 831/2002</a>);</li> <li>• Countries which provide microdata to Eurostat are informed about the research projects and about the microdata access request. The national authorities can refuse to grant access to their microdata for a specific research project.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Indicator 5:</b> Metadata are documented according to standardised metadata systems.</p>	<p>The statistics released by Eurostat are documented using the <a href="#">Euro-SDMX Metadata Structure</a>. This structure describes the concepts to be used for documenting statistical data and for providing summary information on their quality. It is compatible with <a href="#">SDMX</a>, the common technical and statistical standards and guidelines, created jointly with the Bank of International Settlements, the European Central Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the United Nations.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 6:</b> Users are kept informed on the methodology of statistical processes and the quality of statistical outputs with respect to the European Statistical System quality criteria.</p>	<p>The principal way users are kept informed about the methodologies applied and the data quality is through the metadata published on the Eurostat website. The metadata structure identifies each of the European Statistical System quality criteria and specifies appropriate quality indicators to be included.</p> <p>In addition, the <a href="#">European Statistical Law</a> requires Member States to produce quality reports on the data they transmit. Eurostat uses these quality reports to provide summary reports on the quality of European statistics, which are published on the Eurostat website.</p>