EUROPEAN COMMISSION
EUROSTAT

Directorate A: Resources
Legal affairs; Document management

REPORT ON THE EUROSTAT 2019 USER SATISFACTION SURVEY

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1. Background – about the survey

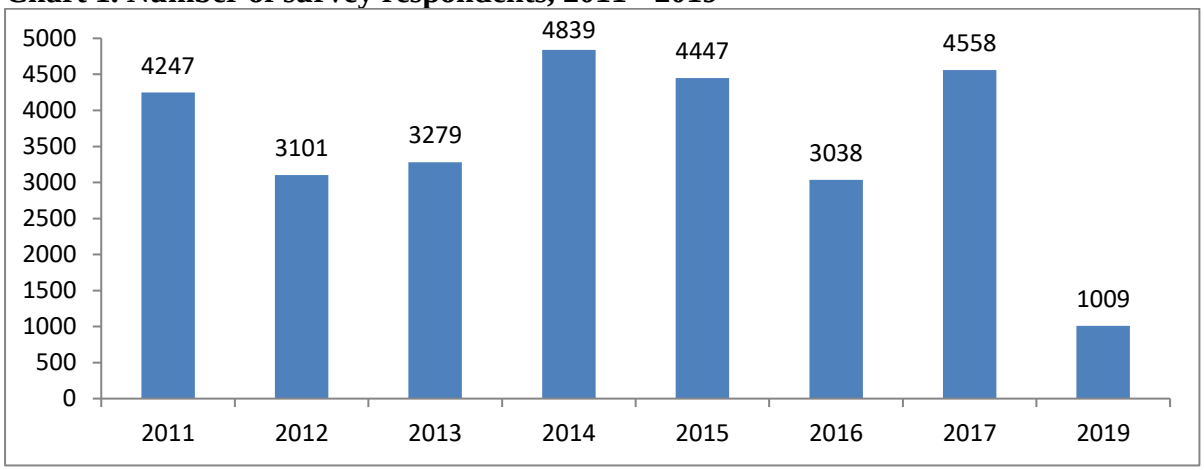
Eurostat's mission is to provide high quality statistics on Europe. In order to measure the degree to which it meets its obligations towards its users, Eurostat carried out a general User Satisfaction Survey (USS) over the period of April – July 2019. It was based on the agreed model questionnaire for the European Statistical System and was designed to obtain a better knowledge about users, their needs and satisfaction with the services provided by Eurostat. The first survey of this kind was held in 2007 and then repeated in 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017. The USS 2019 is, therefore, the 10th of a general nature.

The present survey covered four main aspects:

- information on types of users and uses of European statistics,
- quality aspects,
- trust in European statistics,
- dissemination of statistics.

The survey was carried out online, with a link on Eurostat website. It was launched on 29 April and was open until 9 July. To guarantee a high participation Eurostat used to send an invitation to all users registered on the Eurostat website. However, due to the entry into force of the new Regulation 2018/1725 on personal data protection in the EU institutions[1], Eurostat had to clean the list of users that were registered on the Eurostat website and to revise the way they were contacted. The list of users of Eurostat website now includes only about 24 000 users which could be contacted instead of 172 000 in 2017 and this had a big influence on the number of responses. More channels to advertise the survey were also used (Facebook, Collaboration in Research and Methodology for Official Statistics (CROS) portal) but this could not compensate for the huge reduction of the number of users who could be contacted directly. Moreover, the invitation was sent to 600 researchers, who are using Eurostat's microdata. In the end Eurostat received 1009 replies, compared to the 3000 – 4800 of the previous editions of the survey.

Chart 1. Number of survey respondents, 2011 - 2019



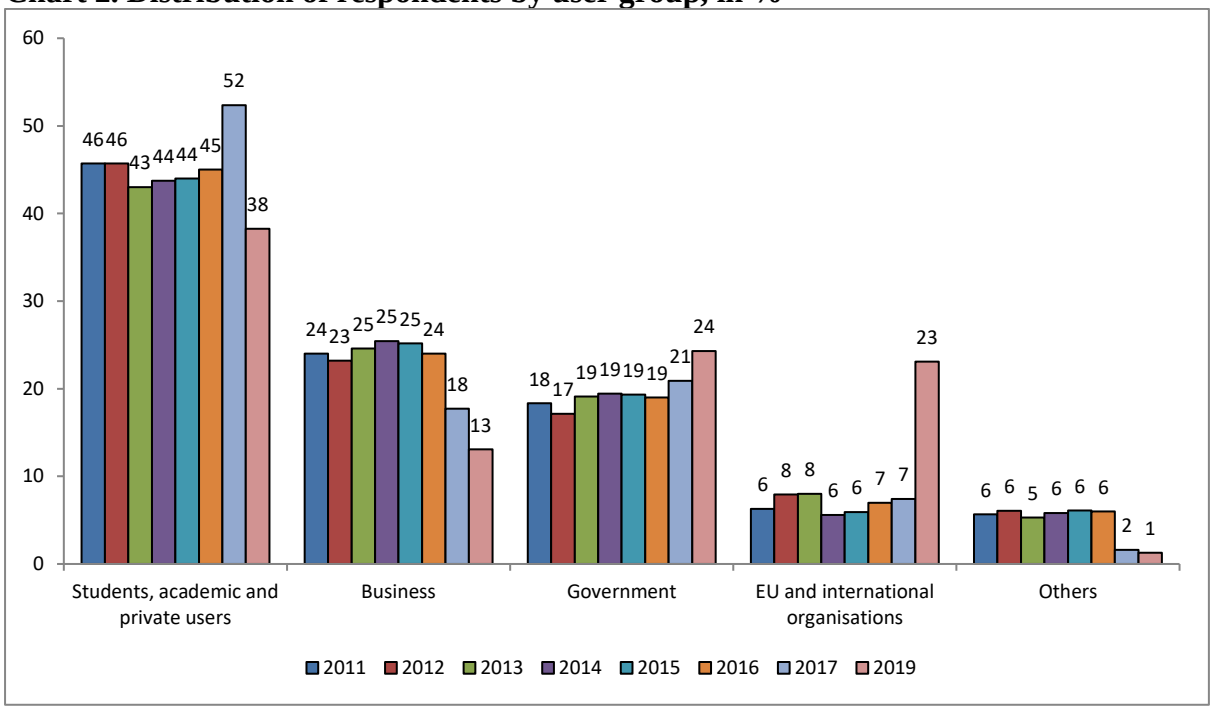
Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

[1] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018R1725

The questionnaire was similar to the one used until 2016, allowing for a comparative analysis over time. The questionnaire used in 2017 was a shorter one, focusing only on the quality of the data and services provided by Eurostat. Changes were made in the sections where the situation has evolved since 2016, as in the questions concerning the dissemination products.

However, on top of having far less replies, the distribution of the respondents among different categories of users was also different from the past, due to the changes in the procedures to inform them about the survey. The most notable change was a larger share of respondents working in the European Commission or in other European and international institutions. This makes the results somewhat less comparable.

Chart 2. Distribution of respondents by user group, in %



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

When analysing the results, users were grouped differently than in the past, so results cannot be compared by user groups but only on an overall level. Such change was implemented to follow the outcome of the Digital communication, User analytics and Innovative products (DIGICOM) project[2]. Users were classified as "light", "intermediate" or "advanced". A similar classification of users was tried in 2017, by distributing the traditional groups of users in the three categories, but the results were not conclusive. This time users were asked to put themselves in each category by using the following definitions:

[2] The project aims to modernize the communication and dissemination of European statistics, by developing innovative products and services, based on new technological opportunities, experiences in the European Statistical System and the concrete needs of users. An in-depth analysis of European statistics users was conducted in DIGICOM, concluding that it is meaningful to group users based on two predefined criteria – frequency and complexity of use – resulting in a new proposed grouping of European statistics users.

- Light user: *e.g. use data visualisations, graphs and statistical articles which are easy to read to get interpreted data; use data to support opinions in discussions, share data on social media, use data in class or want to explore what is available out of curiosity; visit the Eurostat website on a weekly to less than monthly basis; medium to low statistical literacy and computer proficiency.*
- Intermediate user: *e.g. look for raw data / predefined tables or work with existing data visualisations and ready-to-use interpretations in publications/reports to support work, for personal interest (e.g. to verify data in news articles) or to get a basic understanding of what is available for future reference; use Eurostat data on a weekly to monthly basis; have a medium statistical literacy and computer proficiency.*
- Advanced user: *e.g. use the database to mainly obtain raw data and adjust table and data to their needs; draw their own conclusions based on specific data for their job; download data very frequently (even daily); have a high statistical literacy and computer proficiency.*

This new system worked as differences could be consistently noted among the three classes of users.

A separate specific survey was carried out for press and media users. However, some media users might have nonetheless responded to the general user satisfaction survey. They might have identified themselves as belonging to "other users".

The results presented in this report constitute a summary of the most interesting and compelling findings, supported by graphs. The report also shows the main differences compared to the previous survey (2016 or 2017 depending on the question) and an evolution of the users' opinion since 2011, date of the first comparable survey. Even if comparisons of the results have to be taken with caution, for the reasons explained above, the majority of the results show a stability in the opinion of the respondents with small variations in the degree of satisfaction.

2. Main outcomes

General aspects

- In 2019 the survey was open on line for about two months getting 1009 replies, compared to the 3000 – 4800 of the previous editions of the survey.
- Looking at the distribution of responses by user groups, a larger share of respondents was working in the European Commission or in other European and international institutions, 23.1% compared to 6-8% of the previous surveys. All other groups were less represented than in the past. Looking at user types, most of the respondents identified themselves as advanced users (44.2%), followed by intermediate users (35.6%) and light users (20.2%).
- Like in the past, respondents indicated that "Population and social conditions" and "Economy and finance" were the two areas they used most frequently. The former received from 16.3% to 18.4% of responses whereas the latter ranged from 15.1% to 17.2% across all user types.
- Differently from the past, "monitoring or formulating policy" (31.9%) and "general background information" (23.5%) were the most common purposes for all users combined. However, the purposes of statistical data use varied by types of respondents reflecting different needs of each type.
- More than three quarters of participants (77.3%) indicated European statistics to be either "essential" or "important" for their work, the highest share ever registered. Accounting for a breakdown by purposes, statistical data was most significant for "Econometric model building and forecasting", where it was indicated to be "essential" by 56.6% of respondents and "important" by 35.1%. "Preparing legislation", "Monitoring or formulating policy", "Research" and "Re-dissemination of statistical data" also got combined shares of "essential" and "important" exceeding 80%.
- Around one third of respondents (33.6%) stated they used European statistics in their daily or weekly activities, 32.8% did so on a monthly basis and the remaining 33.6% at other intervals.
- User assessment of the quality and user friendliness of Eurostat's products was generally positive, approaching or exceeding the 60% of "very good/good" judgements for most products, with Eurostat press releases (65.9%), Digital publications (65.5%), and the Eurostat database (63.5%) receiving the best scores.
- Eurostat was interested to check if users continue to trust European statistics in a period when European citizens sometimes persist to be sceptic about the role and functioning of the EU institutions. As in previous years and even more this time, responses were overwhelmingly positive, with 96.0% of users stating they trusted European statistics greatly or tended to trust them. Only 3.1% said they did not trust statistics and 0.9% had no opinion.

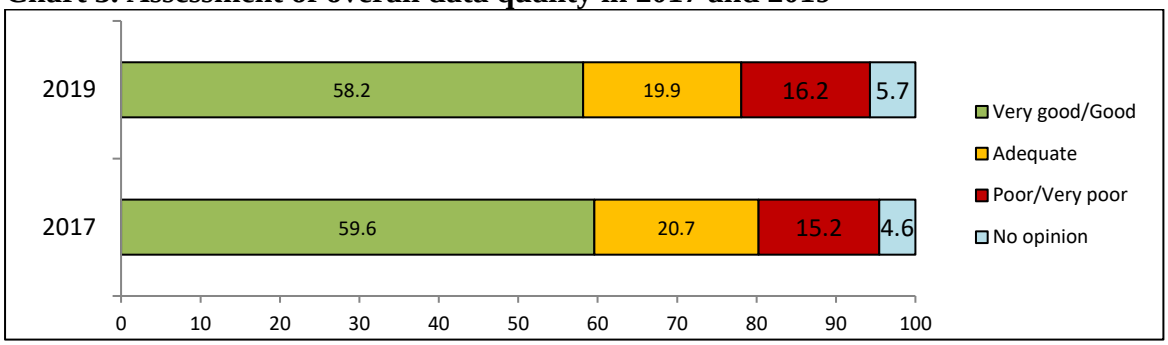
- Trust seems related to the importance and the perceived quality of statistics. Those respondents, for which the statistics are of value, trust more the statistics than those for whom statistics are not so important. The respondents who trust more European statistics are also more convinced of their overall good quality.

Quality aspects

Overall quality

- The level of satisfaction with the overall quality of European statistics remained high, with 58.2% of all users considering the quality to be "very good" or "good" (1.4 percentage points less than in 2017) and 19.9% considering it as "adequate".

Chart 3. Assessment of overall data quality in 2017 and 2019



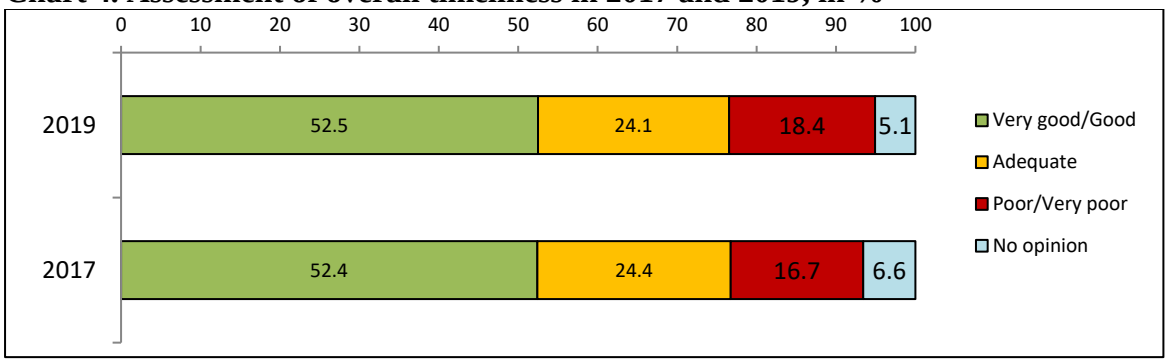
Source: Eurostat 2017 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

- At a more disaggregated level, "Population and social conditions" received the highest positive evaluation this time (59.9% of "very good/good" answers). "Economy and finance" and "Policy indicators" were also close to 60%, with shares of 59.7% and 59.5%, respectively.
- On the other side of the spectrum, "Science, technology and innovation", "Environment statistics" and "Industry, trade and services" were among the ones with lowest share of positive views on overall quality, with 53.0%, 53.2% and 54.2%, respectively. Nevertheless, the differences between all statistical domains (excluding "other statistics") were the smallest registered since the survey started.
- When analysed by user types, intermediate and advanced users were more satisfied (60.4% and 58.0% of "very good" and "good" answers) compared to light users (53.7%).
- The quality of Eurostat's data fares very well compared with other statistical data producers. The majority of participants perceived the quality as better or same, resulting in a combined share of 66.8%. Among other positive sides of Eurostat, users highlighted better quality and reliability of the data provided; more complete, more timely and harmonised data; better coverage and comparability; better metadata; friendly and easier to use interface; and the independence from national politics.

Timeliness

- On average 52.5% of users saw timeliness of European statistics as “very good” or “good”, 24.1% as “adequate” and 18.4% as “poor” or “very poor”, shares very close to those of 2017.

Chart 4. Assessment of overall timeliness in 2017 and 2019, in %



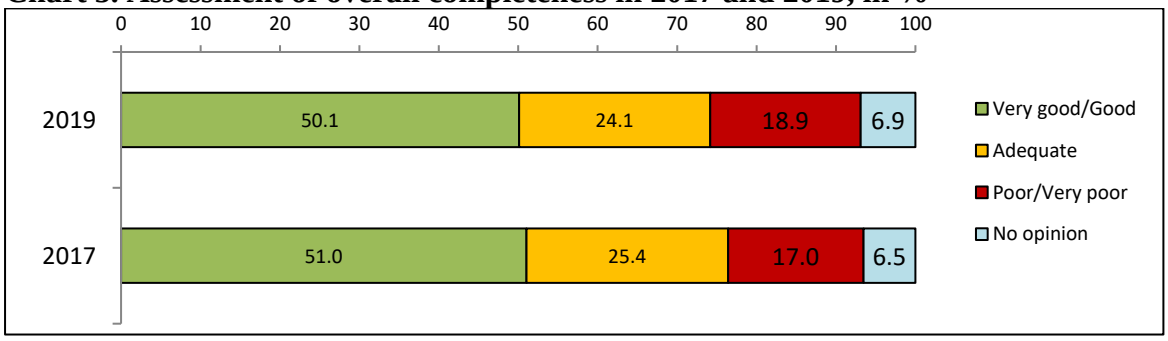
Source: Eurostat 2017 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

- From a statistical domain perspective, “Economy and finance” was again rated as having the best timeliness across all areas, followed this time by “Policy indicators” and “Fishery statistics”, accounting for 57.4%, 56.1% and 55.6% of “very good/good” responses, respectively.
- Looking at the user types, as for all quality dimensions intermediate and advanced users are quite more satisfied than light users. The share of “very good” and “good” responses from intermediate users was 54.8%, from advanced users a similar 54.1% and from light users only 42.6 %.

Completeness

- On average for all areas, 50.1% of users saw data completeness as “very good” or “good”, 24.1% thought it was “adequate” and 18.9% perceived it as “poor” or “very poor”, values that are again close to those of 2017.

Chart 5. Assessment of overall completeness in 2017 and 2019, in %



Source: Eurostat 2017 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

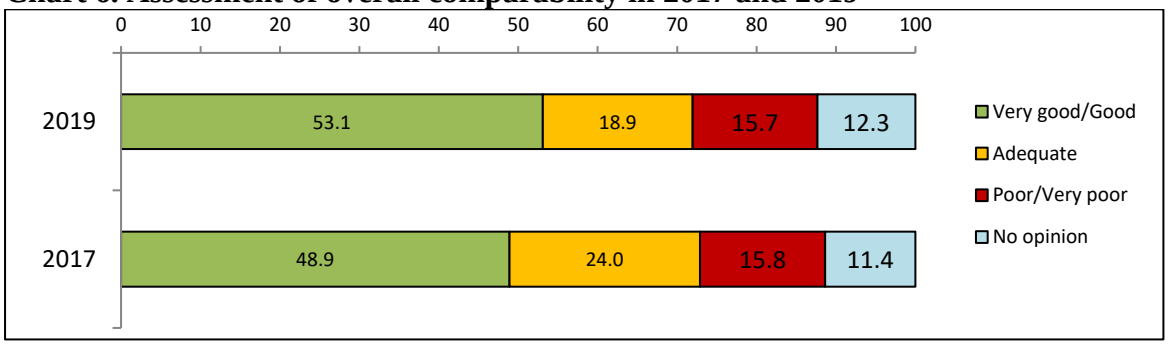
- “Economy and finance” once again stood out as the best rated domain, followed by “Policy indicators” and "Population and social conditions" (54.5%, 54.1% and 51.3% of “very good/good” replies, respectively). The least performing area is this time “Transport statistics” with 39.8% of “very good” or “good”.

- From the user type perspective, there is again a notable difference when comparing advanced and intermediate users with light users (51.5%, 51.0% and 44.1% of "very good/good" ratings, respectively).

Comparability

- Comparability was the single quality dimension with the best score this time. The average of "very good/good" responses across all areas was 53.1%, 18.9% saw comparability as "adequate" and 15.7% did not feel positive about it. Comparability was the quality dimension that saw the most notable variation compared to 2017, with an increase of 4.2 percentage points in the shares of "very good" and "good" responses. That makes the satisfaction share for 2019 the highest ever registered

Chart 6. Assessment of overall comparability in 2017 and 2019



Source: Eurostat 2017 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

- "Economy and finance", "Fishery statistics" and "Policy indicators" were the three domains with more than 55% of the respondents being satisfied, getting shares of 55.8%, 55.6% and 55.2% of "very good" and "good", respectively. For this quality dimension, the differences among the domains were smaller than for other dimensions, "Regional statistics" having still 47.2% of satisfied respondents.
- Once more intermediate and advanced users were more positive than light users. 54.1% and 54.0% of respondents from the first two types judged comparability as "very good" or "good", versus 48.4% of those identifying themselves as light users.

Dissemination aspects

- The overall satisfaction with the Eurostat website, not counting the respondents not giving an opinion, is 58.1% with another 34.9% being partly satisfied. The values are similar to those of 2016 but with 2.2 percentage points less of satisfied users. The share of those not giving an opinion is now of 5.5%.
- On the Eurostat website, the respondents identifying themselves as advanced users are the least satisfied (57.0%) even if the shares are almost equal for the three groups, with 58.5% for the light users and 59.2% for the intermediate users.
- More than half of the respondents (53.0%) found it easy to access and to understand the statistics on the Eurostat website and more than another third (35.4%) partly easy. 8.0% were not satisfied while the remaining 3.6% did not express an opinion. The results are practically identical to the ones of 2016.

- As in previous years, respondents were very positive about the content of Eurostat website. On average 67.7% of all respondents were satisfied with the content, which is 2.9 percentage points more than in 2016 and almost the highest value ever registered.
- Intermediate and advanced users were more satisfied that light users when accessing and understanding the statistics and advanced users were quite more satisfied with the content of the website (71.5%) than those from the other two types (65.2% for the intermediate users and 63.7% for the light users).
- Respondents were less positive on the website's technical characteristics; results are slightly worse than in 2016 and uneven. Some technical characteristics, like clarity of information and performance and speed, get more than half of "very good/good" judgements (53.3% and 53.0% respectively) while for others like the help texts and facilities or the search facilities, the share of satisfied users does not reach 40% and even without taking into account those not giving an opinion, it would not reach 50%.
- User assessment of Eurostat's digital publications and visualisation tools was rather positive, with well more than 60% of respondents, who expressed an opinion, judging the tools as "very good/good", up to the 71.1% of the digital publication on "Air traffic in the European Union". 30.1% to 58.9% of the survey respondents used the different publications and tools but the percentage of those who actually gave their opinion was about 9 - 12% points smaller.
- On an overall level, once again respondents from advanced users giving an opinion are more satisfied with the publications and tools (71.6%), compared to intermediate users (65.2%) and light users (63.0%).
- A new question was added this year, on the usefulness of Eurostat's experimental statistics, a domain that Eurostat has recently started to develop and that did not exist in 2016. The shares of those who gave an opinion was around 10% - 20% of the respondents, from 11.6% (117 respondents) for "World heritage sites statistics" to 21.8% (220 respondents) for "Statistics on the joint distribution of income, consumption and wealth" and "Income and consumption: comparing social surveys and national accounts". The majority of those who gave an opinion found experimental statistics useful. The shares of "very good/good" answers went from 55.8% for the Quality Adjusted Labour Input (QALI) to 66.4% for the Labour market transitions statistics.
- On an overall level, also for this question respondents from advanced users giving an opinion are more satisfied (65.1% of "very good/good"), compared to intermediate users (56.9%) and light users (63.2%).
- Users were asked for the second time this year to rate the information on microdata access services on the Eurostat website. Almost half of the respondents (47.0%) gave an opinion, so showing that they use the microdata. The share was higher, as it could be expected, for the respondents from advanced users (52.7%) than for intermediate users (44.8%) and light users (38.2%). However, advanced users seem to be also more

exigent for this kind of services, as their satisfaction (54.9% of "very good/good") was in this case lower than for intermediate users (60.9%) and light users (59.0%). Compared to 2016, the share of those considering the information on microdata access services as least good registered an increase of 2.8 percentage points. In their comments respondents seemed to consider not only the information on microdata access but also the access procedure and the set of microdata available.

- Users' awareness of Eurostat's release calendar, which provides information on the dates and times of Euro indicators' releases and other news releases and publications, increased by 3.3 percentage points compared to 2016 to reach 34.6% of the respondents. Among user types, advanced and intermediate users, with respective shares of 38.8% and 36.2% were much more aware than light users (22.5%), which could be expected.
- A large part of the users who are aware of the release calendar, are satisfied with its content (67.3%), and another 18.6% said the calendar satisfied their needs partly.
- Metadata was used by more than half of the respondents (57.6%), well more than in 2016 (48.5%), with a big difference among the three types of users. Only 30.4% of light users declared to use metadata, versus 56.0% of intermediate users and 71.3% of advanced users.
- The share of metadata users who find it easily accessible went slightly down to less than a half (48.4%) this year and 45.2% found metadata sufficient for their purposes. This is 8.9 percentage points less than in 2016 and the largest registered decrease of all questions. Another 40.8% of users found metadata partly sufficient and 7.2% stated that metadata was not sufficient.
- Looking at user types, intermediate users were surprisingly a bit more satisfied with the metadata accessibility and sufficiency (51.2% and 45.7%) than advanced users (48.4% and 45.6%), while light users were the least happy (38.7% and 41.7%).
- Leaving out those with no opinion or not aware of the user support function, the degree of satisfaction with it remains the highest of all services, with 75.0% of the respondents saying that they were either "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with the support service provided by Eurostat, the highest value ever reached. All types of users were very satisfied, advanced users (76.5%) a bit more than light users (74.0%) and intermediate users (73.5%).
- The level of overall satisfaction with Eurostat's *data and services* was very high with 70.1% of all respondents evaluating data and services as "very good" or "good", 19.5% as "adequate" and only 3.3% as "poor" or "very poor". The small difference with the highest value ever reached in 2017 is only due to a larger number of respondents not giving an opinion. Advanced users were again more satisfied (72.9%) than intermediate (68.5%) and light users (66.7%).

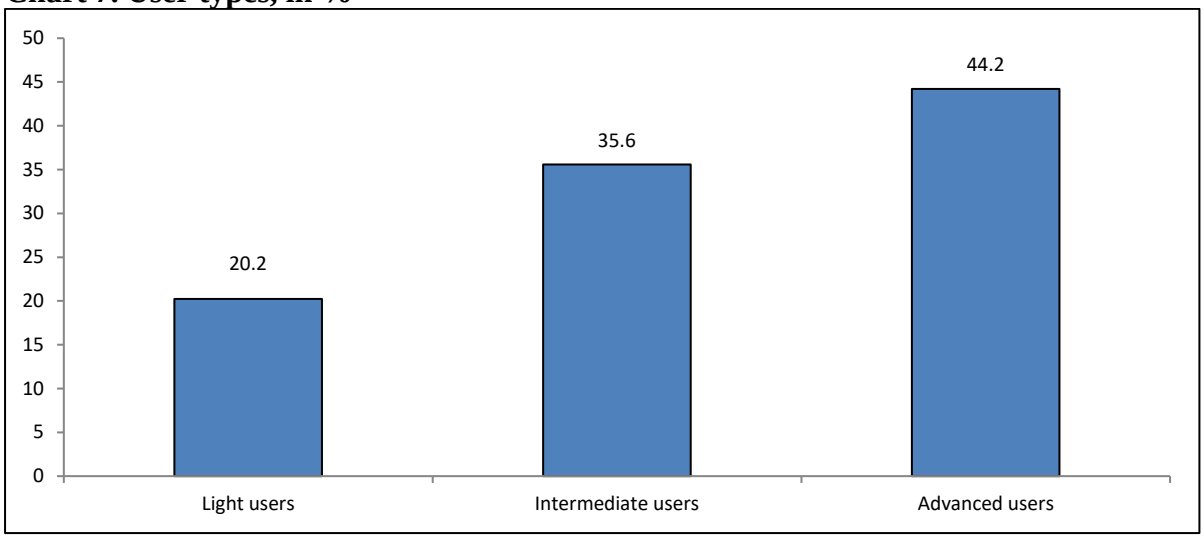
3. Results of the USS 2019

3.1 General information

3.1.1 Who uses Eurostat's European statistics?

Looking at the distribution of responses by user types (Chart 7), a bit less than half of the respondents identified themselves as advanced users, a bit more than one third as intermediate users and only a fifth as light users.

Chart 7. User types, in %



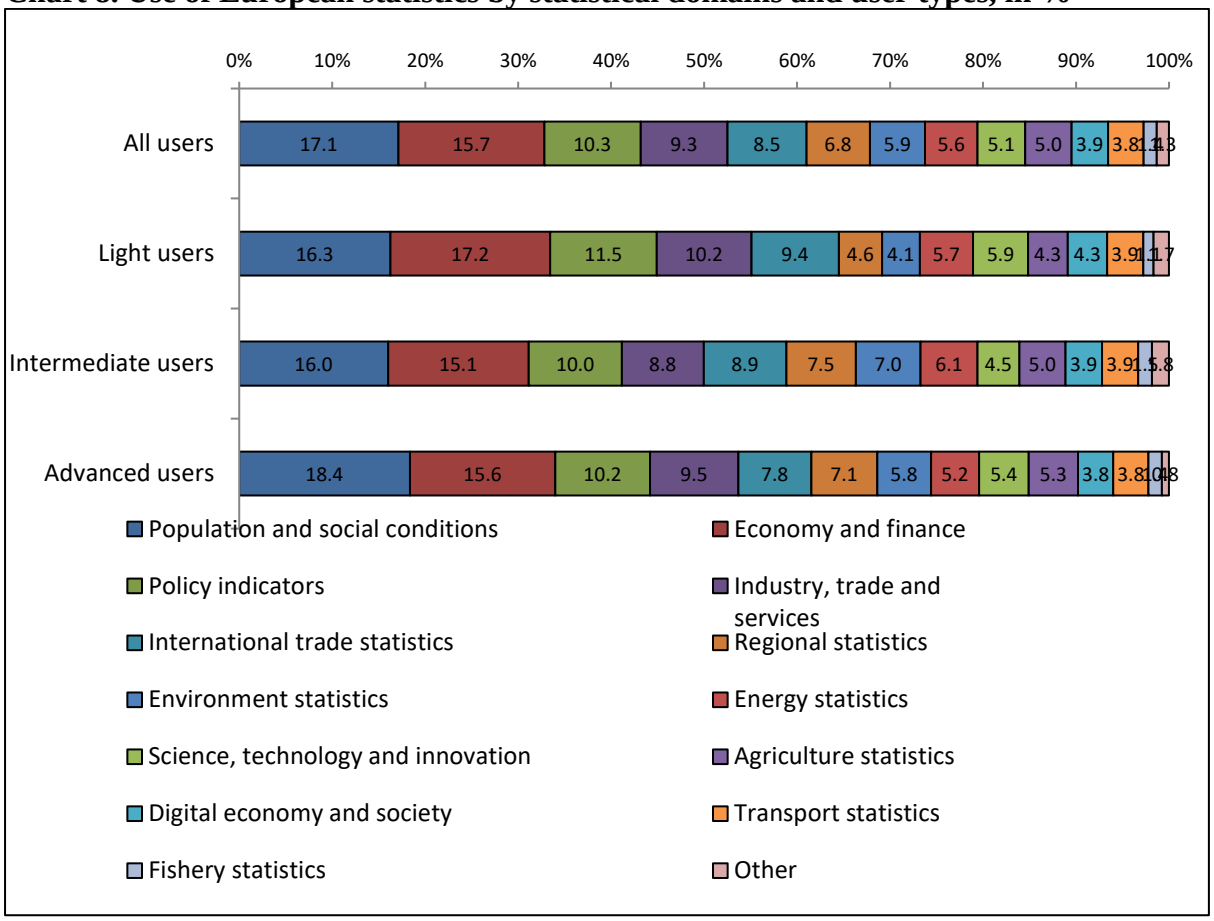
Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

As in previous years, geographical distribution of European statistics' users remained strongly tilted towards the EU countries with 87.0% of respondents coming from the 28 Member States and remaining 13.0% from non-EU countries. On a country level, the biggest proportion came from Belgium (17.7%), which was followed by Italy (9.7%), Germany (8.1%) and Spain (7.1%). It is worth noting that the high percentage of users coming from Belgium can be explained by their relationship to the European institutions based in Brussels.

Participants were also asked to specify which statistics they used most frequently and given an option to pick more than one answer. As seen from Chart 8, "Population and social conditions" and "Economy and finance" remained the two dominating areas across all user types. The former domain received from 16.3% to 18.4% of responses whereas the latter ranged from 15.1% to 17.2% across user types.

The least utilised statistics were "Digital economy and society", "Transport statistics" and "Fishery statistics", with approximate average shares below 4%. When compared to the results of previous years, the order remained roughly the same.

Chart 8. Use of European statistics by statistical domains and user types, in %



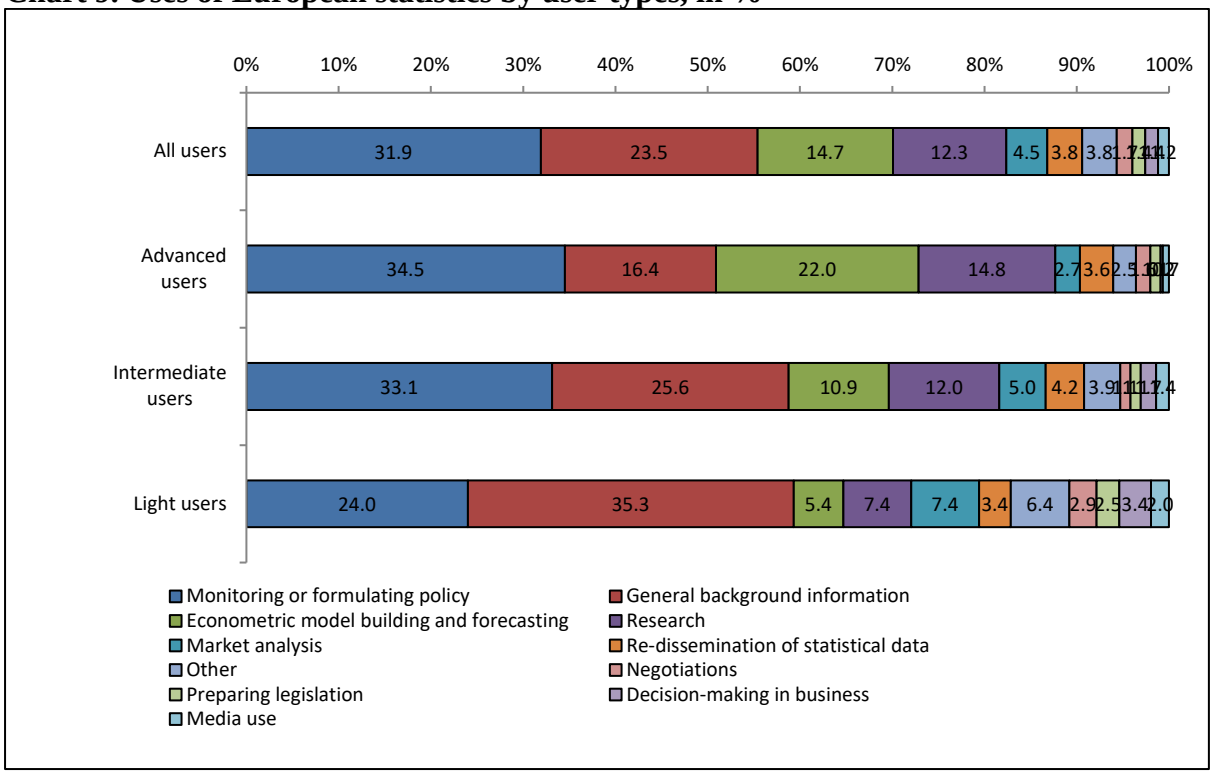
Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

3.1.2 To do what?

The users of European statistics were also asked to indicate the purpose of their interest in it. Multiple responses were available. As shown in Chart 9, "monitoring or formulating policy" (31.9%) and "general background information" (23.5%) were the most common purposes for all users combined. A bigger share than in the past of institutional users can justify the high share of use for monitoring or formulating policy. However, a closer look at the purposes reveals a different nature of statistical data use by types of respondents.

For advanced users the second purpose is "econometric model building and forecasting" (22.0%) and "research" is also more mentioned (14.8%) while "general background information" less (16.4%) than for the other types of users. On the contrary, for light users "general background information" is the most common use (35.3%), which is normal.

Chart 9. Uses of European statistics by user types, in %



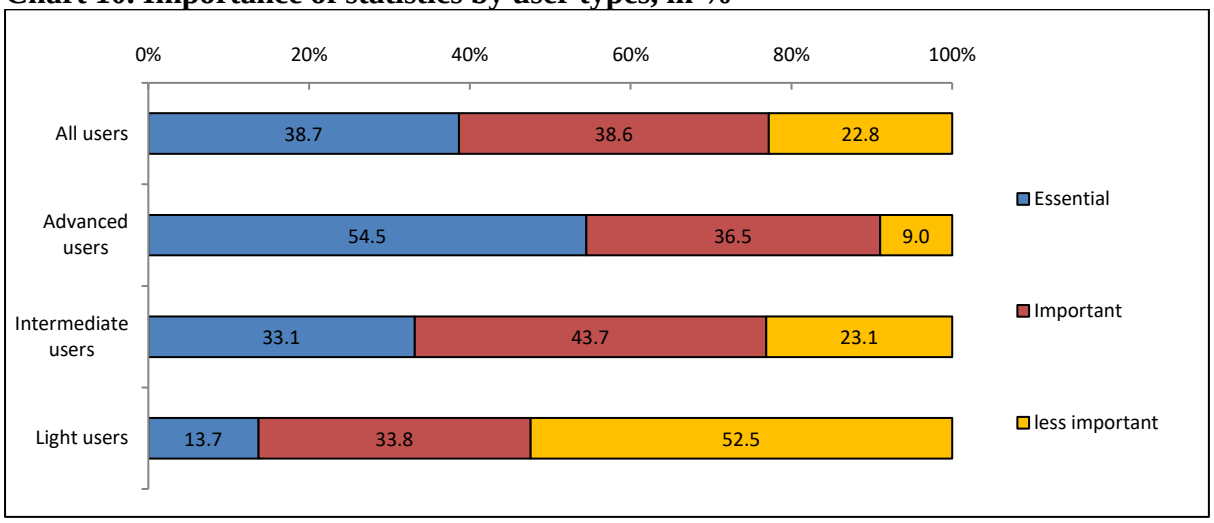
Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

3.1.2.1 How important are the statistics?

Looking at the importance of European statistics, more than three quarters of participants (77.3%) indicated them to be either "essential" or "important" for their work (Chart 10).

As it could be expected, statistics are more important for advanced users, 91% of their respondents declaring them as essential or important, compared to the intermediate users (76.8%) and to the light users (47.5%).

Chart 10. Importance of statistics by user types, in %



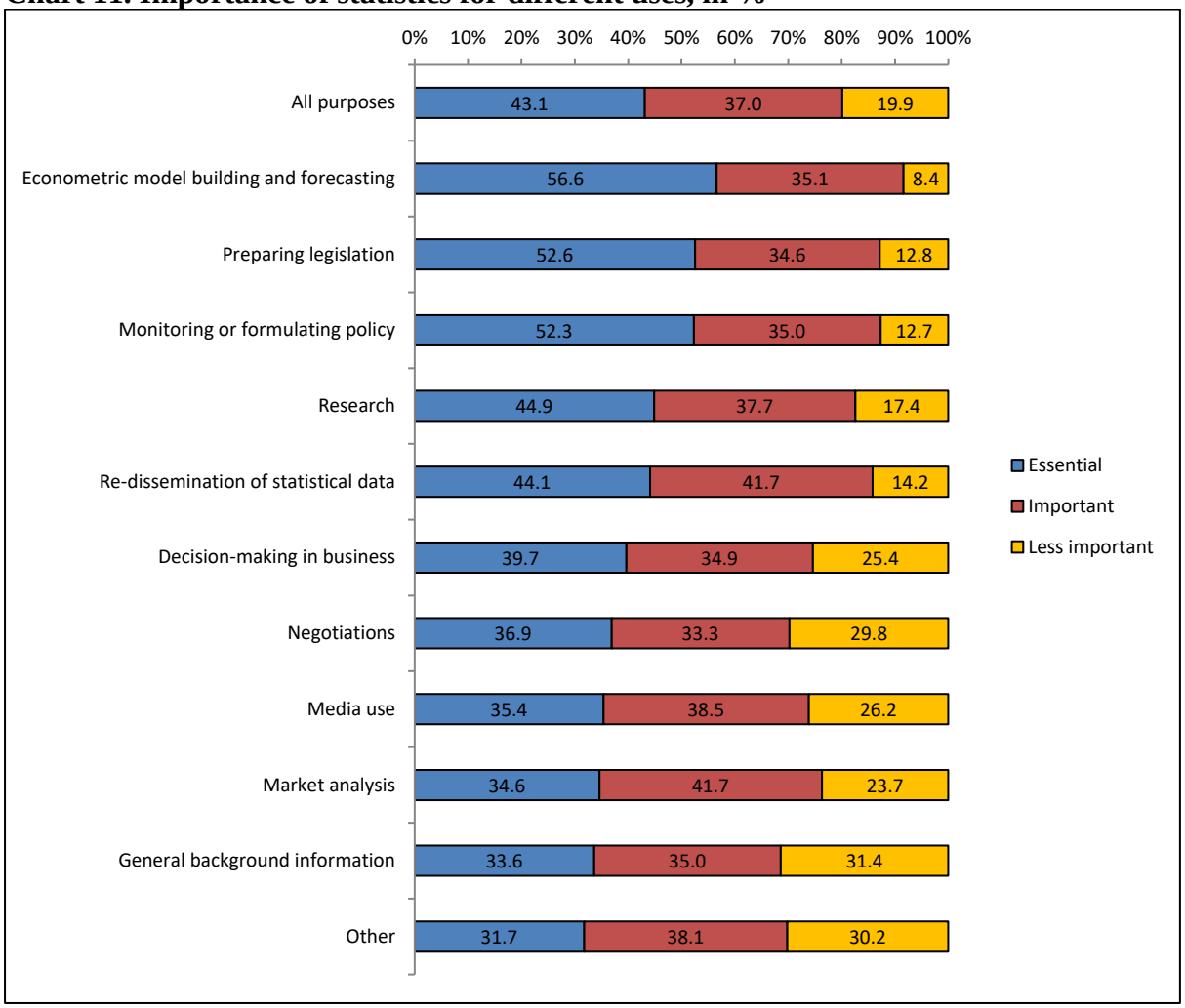
Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

Accounting for a breakdown by purposes, statistical data was most significant for "Econometric model building and forecasting", where it was indicated to be "essential" by

56.6% of respondents and “important” by 35.1%. "Preparing legislation", “Monitoring or formulating policy”, “Research” and "Re-dissemination of statistical data" also got combined shares of "essential" and "important" exceeding 80%.

European statistics were considered least essential for “market analysis” and “general background information” (34.6% and 33.4% share of responses, respectively).

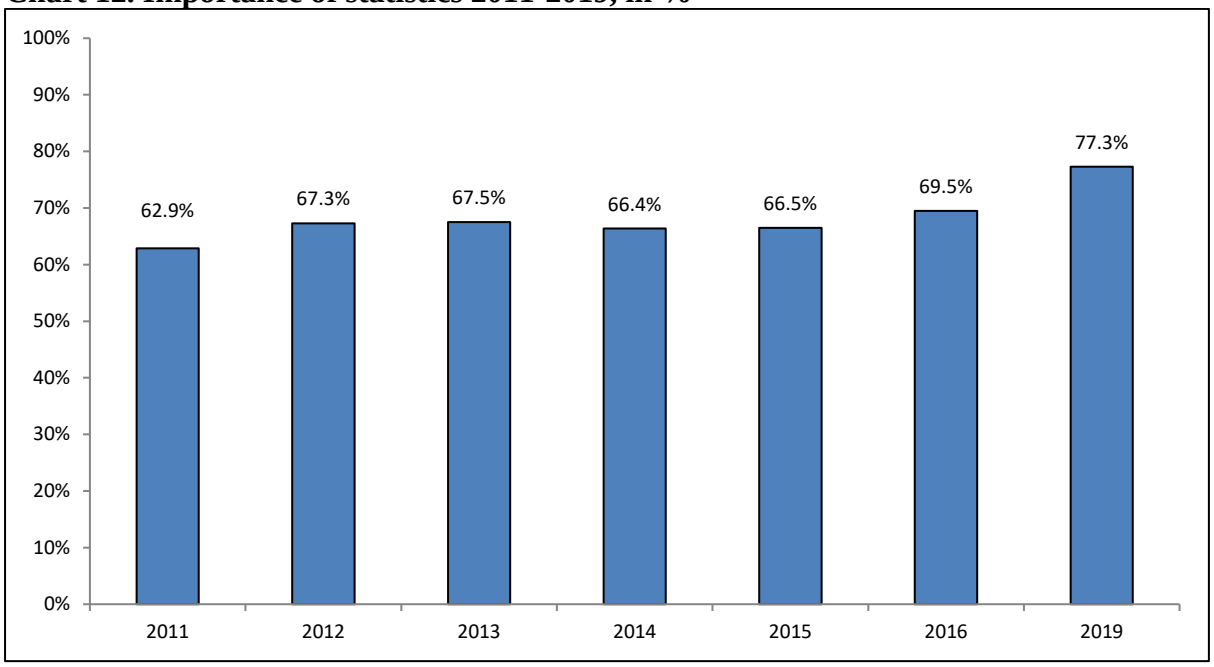
Chart 11. Importance of statistics for different uses, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

Chart 12 below shows the importance of statistics over time, throughout the period between 2011 and 2019. The importance of statistics has increased this year, with more than three quarters of participants (77.3%) reporting them to be either “essential” or “important” for their work, reaching its highest value ever.

Chart 12. Importance of statistics 2011-2019, in %



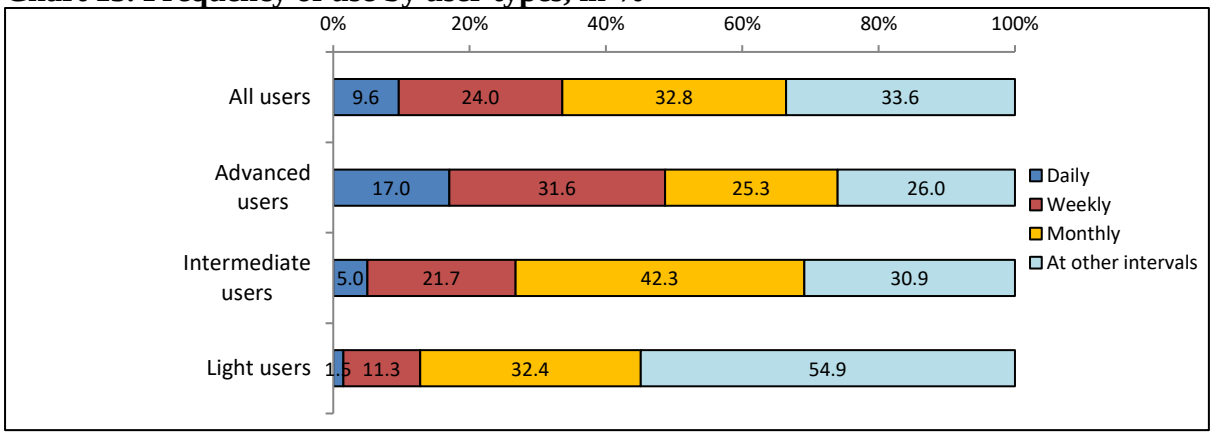
Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

3.1.2.2 How often are European statistics used?

Knowing the purpose of use and importance of statistical information, it is interesting to see how frequently statistics were used. As Chart 13 shows, almost one third of users (33.6%) stated they used European statistics in their daily or weekly activities, 32.8% did so on a monthly basis and the remaining 33.6% at other intervals. When compared to the results of the survey carried out for media users, statistical information was used more frequently by press and media representatives, with a percentage of daily and weekly usage exceeding 70%.

Advanced users are the most frequent users of European statistics with 48.6% using them daily or weekly.

Chart 13. Frequency of use by user types, in %

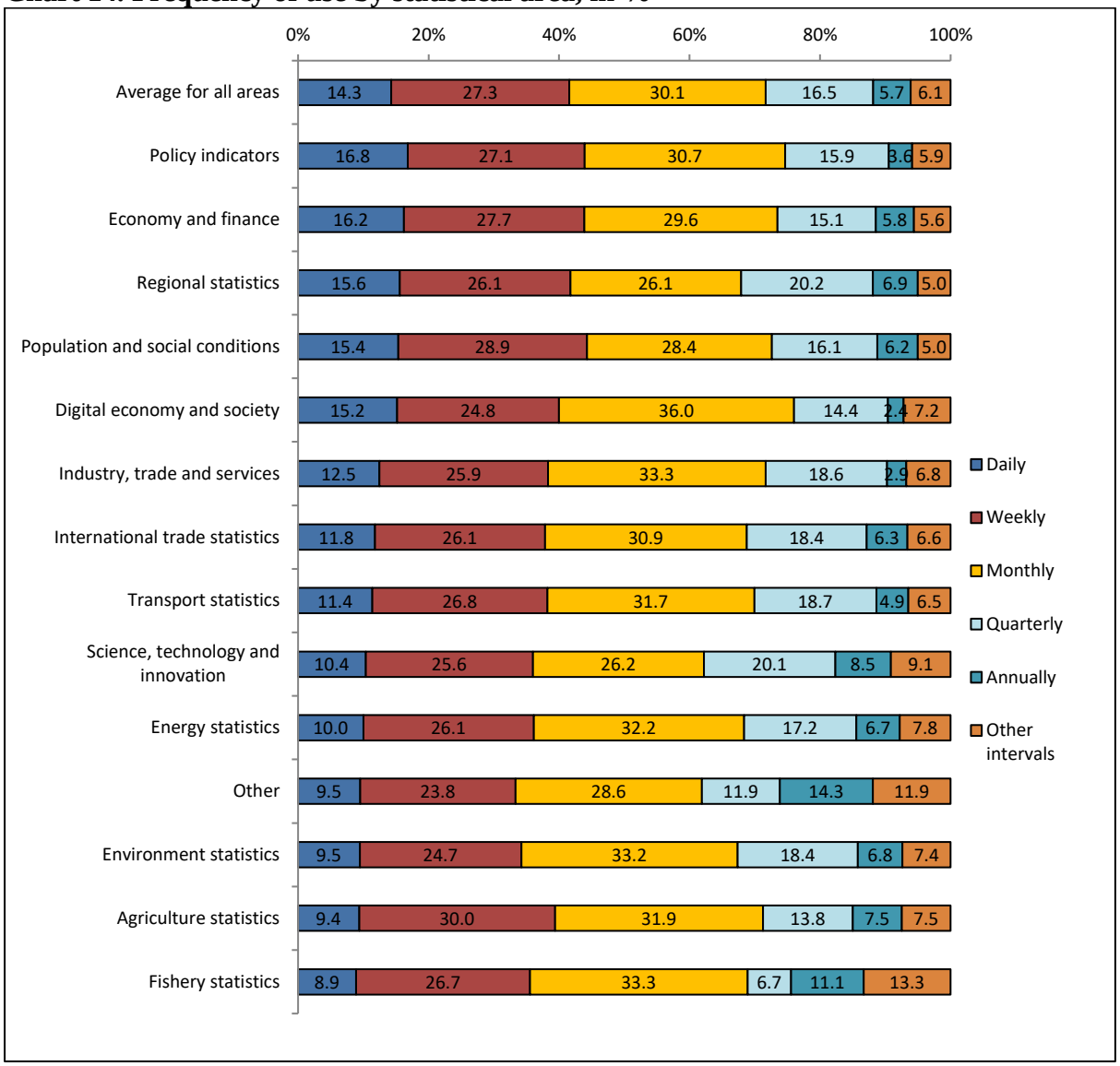


Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

The frequency also differed by statistical domains (Chart 14). Highest daily use was found in the areas of "Policy indicators" (16.8%), "Economy and finance" (16.2%) and "Regional statistics" (15.6%). On the opposite, least frequently utilised domains contained "Fishery

statistics", "Agriculture statistics" and "Environment statistics". The differences, however, were rather small.

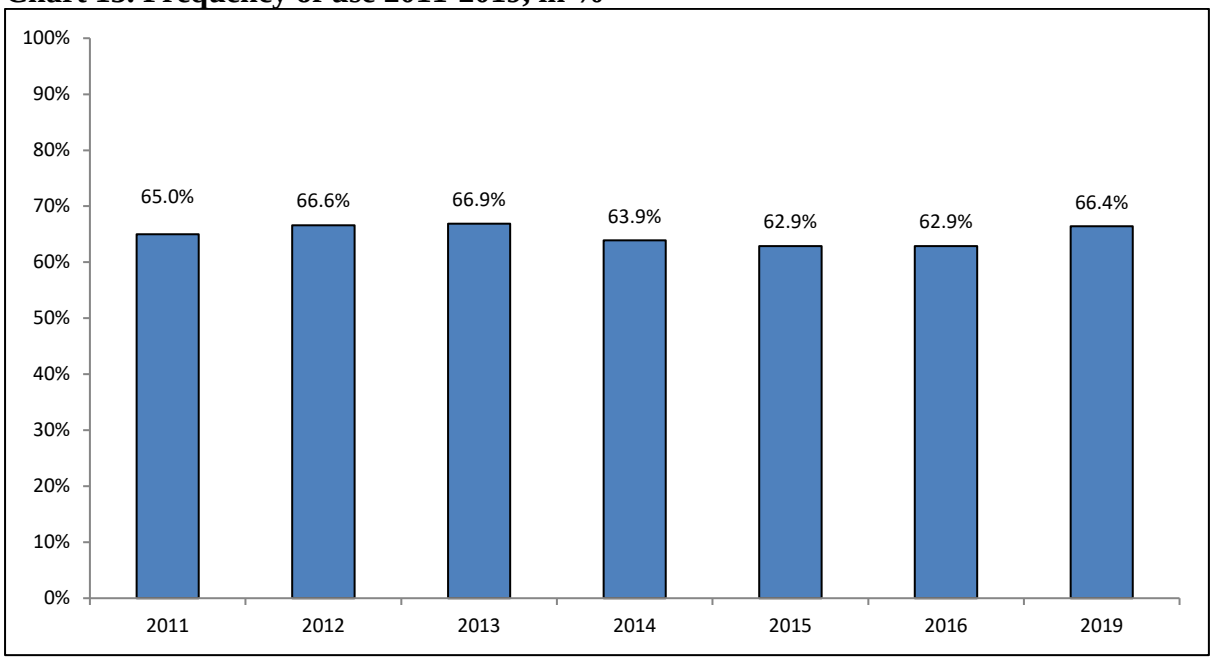
Chart 14. Frequency of use by statistical area, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

Chart 15 illustrates the trend of the frequency of use between 2011 and 2019. More specifically, it shows the percentage of respondents who use Eurostat's statistics on daily, weekly or monthly basis. Overall, the use of the statistics has increased (66.4%), reaching almost the peak of 2012 and 2013 when two thirds of respondents (66.6% - 66.9%) used statistics at least on a monthly basis.

Chart 15. Frequency of use 2011-2019, in %



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

3.2 Information on quality aspects

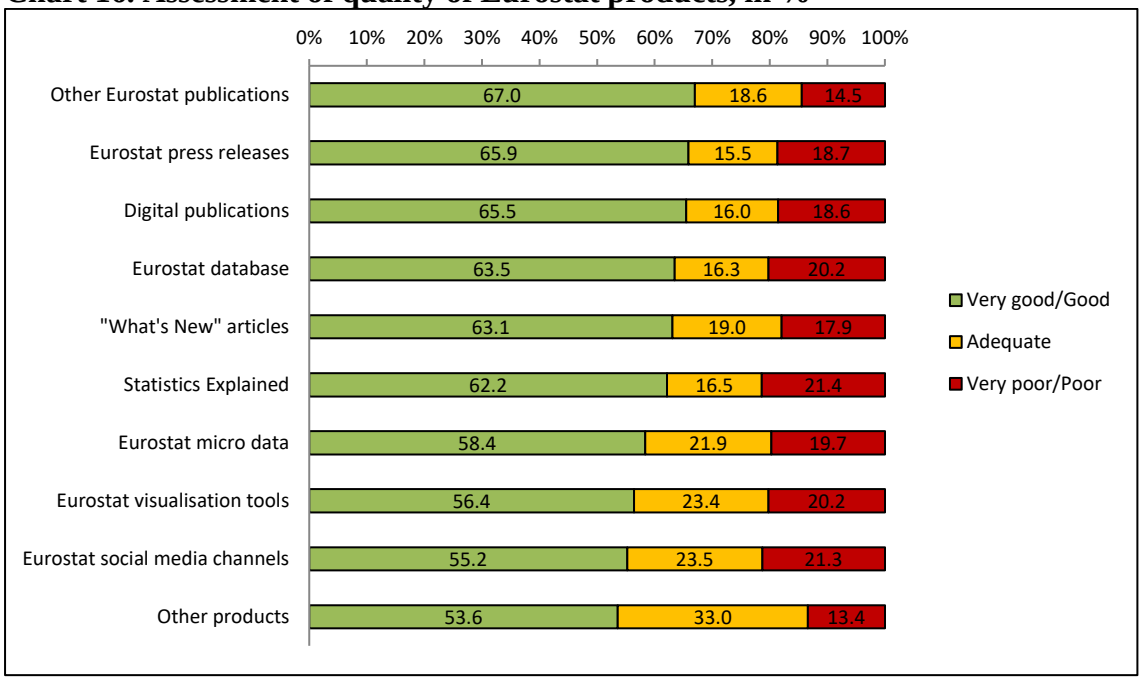
In accordance with Eurostat's mission statement, quality considerations play a central role in both its corporate management and day-to-day statistical operations. It is thus important to find out how users assess the quality of the European statistics produced and disseminated by Eurostat and of the products released by Eurostat. In addition to the overall data quality, the survey looked at three different aspects of data quality that are considered as the most important for Eurostat - timeliness, completeness and comparability.

3.2.1 What are the perceived quality and user friendliness of Eurostat products?

Respondents were asked to assess the quality and friendliness of Eurostat products.

As for quality, the highest evaluations were received by Eurostat press releases (65.9%) and Digital publications (65.5%), followed this year by the Eurostat database (63.5%). For all the other tools the rate of "very good/good" replies were also at around 55% or above.

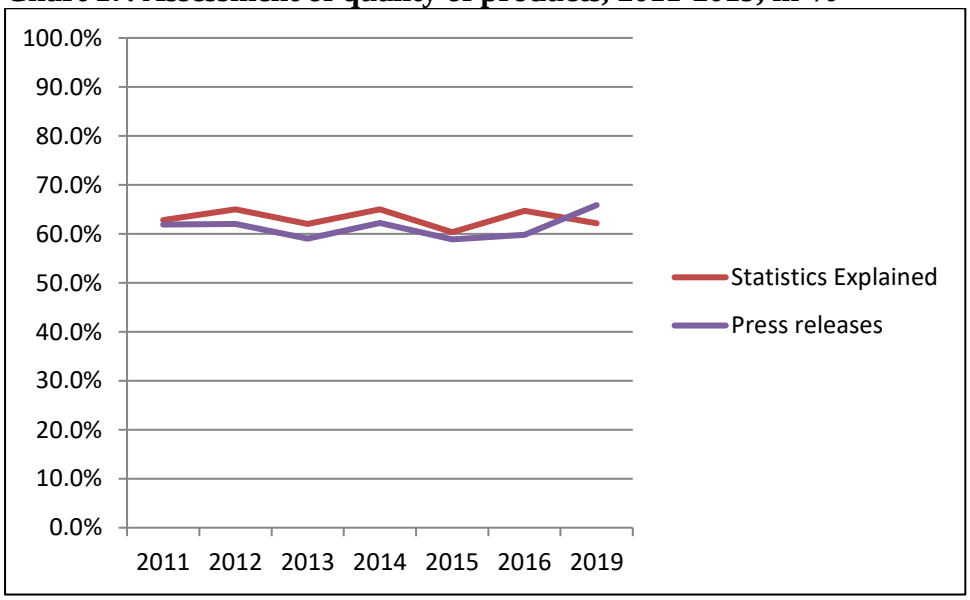
Chart 16. Assessment of quality of Eurostat products, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

Looking at the evolution over time of the assessment of the quality of products in Chart 17, a substantial stability can be observed with small variations each year for the two products released during the overall period of observation.

Chart 17. Assessment of quality of products, 2011-2019, in %

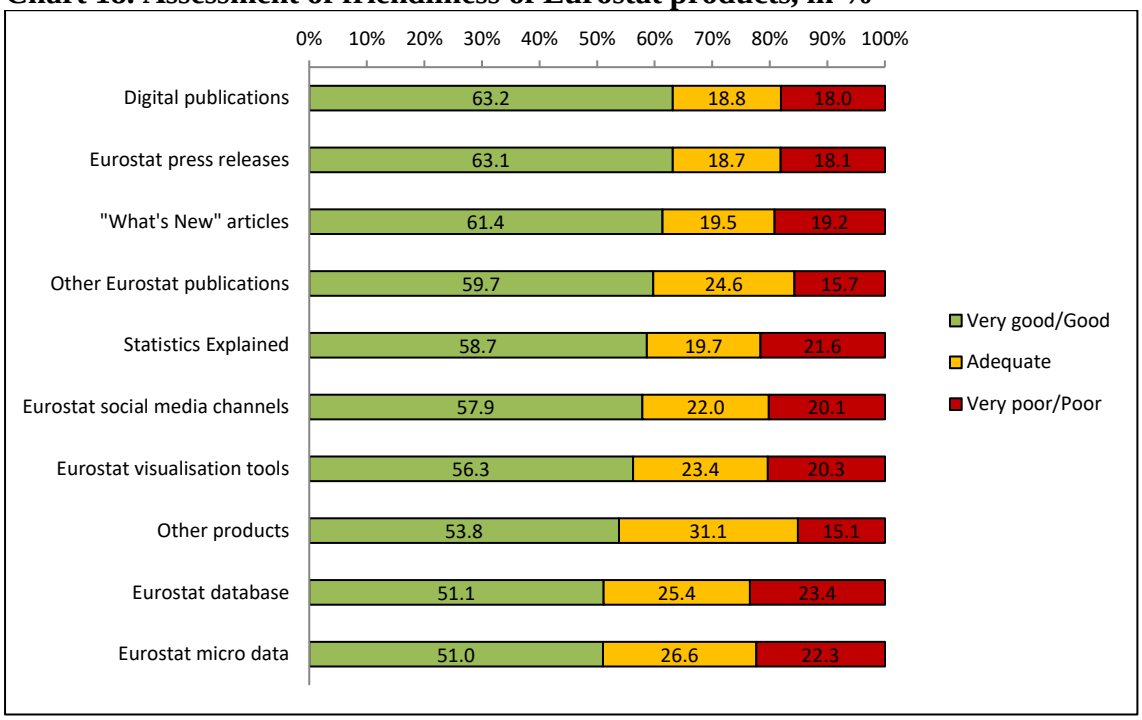


Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

The perceived quality of Press releases in 2019 for the respondents in the USS 2019 has increased by 6.1 percentage points since 2016, up to 65.9%, which is now in line with the opinion reported in the survey for media users (68.1%), whereas in the past this difference was much wider.

As for the user friendliness of products, the highest evaluations were received by Digital publications (63.2%), followed by Eurostat press releases (63.1%) and “What’s New” articles (61.4%). For all the other products the rate of "very good/good" replies were also above 50%.

Chart 18. Assessment of friendliness of Eurostat products, in %



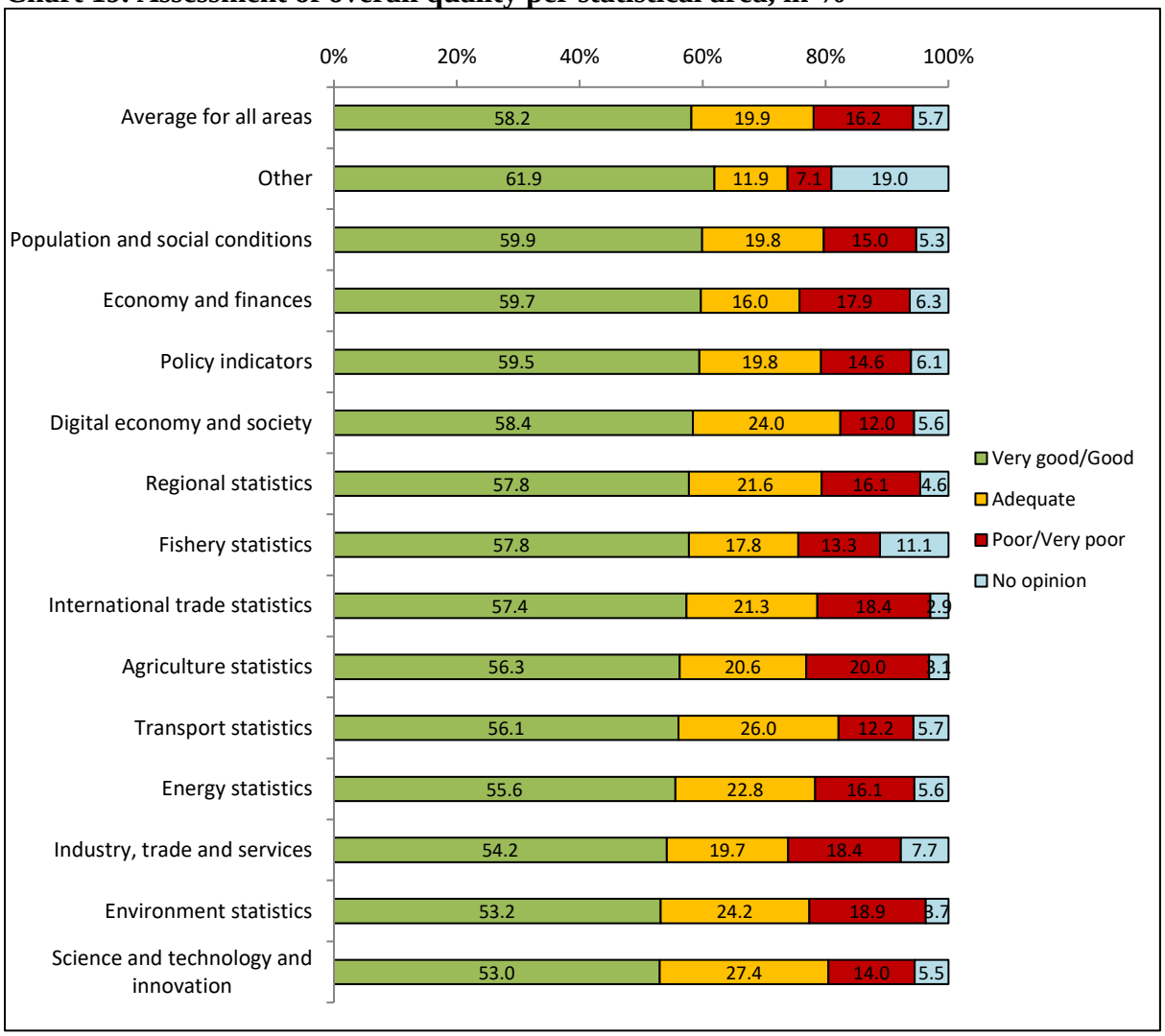
Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

Respondents could also give comments on the quality of the products. Only few did so. A couple pointed to the difficulty to find the the data used for the statistics explained. It was also suggested to publish more info on social media.

3.2.2 Overall data quality

As in the past, this year evaluations were generally positive with close to six out of 10 respondents viewing the overall quality of statistics as “very good” or “good”. As can be seen from Chart 19, the level of satisfaction with the overall quality of European statistics remained high, with 58.2% of all respondents considering the quality to be “very good” or “good” and 19.9% considering it as “adequate".

Chart 19. Assessment of overall quality per statistical area, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

At a more disaggregated level, “Population and social conditions” received the highest positive evaluation (59.9% of “very good/good” answers). “Economy and finance” and “Policy indicators” were also close to 60%, with shares of 59.7% and 59.5%, respectively. “Population and social conditions” was for once the highest rated area by overtaking “Economy and finance”, which continues to get the best scores for the other quality dimensions. Given the interest in economic, financial and social developments in Europe during the recent years and the fact that these domains are used most frequently, high evaluations represent positive views of European statistics users. A more detailed analysis of the two domains revealed that “Government finance statistics”, “Living conditions and social protection” and “Population” came to the top of the list receiving 65.9%, 62.8% and 62.0%, respectively, of “very good/good” assessments.

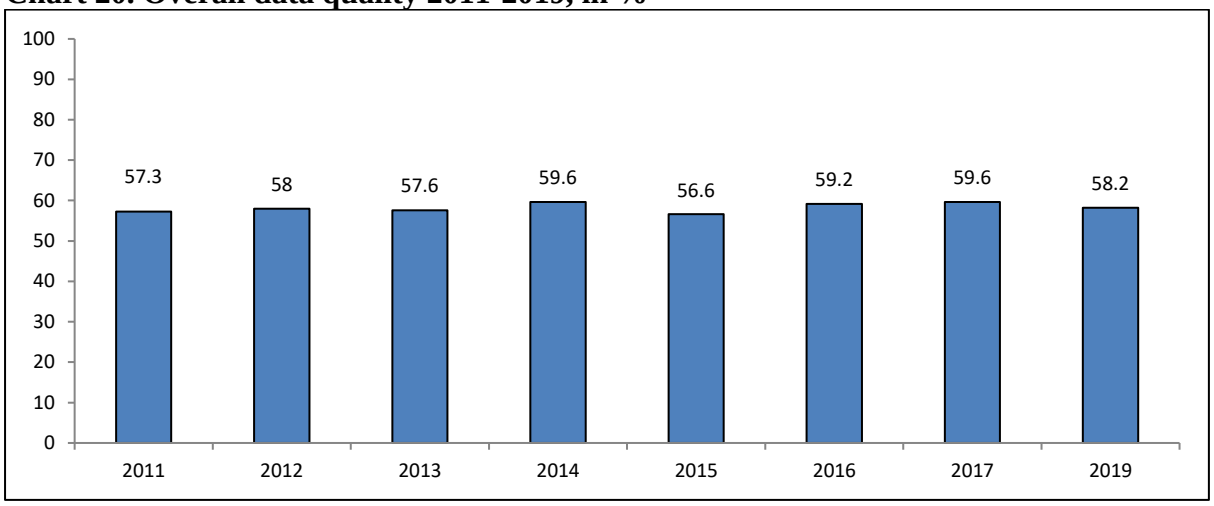
On the other side of the spectrum, "Science, technology and innovation", “Environment statistics” and “Industry, trade and services" were among the ones with lowest share of positive views on overall quality, with 53.0%, 53.2% and 54.2%, respectively. Nevertheless,

the differences between all statistical domains (excluding "other statistics") were the smallest registered since the survey started.

When analysed by user types, intermediate and advanced users were more satisfied (60.4% and 58.0% of "very good" and "good" answers) compared to light users (53.7%).

Compared to 2017, the share of those considering the overall quality at least good registered a small decrease of 1.4 percentage points. Chart 20 shows that there has not been a lot of difference with the overall data assessment in the period from 2011 to 2019, with similar values for all years.

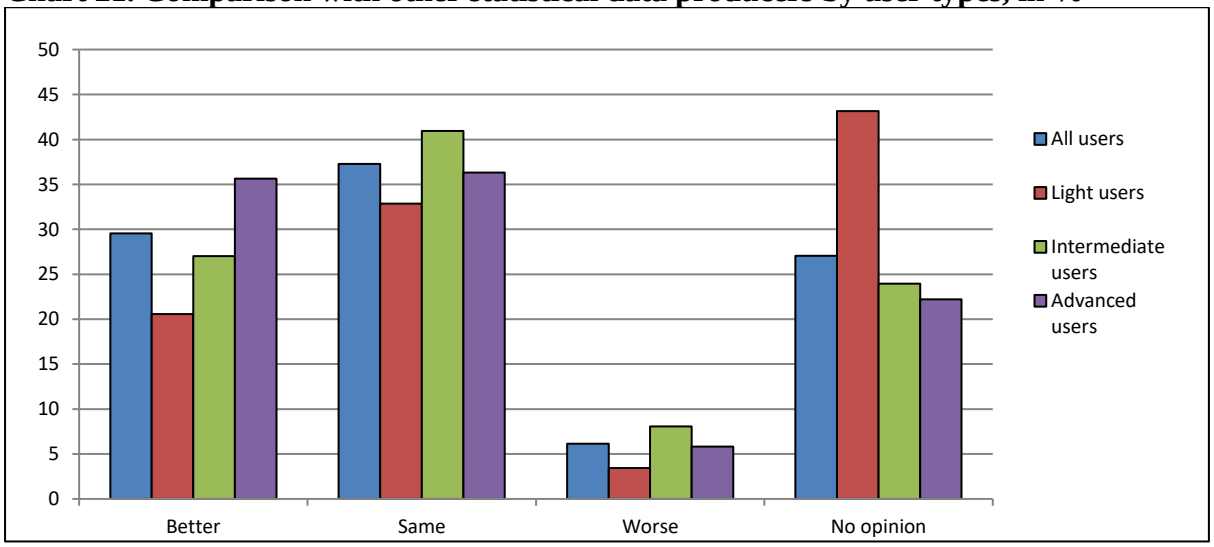
Chart 20. Overall data quality 2011-2019, in %



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

Given that there are several producers of European statistics, respondents were also asked to compare the quality of Eurostat's data with that of national statistical institutes (NSIs) and other international organisations. The results are presented in Chart 21.

Chart 21. Comparison with other statistical data producers by user types, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

As can be seen, the majority of participants consider the quality to be better or the same, resulting in a combined share of 66.8%. Among other positive sides of Eurostat, users highlighted better quality and reliability of the data provided, more complete, more timely and harmonised data, better coverage and comparability, better metadata, friendly and easier to use interface, and the independence from national politics.

Only few respondents (6.1%) considered Eurostat's data of a worse quality when compared to other sources. Respondents mentioned shorter time series, data changes not signalled, limited coverage of non-EU sources, data timeliness, missing data and a worse website as major drawbacks due to which they may prefer other data sources. It is interesting to note that on topics like data timeliness and the quality of the website, users may have contradictory opinions.

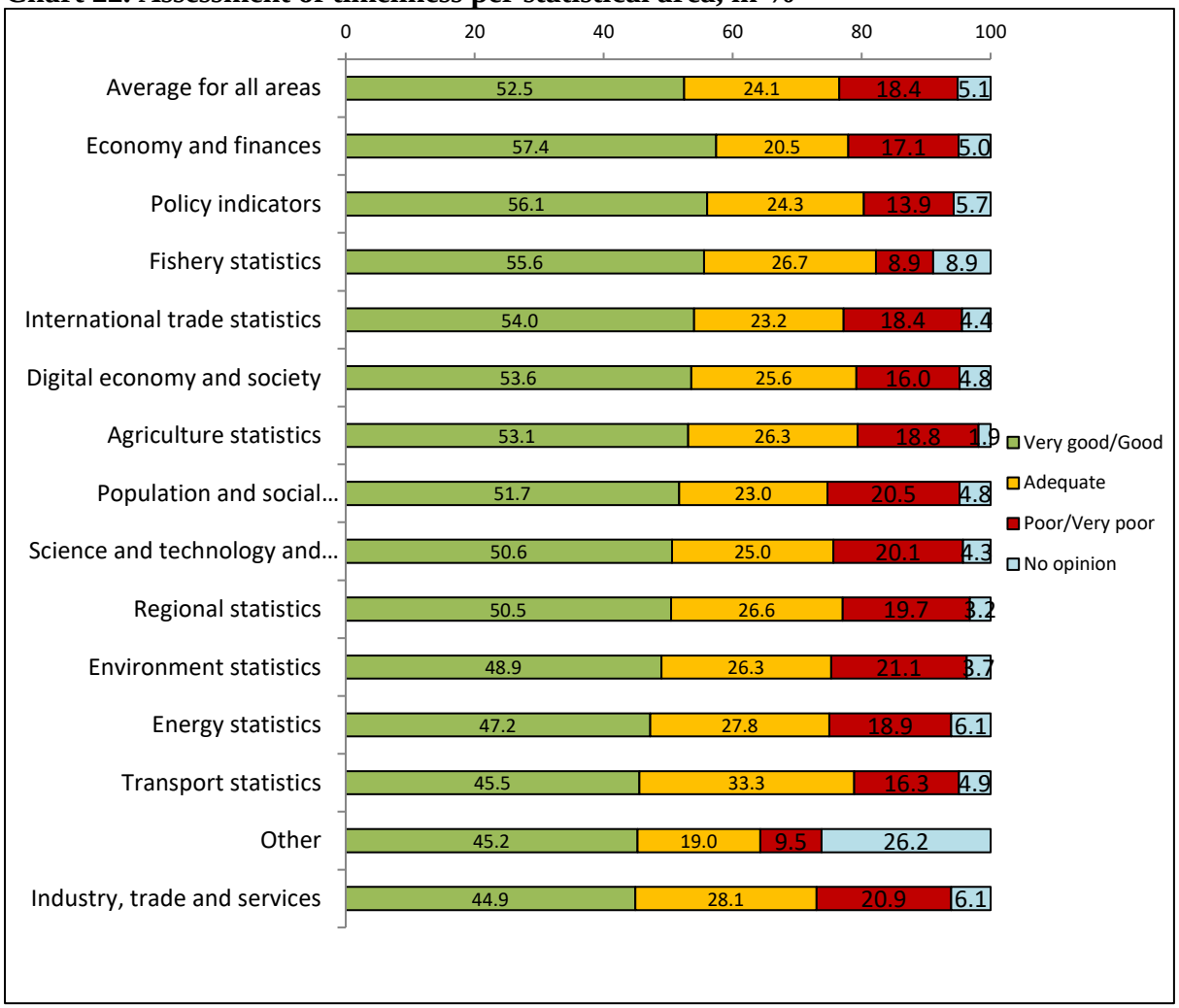
It is also worth noting that more than a quarter (27.1%) of the respondents did not have an opinion on the issue, suggesting that a relatively large share of Eurostat statistics' users either do not use other data sources or find it hard to formulate such comparisons.

3.2.3 Timeliness

The aspect of information timeliness reflects the length of time between its availability and the event or phenomenon it describes. According to the results, which are presented in Chart 22, on average 52.5% of users saw timeliness of European statistics as "very good" or "good", 24.1% as "adequate" and 18.4% as "poor" or "very poor. Timeliness this time is not the quality dimension, of the three investigated, with the best performance as in the past, because respondents judged comparability slightly better.

From a statistical domain perspective, "Economy and finance" was again rated as having the best timeliness across all areas, followed this time by "Policy indicators" and "Fishery statistics", accounting for 57.4%, 56.1% and 55.6% of "very good/good" responses, respectively.

Chart 22. Assessment of timeliness per statistical area, in %

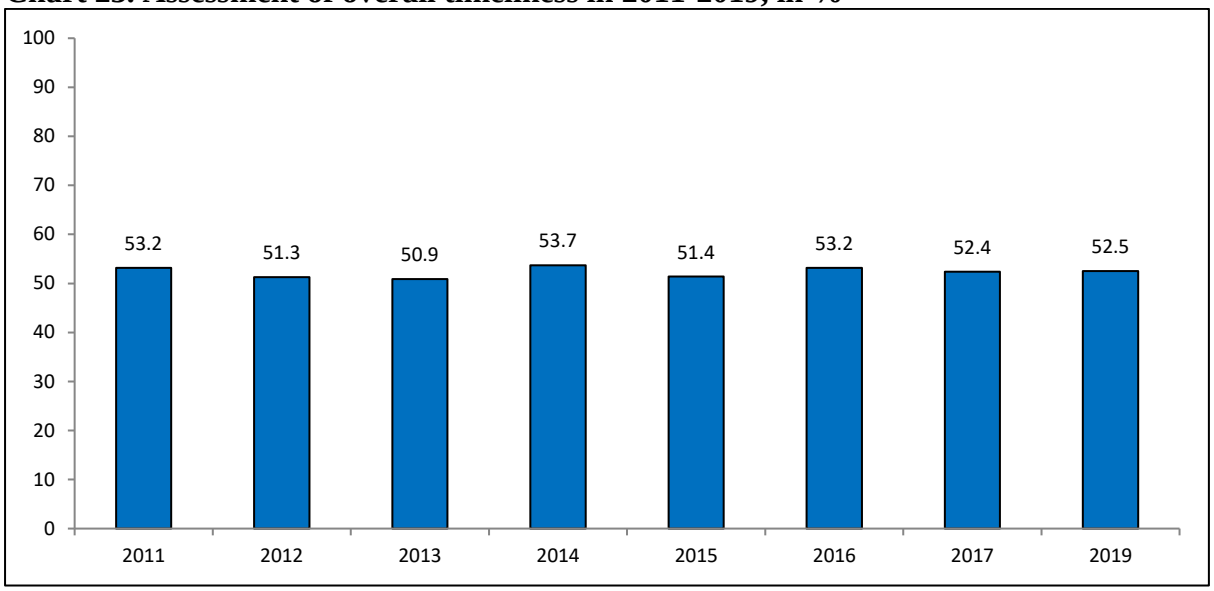


Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

Looking at the user types, as for all quality dimensions intermediate and advanced users are quite more satisfied than light users. The share of "very good" and "good" responses from intermediate users was 54.8%, from advanced users a similar 54.1% and from light users only 42.6%.

The assessment of the overall timeliness this year is almost the same as in the previous survey in 2017. In fact, as Chart 23 demonstrates, there have been very limited variations during the entire period of observations.

Chart 23. Assessment of overall timeliness in 2011-2019, in %



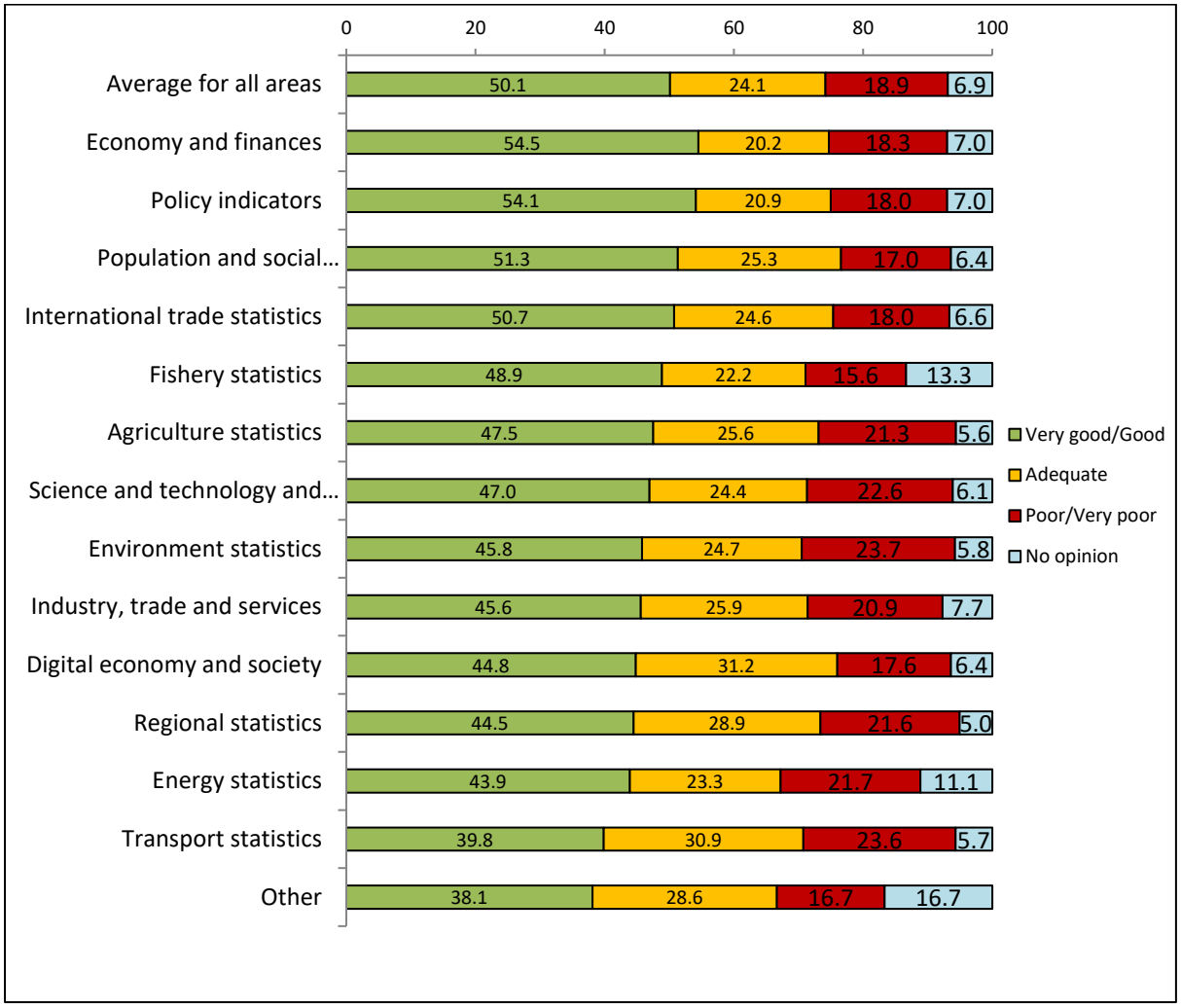
Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

3.2.4 Completeness

Completeness is the extent to which all statistics that are needed are available. It is usually described as a measure of the amount of available data from a statistical system compared to the amount that was expected to be obtained. Chart 24 presents the results of user views on data completeness in 2019.

On average for all areas, 50.1% of users saw data completeness as “very good” or “good”, 24.1% thought it was “adequate” and 18.9% perceived it as “poor” or “very poor”. “Economy and finance” once again stood out as the best rated domain, followed by “Policy indicators” and "Population and social conditions" (54.5%, 54.1% and 51.3% of “very good/good” replies, respectively). The least performing area is this time “Transport statistics” with 39.8% of “very good” or “good”.

Chart 24. Assessment of completeness of European statistics per statistical area, in %

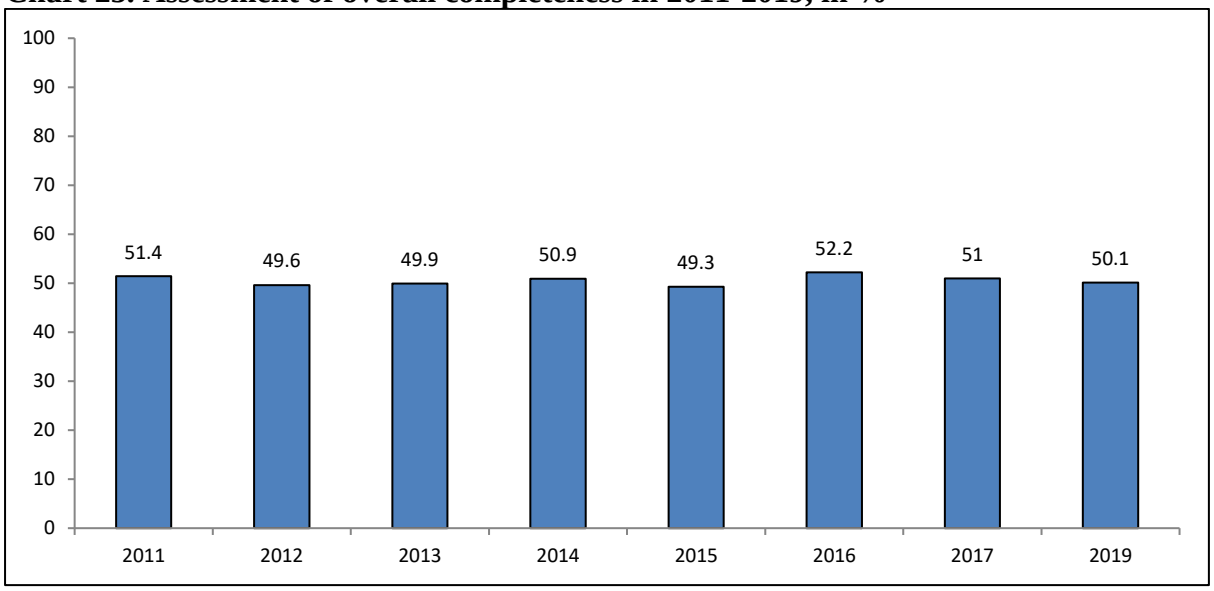


Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

From the user type perspective, there is again a notable difference when comparing advanced and intermediate users with light users (51.5%, 51.0% and 44.1% of "very good/good" ratings, respectively).

As Chart 25 shows, compared to 2017 there was a very small decrease (0.9 percentage points) in the "very good" and "good" assessments of data completeness this year, which makes completeness the quality dimension with the lowest overall score. Again, as can be seen in Chart 25, the differences in the user satisfaction with this indicator in the last nine years were quite small.

Chart 25. Assessment of overall completeness in 2011-2019, in %



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

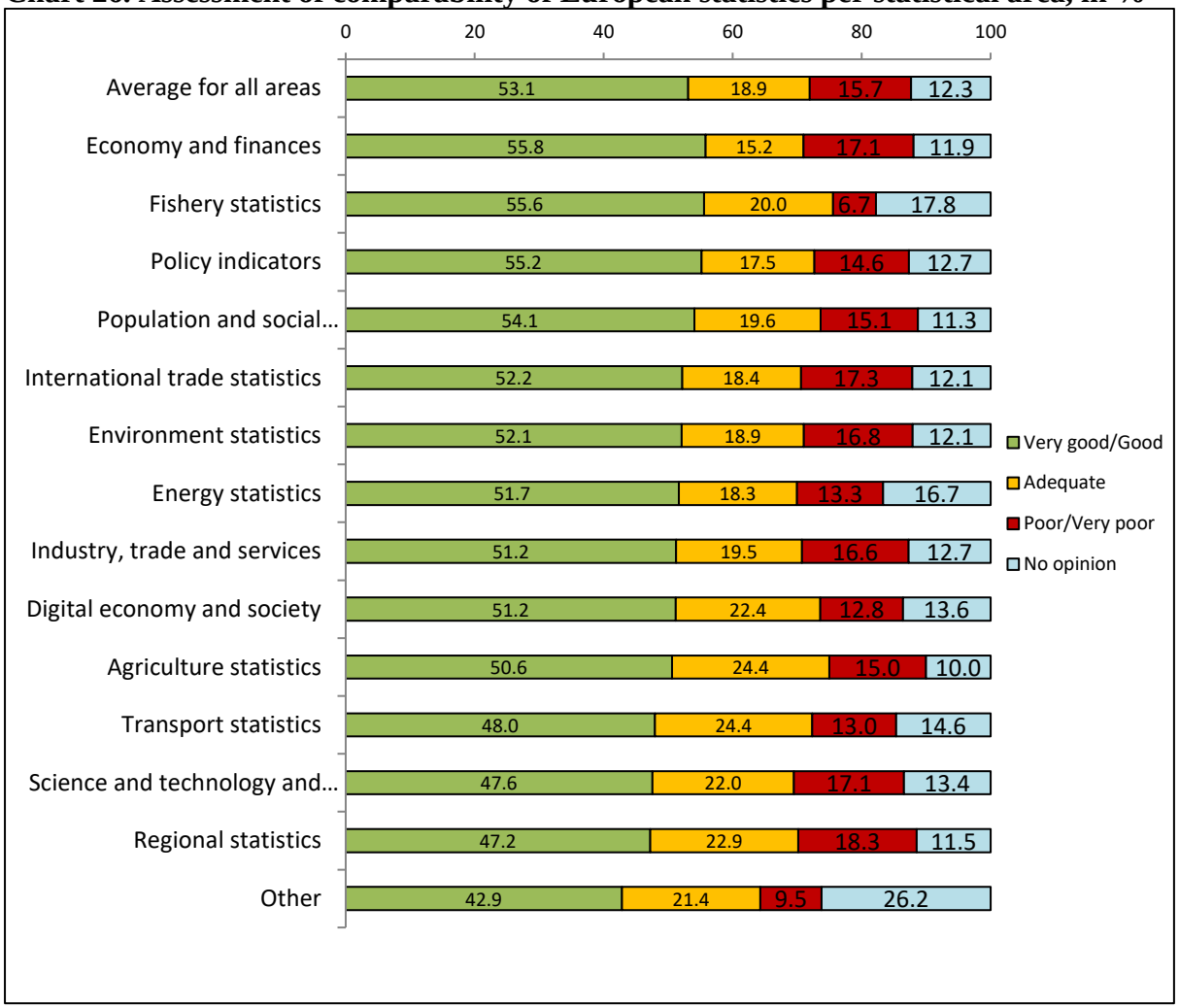
3.2.5 Comparability

Comparability is the extent to which differences between statistics from different geographical areas, non-geographic domains or over time can be attributed to differences between the true values of statistics.

As seen from Chart 26, comparability was the single quality dimension with the best score this time. The average of “very good/good” responses across all areas was 53.1%, 18.9% saw comparability as “adequate” and 15.7% did not feel positive about it. In this case “Economy and finance”, “Fishery statistics” and "Policy indicators" were the three domains with more than 55% of the respondents being satisfied, getting shares of 55.8%, 55.6% and 55.2% of “very good” and “good”, respectively. For this quality dimension, the differences among the domains were smaller than for other dimensions, "Regional statistics" having still 47.2% of satisfied respondents.

For comparability, once more intermediate and advanced users were more positive than light users. 54.1% and 54.0% of respondents from the first two types judged comparability as “very good” or “good”, versus 48.4% of those identifying themselves as light users.

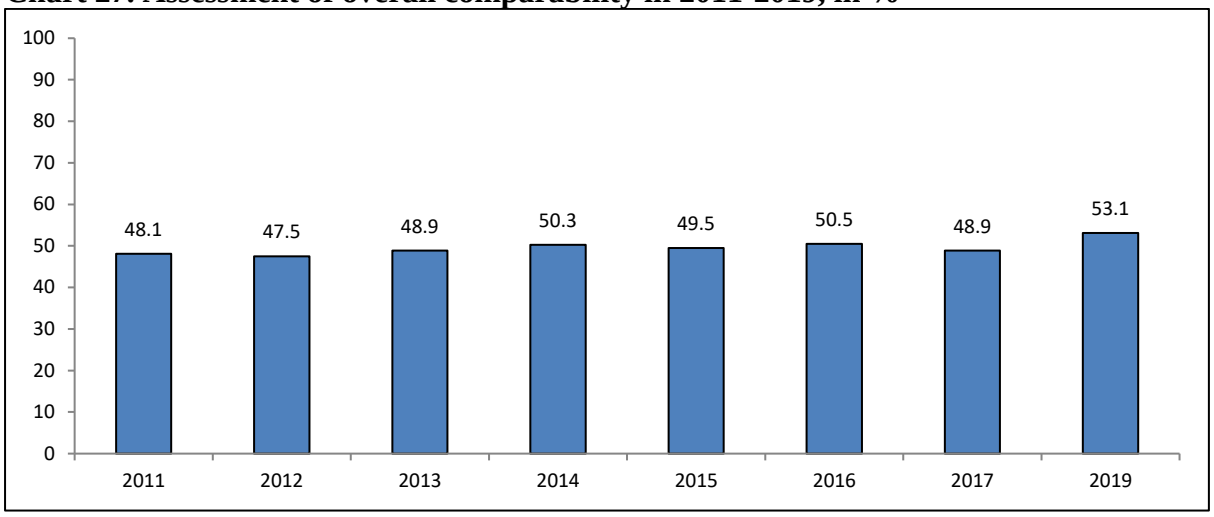
Chart 26. Assessment of comparability of European statistics per statistical area, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

Comparability was the quality dimension that saw the most notable variation compared to 2017, with an increase of 4.2 percentage points in the shares of "very good" and "good" responses. That makes the satisfaction share for 2019 the highest ever registered.

Chart 27. Assessment of overall comparability in 2011-2019, in %



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

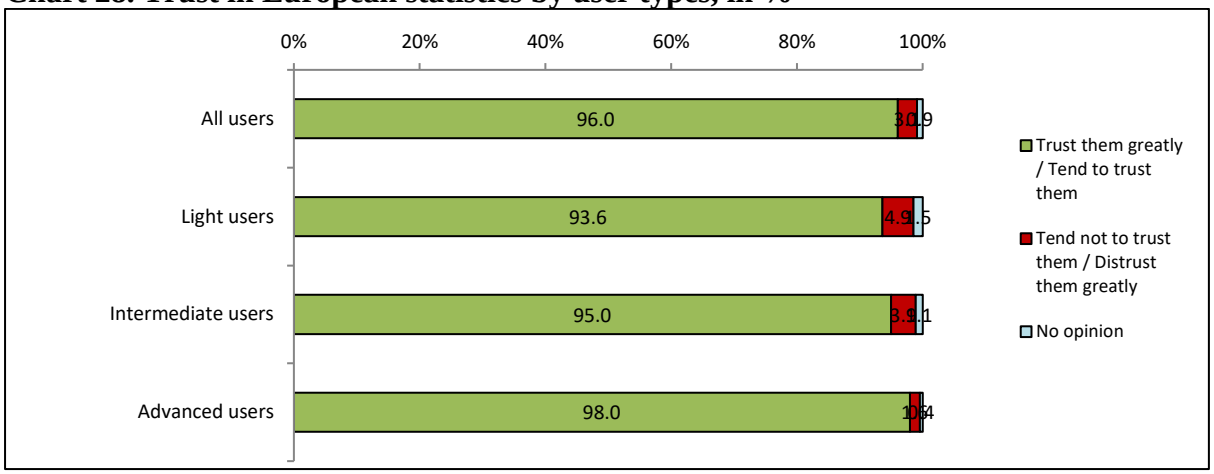
Some respondents gave also some general comments on the quality of European statistics, even if a specific request for such comments was not in the questionnaire, mostly adding them in the general comments. The majority of the comments referred to the necessity to improve the data timeliness, especially for those data which a have a delay of one year or more. However, some users recognised that timeliness had improved for some data compared to 2017. Eurostat should also try to minimise the number of missing data, due to lack of figures for some countries and to confidentiality. Data inconsistencies were also mentioned, over time, among regions and in mirror statistics. When the methodology changes users would like to have this reflected also in past data for comparability reasons.

3.3 Trust in European statistics

In a period when European citizens sometimes persist to be sceptic about the role and functioning of the EU institutions, it was interesting to check if users continue to trust the statistics produced by Eurostat. Results are presented in Chart 28.

As in previous years, responses were overwhelmingly positive, with 96.0% of users stating they trusted European statistics greatly or tended to trust them. Only 3.1% said they did not trust statistics and 0.9% had no opinion. When looking at the distribution of responses by user types, the share of respondents trusting European statistics is very similar for all types, none going below 93.6% and with a peak at 98.0% for advanced users.

Chart 28. Trust in European statistics by user types, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

Despite the potential bias that comes from the fact that Eurostat's data users should generally trust the data they use, the constantly high rate of positive answers over time demonstrates a very good and encouraging sign on the confidence of users in the statistics disseminated by Eurostat.

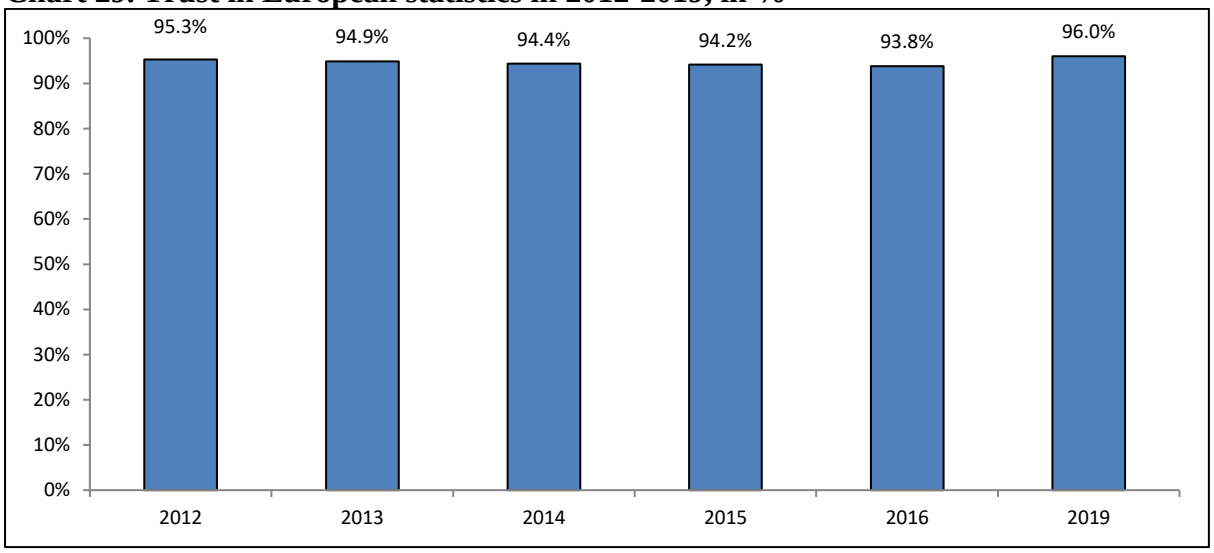
Looking at the responses, some of the reasons while people trust the statistics are that they are based on harmonised methodology and subject to quality standards and thorough validations. The fact that Eurostat is professional and is not politically influenced also helped to gain user trust.

As in past years, the most recurrent comment of those few who tend not to trust European statistics is because they depend on national statistics. Some then pointed out discrepancies with national data and reported implausible data and errors. Few also felt the lack of a clear source for the original data.

Users were also explicitly asked to suggest ways to improve trust. Common suggestions included more checks on the data provided by the countries and more transparency in the methodology used, including a better harmonisation of the methodology used by the countries. Few also suggested giving information on changes and updates in the data and explaining abnormal data and outliers. In one case, the peer reviews were mentioned as an important instrument to improve the quality and trust in European statistics.

Between 2012 and 2016 there had been a continuous but very small decrease in trust in European statistics, whereas the survey 2019 shows an increase in this indicator, up to an overall 96.0%, the highest result ever (Chart 29).

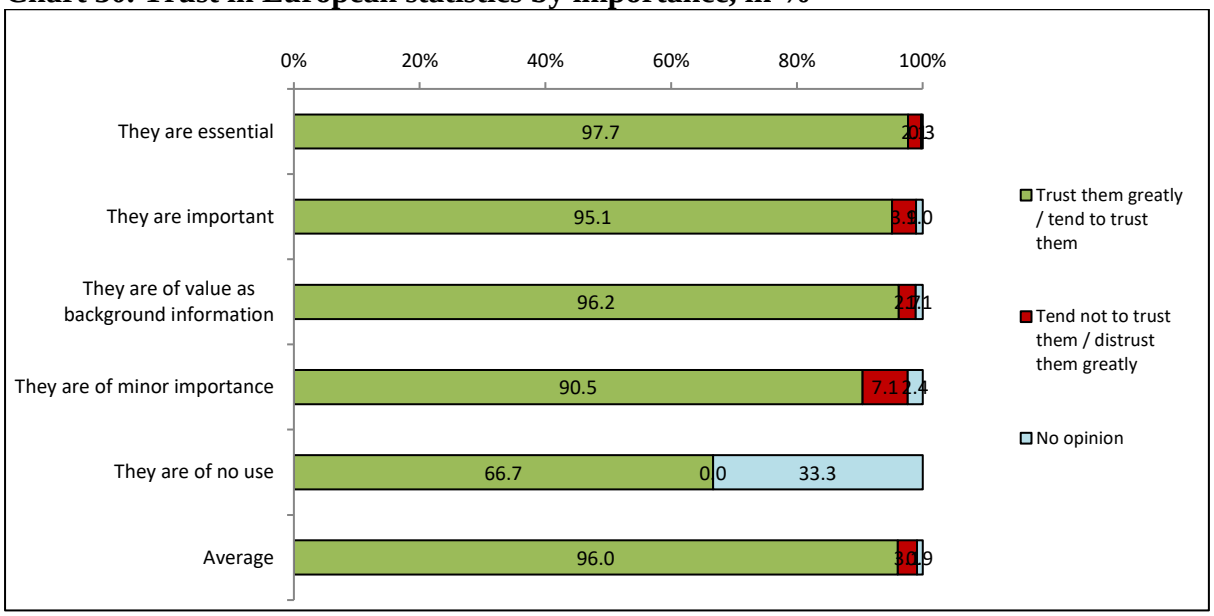
Chart 29. Trust in European statistics in 2012-2019, in %



Source: Eurostat 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

To deepen our analysis on the trust in statistics, we have checked whether there is some relation between importance, trust and perceived quality of statistics. As can be seen in Chart 30 the degree of trust in European statistics depends on the importance that the statistics have for the users. Those respondents, for which the statistics are of greater value, trust more the statistics than those for whom statistics are not so important, who tend more often not to express an opinion.

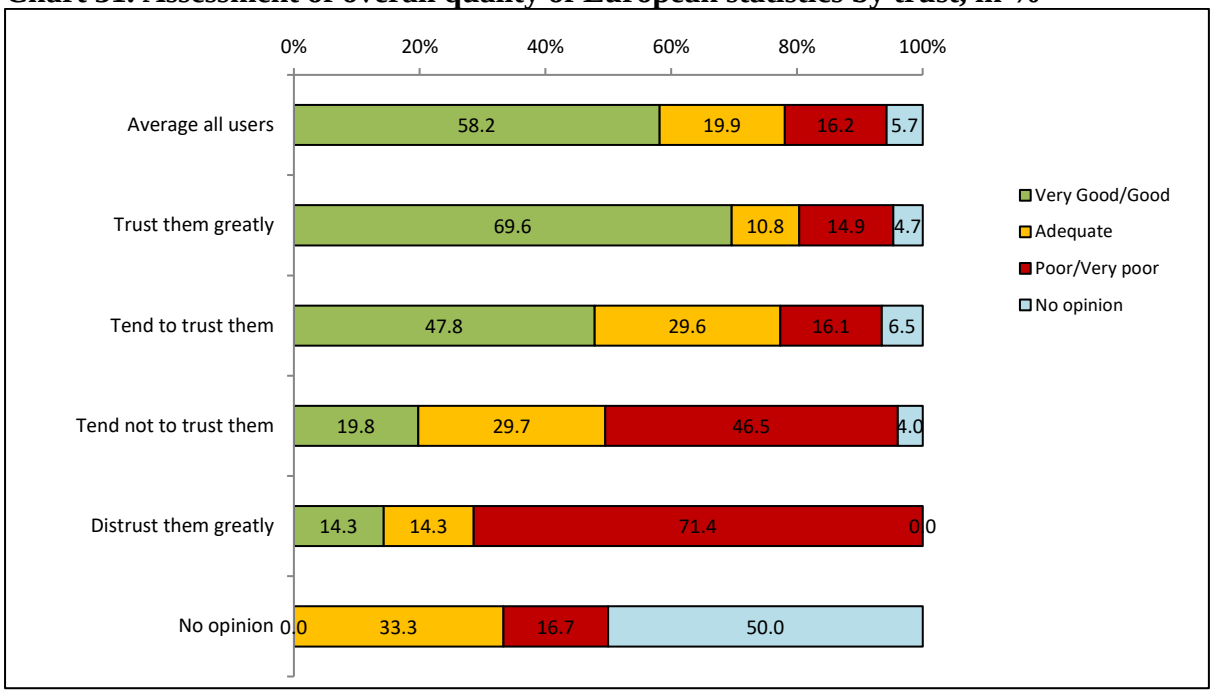
Chart 30. Trust in European statistics by importance, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

The respondents who trust more European statistics are also more convinced of their overall good quality, as it appears in Chart 31. In particular, those respondents who trust European statistics greatly are 11.4% points more satisfied with the data quality than the average of all users, while the few respondents who tend not to trust or distrust greatly the statistics, are also much more critical towards their quality.

Chart 31. Assessment of overall quality of European statistics by trust, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

3.4 Information on dissemination aspects

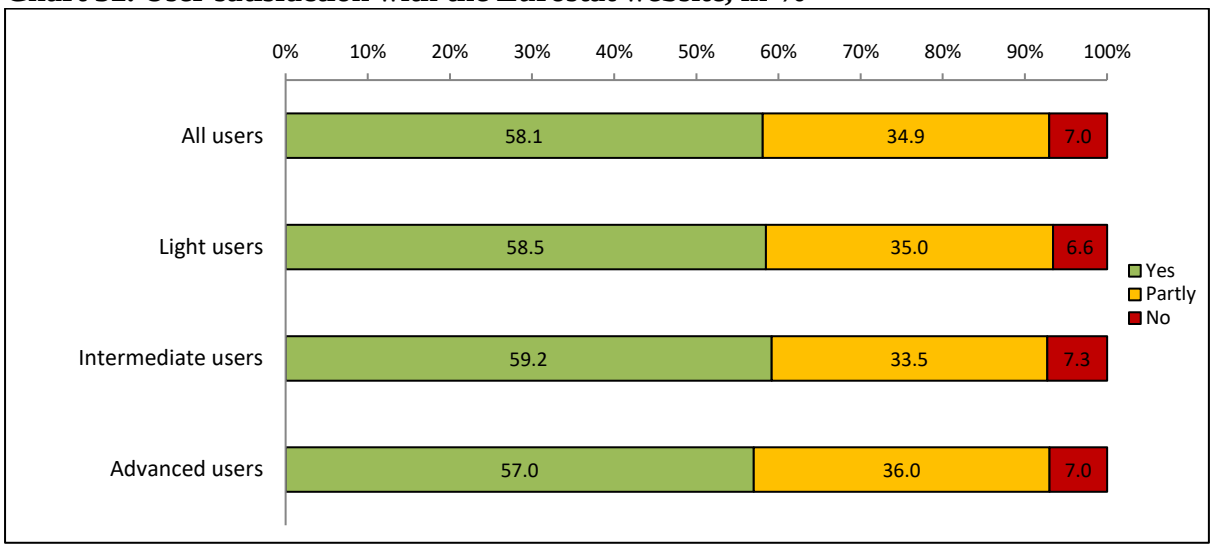
This section covers a number of aspects concerning dissemination of European statistics (content and characteristics of the Eurostat website; access to the European statistics; release calendar; metadata; visualisation tools; experimental statistics; access to microdata and user support provided by Eurostat).

Various aspect of the Eurostat website are investigated, starting with a general question on the satisfaction with the "Eurostat website" which is targeted to assess the more global level of satisfaction of the overall Eurostat dissemination offer. Indeed, for consumers of European statistics the term "Eurostat website" groups the various dissemination products and tools Eurostat publishes via the website. The degree of satisfaction expressed by those who gave an opinion is 58.1% satisfied and 34.9% partly satisfied, as presented in Chart 32. The rate of the respondents who declared to be satisfied went slightly down by 2.2 percentage points compared to 2016. This might indicate that the users would wish to get a more modern version of the website, which is, even with some improvements, still the one introduced in 2014, and indeed Eurostat is preparing a new website to be released soon. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that in the question on the "changes in perception of the overall quality of data and services provided by Eurostat", the website was the single item with the highest share of respondents (20.7%) perceiving that it had improved compared to the time of the previous survey. This could confirm that although users admit that the website has improved they would like to get a new one.

In this case, the respondents identifying themselves as advanced users are the least satisfied (57.0%) even if the shares are almost equal for the three groups, with 58.5% for the light

users and 59.2% for the intermediate users. It might be that advanced users are also more exigent with the website.

Chart 32. User satisfaction with the Eurostat website, in %



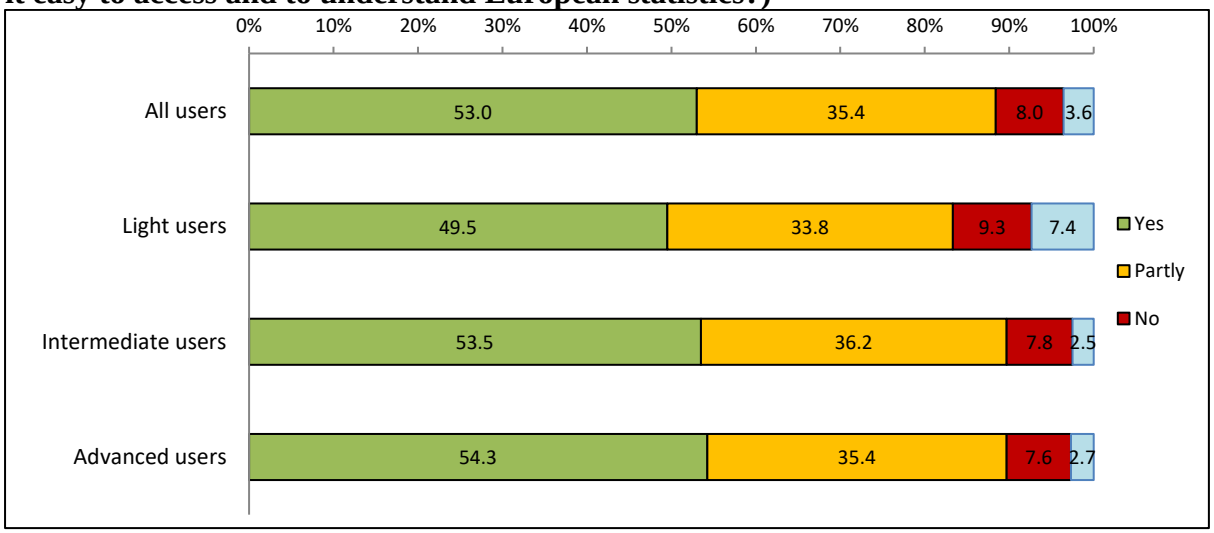
Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

3.4.1 Access to and understanding of European statistics on the Eurostat Website

More than half of the respondents (53.0%) found it easy to access and to understand the statistics on the Eurostat website and more than another third (35.4%) partly easy. 8.0% were not satisfied while the remaining 3.6% did not express an opinion. The results are practically identical to the ones of 2016.

Here again intermediate and advanced users are more satisfied that light users. This is normal, as they should know better how to navigate the website and extract the statistics they need.

Chart 33. Assessment of the access to and understanding of European statistics, in % (Is it easy to access and to understand European statistics?)



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

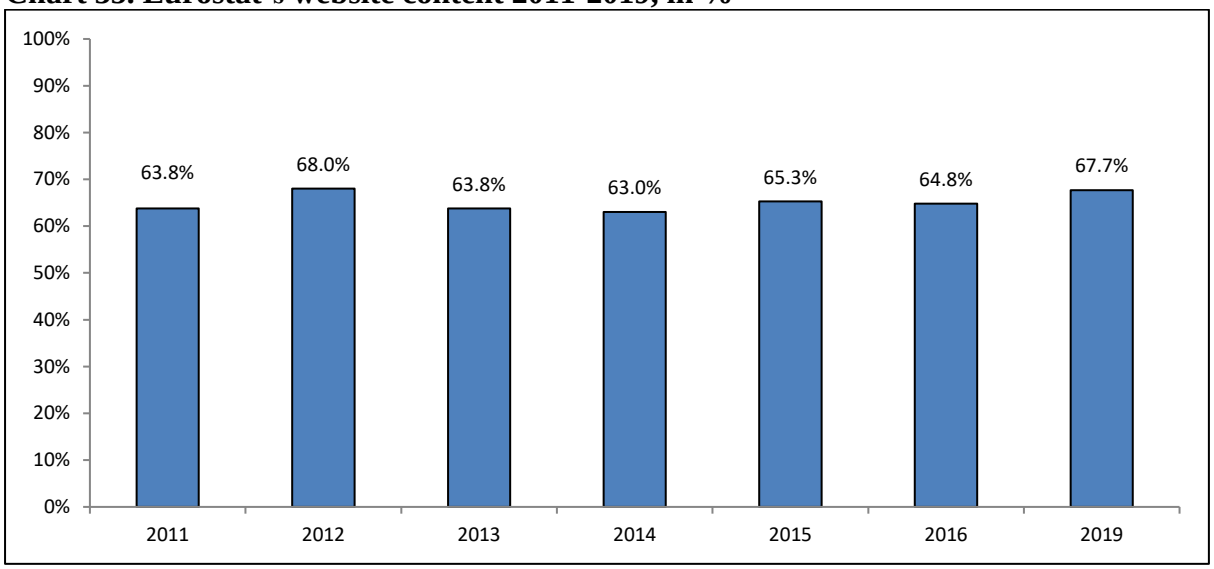
Users were also asked to evaluate the content of the Eurostat database. As in previous years, responses were very positive (Chart 34). On average 67.7% of all respondents were satisfied with the content, which is 2.9 percentage points more than in 2016 and almost the highest value ever registered (Chart 35).

Advanced users were quite more satisfied with the content of the website (71.5% of "Very Good/Good") than those from the other two types (65.2% for the intermediate users and 63.7% for the light users).

Chart 34. Assessment of the Eurostat website content by user types, in %

Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

Chart 35. Eurostat's website content 2011-2019, in %

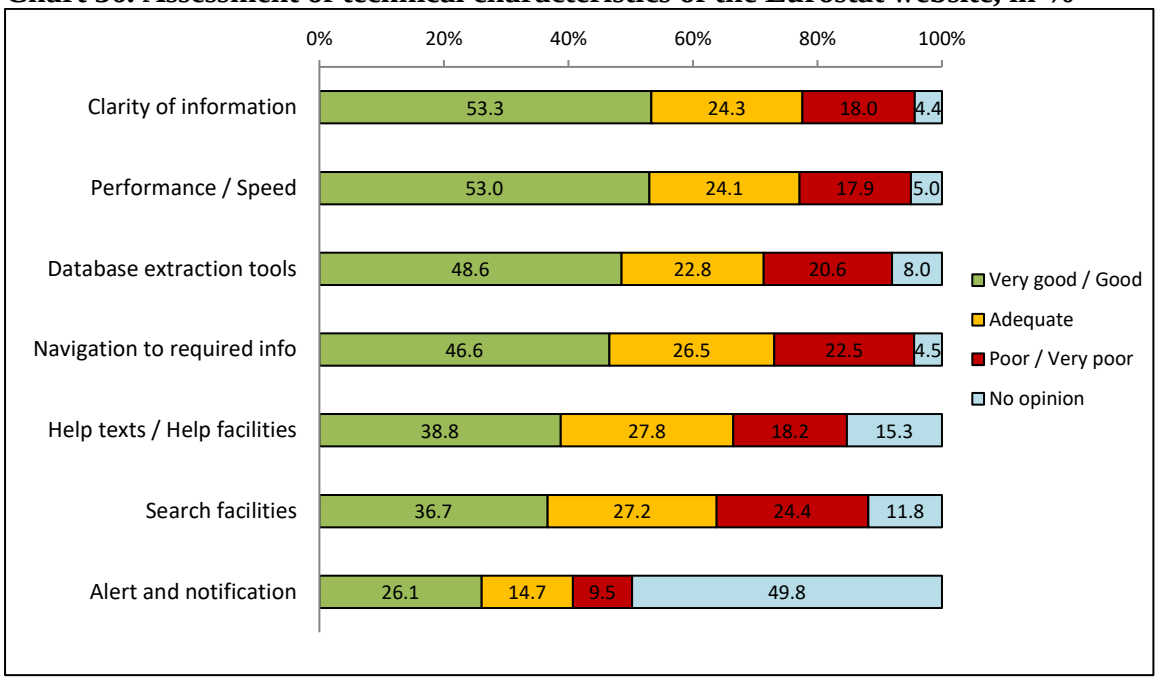


Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

In another question, users were requested to judge its technical characteristics (Chart 36). Results are slightly worse than in 2016 and uneven. Some technical characteristics, like clarity of information and performance and speed get more than half of "very good/good"

judgements (53.3% and 53.0% respectively) while for others like the help texts and facilities or the search facilities, the share of satisfied users does not reach 40% and even without taking into account those not giving an opinion, it would not reach 50%. It can be deduced that these attributes still require further attention and improvements. In the case of the alert and notification mechanisms almost half (49.8%) of the respondents did not give an opinion as many do not use or do not need this service.

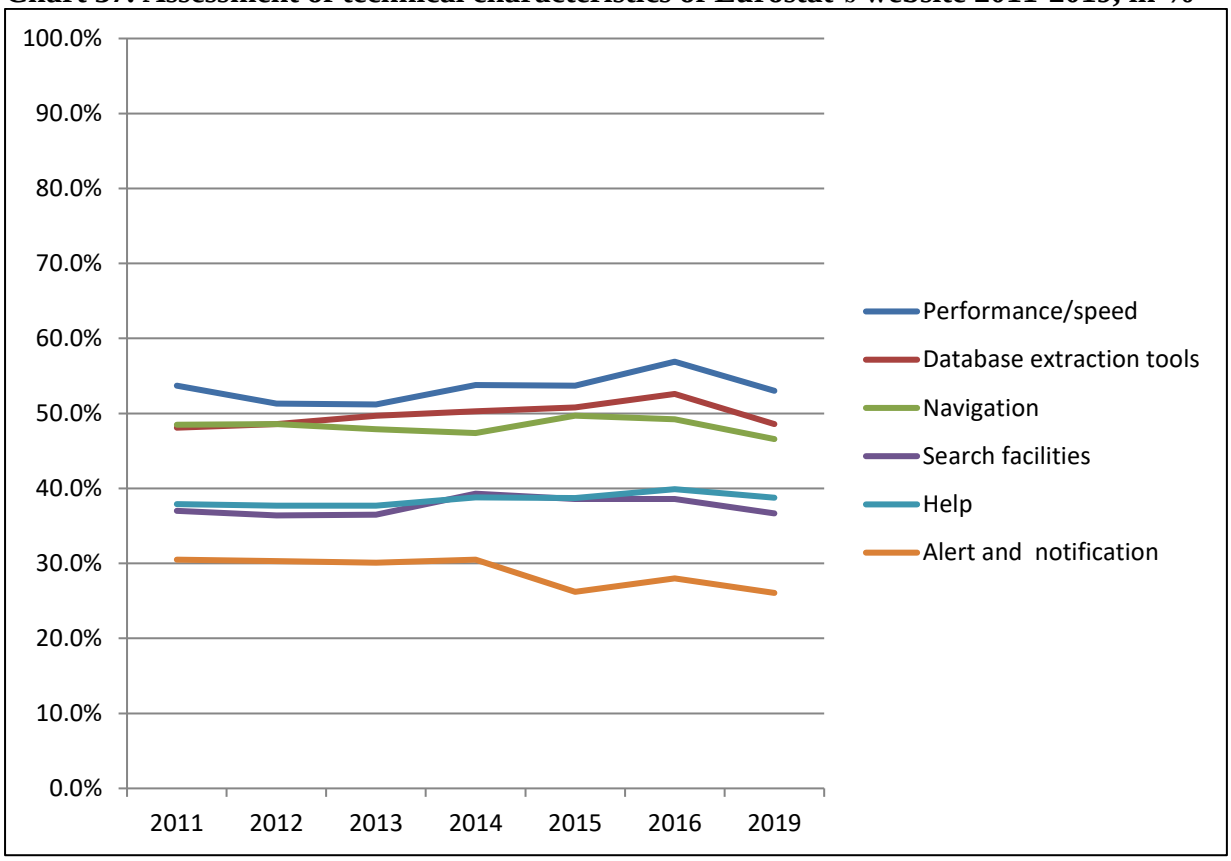
Chart 36. Assessment of technical characteristics of the Eurostat website, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

Chart 37 shows that the results have not changed much over time but going down this time, another sign of the necessity to renovate the website.

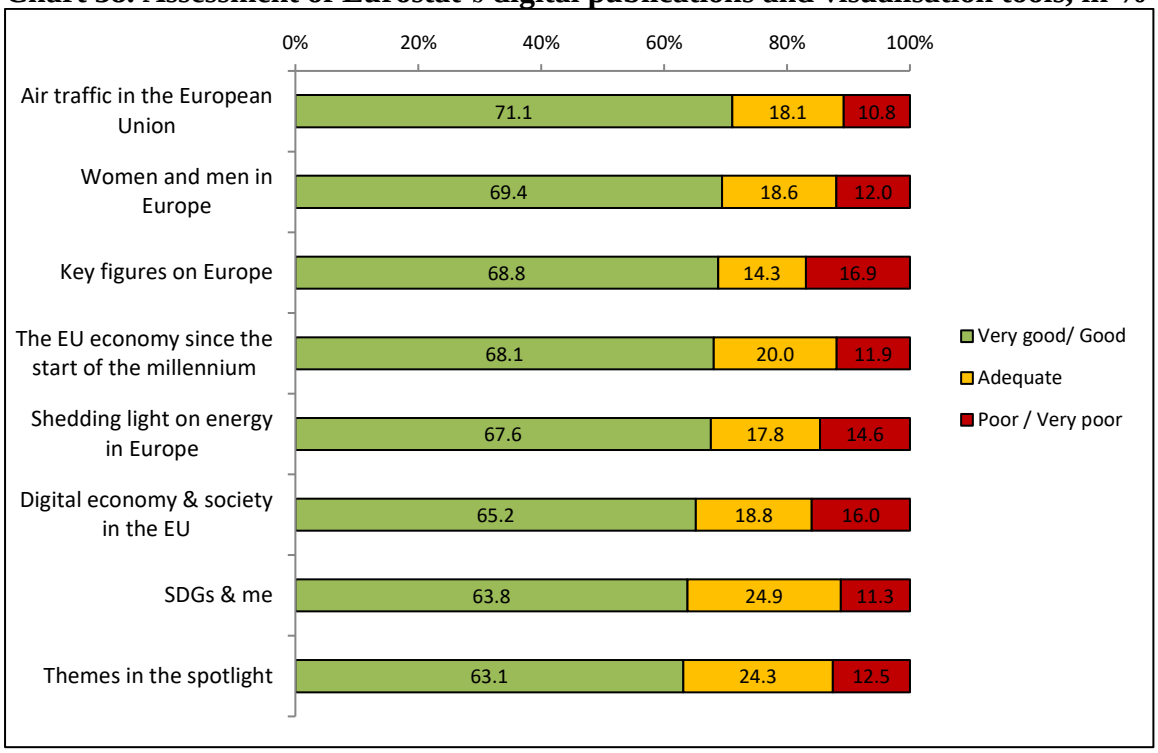
Chart 37. Assessment of technical characteristics of Eurostat's website 2011-2019, in %



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

The following questions were to rate Eurostat's digital publications and visualisation tools. The satisfaction is presented in the Chart 38, and is generally very positive, with well more than 60% of respondents, who expressed an opinion, judging the tools as "very good/good", up to the 71.1% of the digital publication on "Air traffic in the European Union".

Chart 38. Assessment of Eurostat's digital publications and visualisation tools, in %



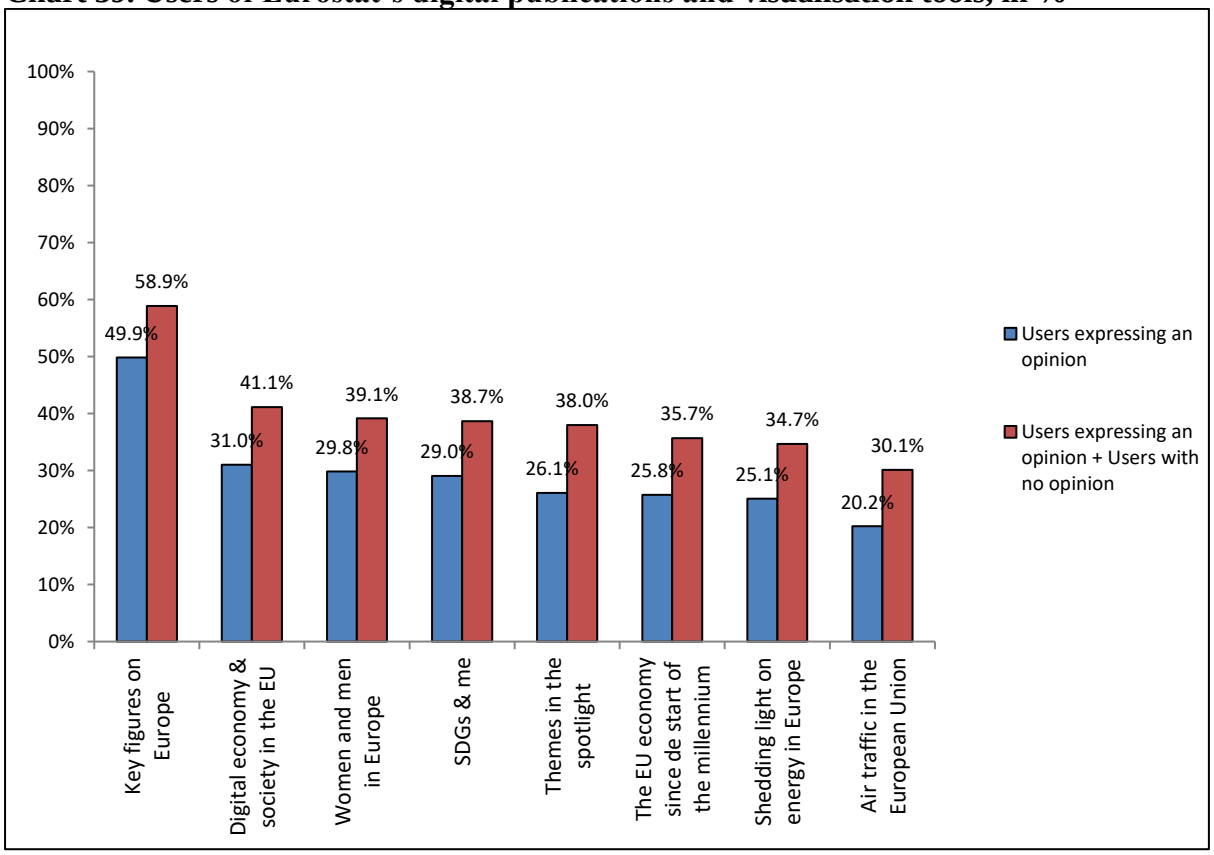
Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

It is worth noting that there is a considerable difference between all the survey respondents, the respondents who used Eurostat's digital publications and visualisation tools, and the respondents who used them and chose to express an opinion. As demonstrated in Chart 39, 30.1% to 58.9% of the survey respondents used the different publications and tools, "Key figures on Europe" being the most widely used, followed at distance by "Digital economy & society in the EU" (41.1%). However, as it can be seen in the same chart, the percentage of users who actually gave their opinion in the question concerned was about 9 - 12% points smaller than the number of users for each of the publications and tools. This means that in the case of "Air traffic in the European Union" the assessment was given by only 20% of users who filled in the survey, but which represents still a significant absolute number of 204 respondents.

On an overall level, respondents from advanced users giving an opinion are again more satisfied with the publications and tools (71.6% of "very good/good"), compared to intermediate users (65.2%) and light users (63.0%).

A comparison with the past surveys is not possible for this question as the tools and publications are almost all different from 3 years ago, a sign that Eurostat varies them according to the importance of the topics and to the interest of the users over time.

Chart 39. Users of Eurostat's digital publications and visualisation tools, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

The Eurostat website was, as usual, the section of the questionnaire that received the largest amount of comments, confirming the need to revise the website. Many respondents still found it rather difficult to find data, especially for new users or those who do not use the webpage frequently. Some felt that a clear overview was missing and that titles, definitions and units were not always clear. The size of the database and the high level of detail of data were also seen as a drawback by some users who found it hard to find the specific data they needed. The navigation tree was also criticised by some users who would like to have it organised differently. An index of all statistics was felt useful. This time several users also referred to the website and its interface as old-fashioned, with a too heavy front page, and not intuitive.

Regarding data search, there were users dissatisfied with the search engine, some of whom would have preferred to a search targeted exclusively to databases rather than the whole website. Others complained about the downloading facilities, especially for big amount of data, which sometimes fail in the middle of the process. Several respondents suggested adding the possibility to customise the data extraction, using parameters, and allowing saving them.

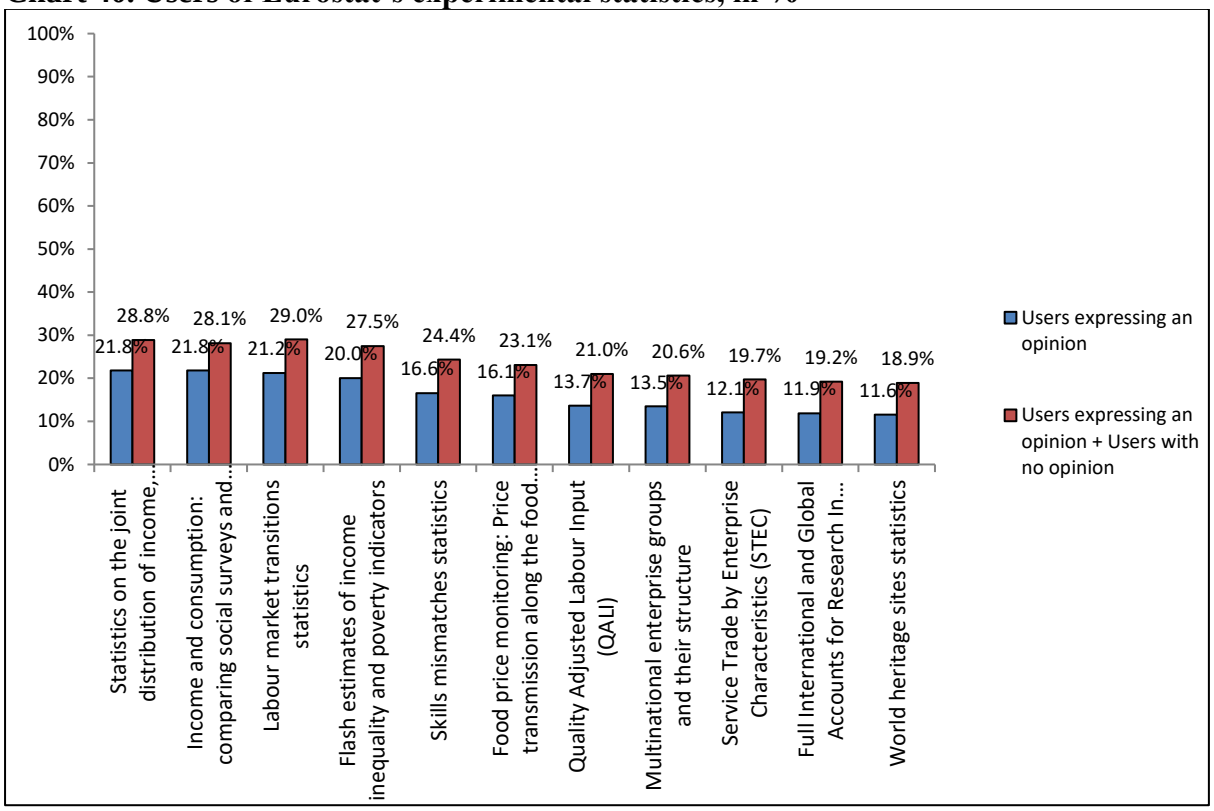
Other recurrent comments referred to the difficulty to find old data. Several users reported then problems with the changes in the database, which are not always clearly explained and on which users are not informed. Some asked if it was possible to add an alert mechanism on a set of data. Finally, some similar comments were made also on the specific database for

international trade statistics, COMEXT. One user also questioned why it was different from the rest of the database.

It must considered that although the website attracted many negative comments, there were also users who described it in very positive terms, some considering it very user friendly and efficient and better than those of other similar organisations.

A new question was added this year to the section of the survey on the website, on the usefulness of Eurostat's experimental statistics, a domain that Eurostat has recently started to develop and that did not exist in 2016. As it was expected that only a minority of respondents had used at least some of the experimental statistics, in this case respondents could skip the question, declare that they had never used some experimental statistics or also that they had no opinion on their usefulness. In the end the shares of those who gave an opinion was around 10% - 20% of the respondents, from 11.6% (117 respondents) for "World heritage sites statistics" to 21.8% (220 respondents) for "Statistics on the joint distribution of income, consumption and wealth" and "Income and consumption: comparing social surveys and national accounts" (Chart 40).

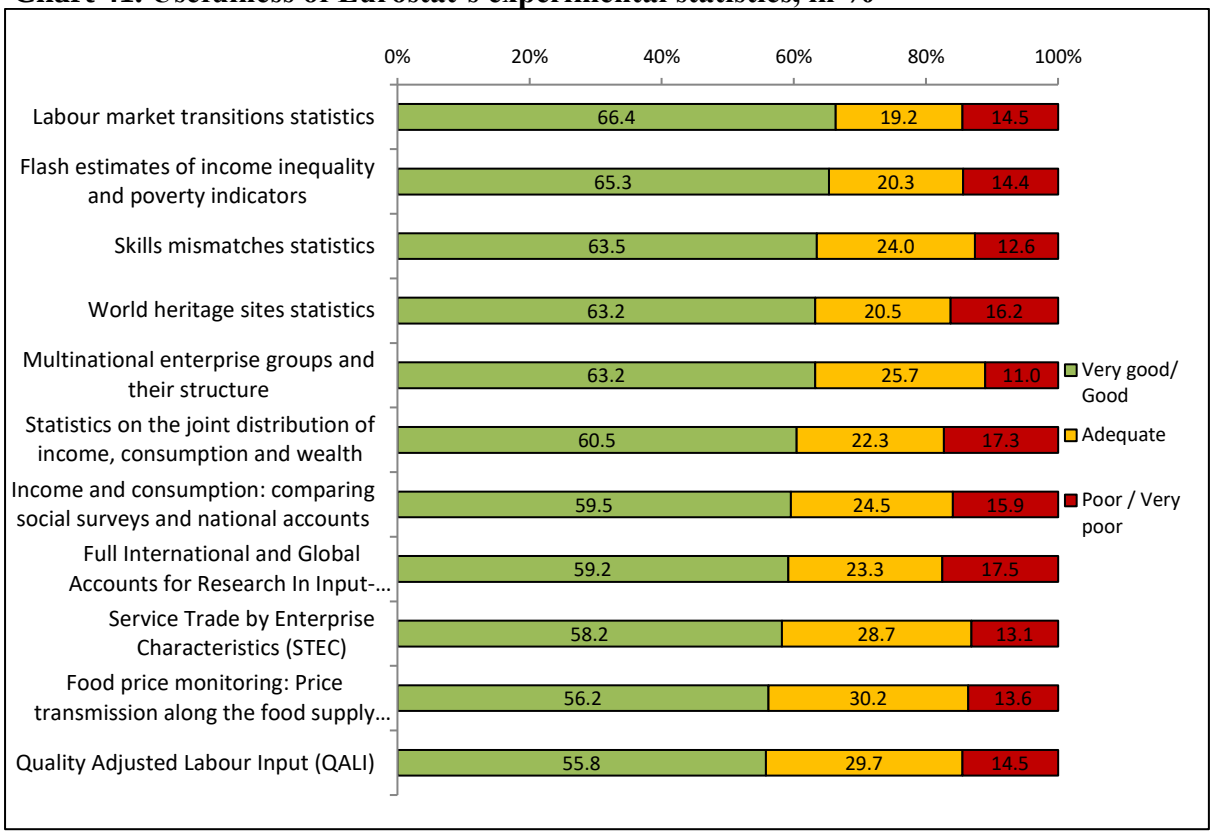
Chart 40. Users of Eurostat's experimental statistics, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

The majority of those who gave an opinion on experimental statistics found them useful. The shares of "very good/good" answers went from 55.8% for the Quality Adjusted Labour Input (QALI) to 66.4% for the Labour market transitions statistics (Chart 41).

Chart 41. Usefulness of Eurostat's experimental statistics, in %



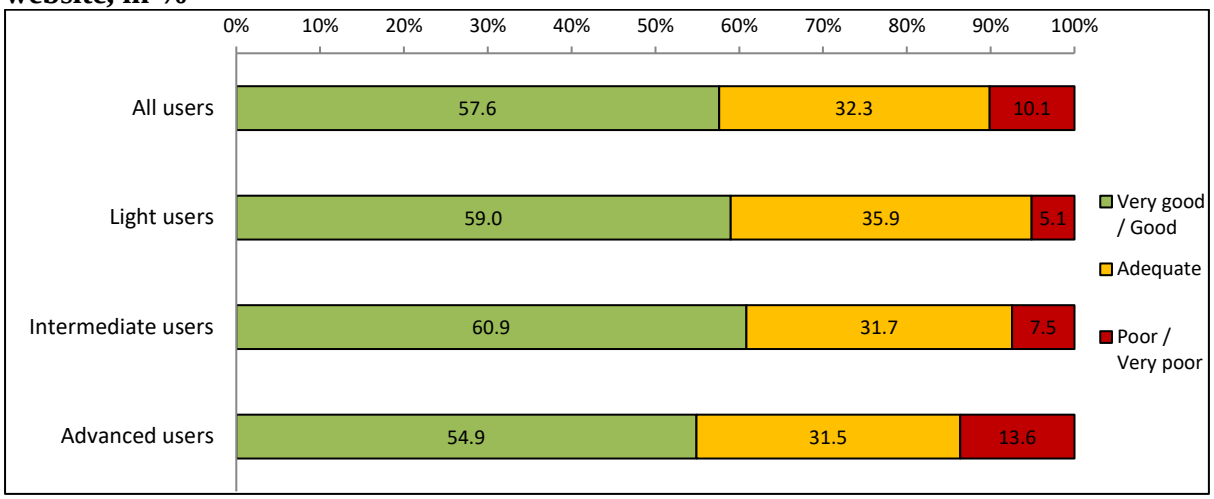
Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

On an overall level, also for this question respondents from advanced users giving an opinion are more satisfied (65.1% of "very good/good"), compared to intermediate users (56.9%) and light users (63.2%).

In their comments, users confirmed that they found experimental statistics quite interesting and useful and would like to get more of them in future. Some pointed out that they were not very visible and a few respondents said that they had discovered them thanks to the survey.

To complete the section of the survey on the website, users were asked for the second time this year to rate the information on microdata access services on the Eurostat website. Almost half of the respondents (47.0%) gave an opinion, so showing that they use the microdata. The share was higher, as it could be expected, for the respondents from advanced users (52.7%) than for intermediate users (44.8%) and light users (38.2%). However, advanced users seem to be also more exigent for this kind of services, as their satisfaction (54.9% of "very good/good") was in this case lower than for intermediate users (60.9%) and light users (59.0%) (Chart 42).

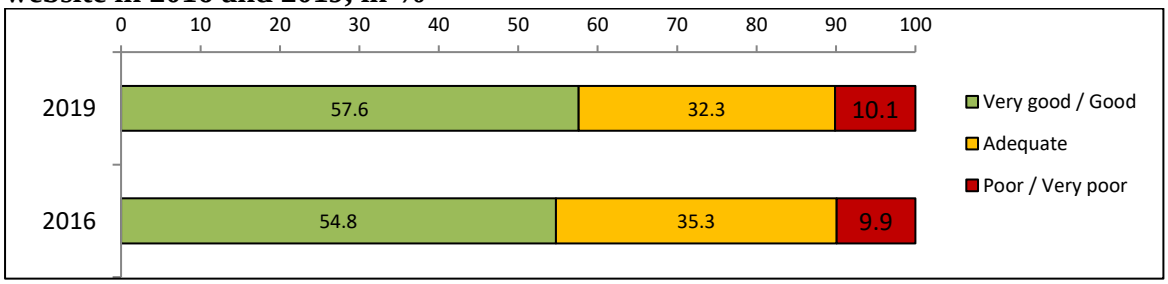
Chart 42. Assessment of the information on microdata access services on the Eurostat website, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

Compared to 2016, the share of those considering the information on microdata access services as least good registered an increase of 2.8 percentage points (Chart 43).

Chart 43. Assessment of the information on microdata access services on the Eurostat website in 2016 and 2019, in %



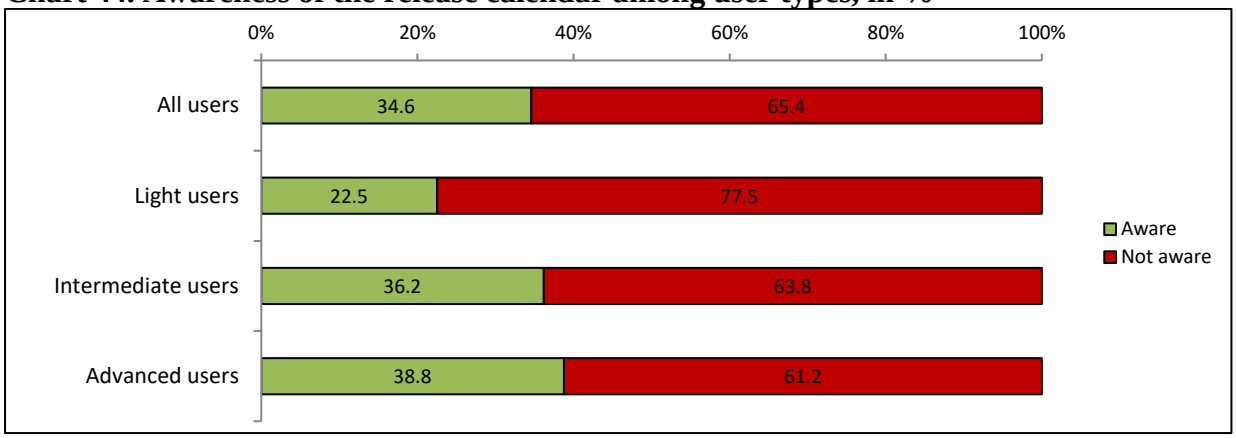
Source: Eurostat 2016 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

In their comments respondents considered not only the information on microdata access but also the access procedure and the set of microdata available. They declared to appreciate the service and the availability of microdata. However, several pointed out that it is difficult to receive an answer when asking for microdata and the procedure for getting access is too complicate and long. On this, it can be noted that when getting a request Eurostat has to verify the criteria laid down in the applicable Regulation, which usually takes about one week. A few respondents said that they would like to get microdata also for other topics than those available and that they would appreciate more options to access the microdata.

3.4.2 Release calendar

When asked about their awareness of Eurostat's release calendar (Chart 44), which provides information on the dates and times of Euro indicators' releases and other news releases and publications, a bit more than a third of the respondents seemed to be aware of it (34.6%), with a share increasing by 3.3 percentage points compared to 2016. Among user types, advanced and intermediate users, with respective shares of 38.8% and 36.2% were much more aware than light users (22.5%), which could be expected.

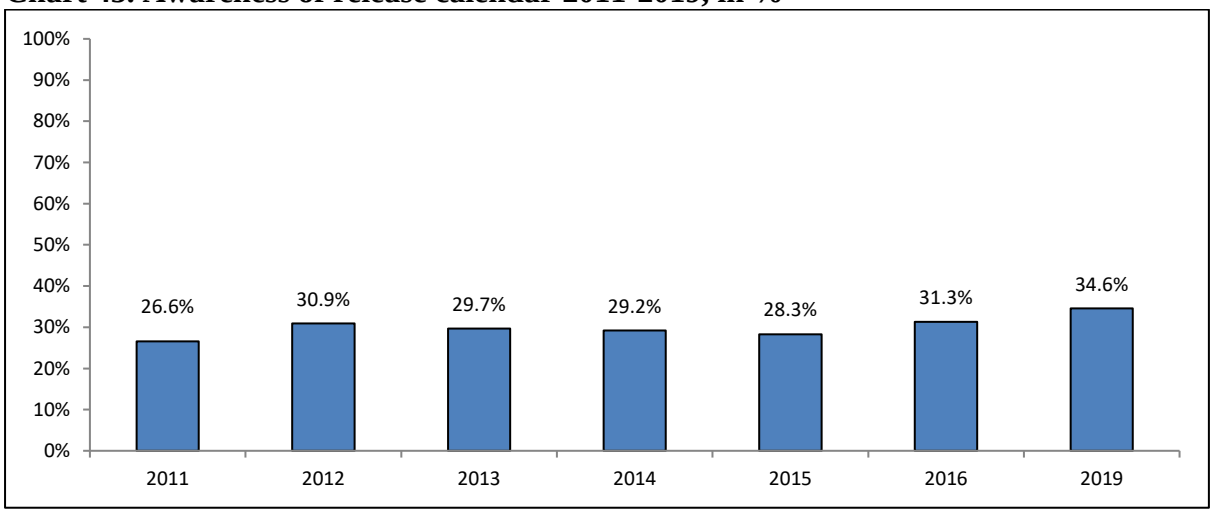
Chart 44. Awareness of the release calendar among user types, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

Within the entire surveying period, 2019 is the year with the highest degree of awareness.

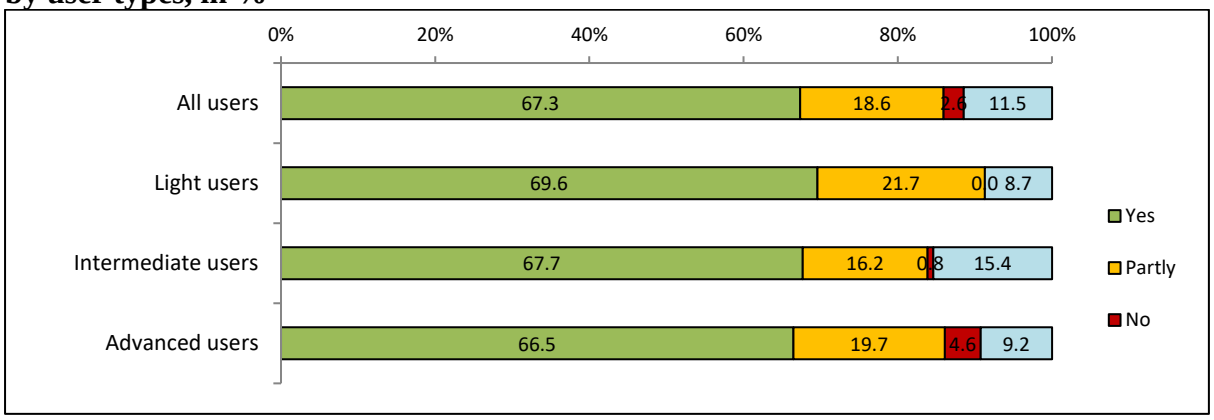
Chart 45. Awareness of release calendar 2011-2019, in %



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

Those who were aware of the calendar were also asked to assess whether the release calendar had sufficient and relevant information to fulfil their needs (Chart 46). About two thirds of the respondents (67.3%), a share close to 2016, gave positive opinions, indicating that Eurostat release calendar continues to be of great value for those who are aware of it and use it for their needs. 18.6% of respondents said the calendar satisfied their needs partly.

Chart 46. Assessment of sufficiency and relevance of information in the release calendar by user types, in %



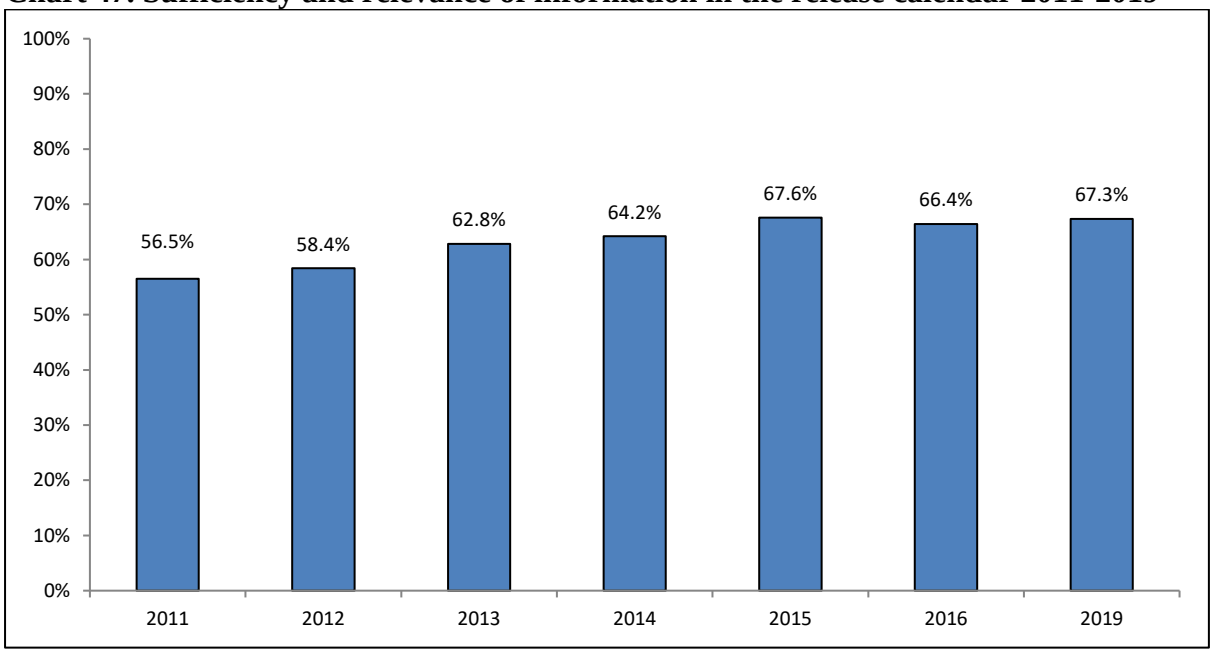
Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

For once, there were limited differences among the three user types, with the light users this time more satisfied (69.6%) than intermediate (67.7%) and advanced users (66.5%).

In their comments, users expressed the wish to have more topics covered by the release calendar (social and environment statistics were mentioned), to include in the calendar the list of all data for which updates or releases are expected, and to respect the publications dates.

After growing steadily until 2015, user satisfaction with the sufficiency and relevance of information in the release calendar seem to have stabilised (Chart 47).

Chart 47. Sufficiency and relevance of information in the release calendar 2011-2019



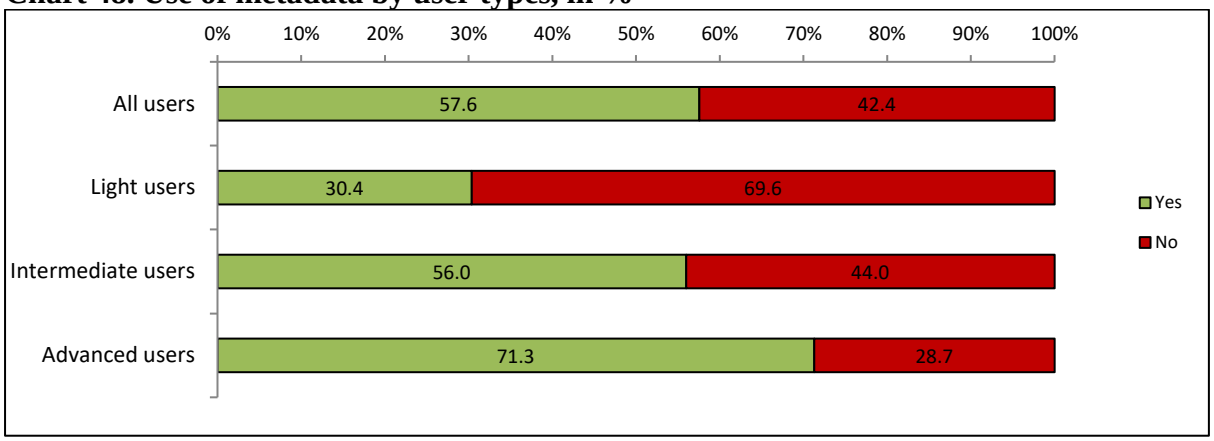
Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

3.4.3 Metadata and methodological information

Eurostat publishes metadata in order to provide better background information about the data (definitions, methodology, classifications, nomenclature, etc.) and to explain their limitations.

Users were asked to indicate whether they used metadata provided by Eurostat. As seen from Chart 48, metadata was used by more than half of the respondents (57.6%), well more than in 2016 (48.5%). When asking about metadata usage there is a big difference among the three types of users. Only 30.4% of light users declared to use metadata, versus 56.0% of intermediate users and 71.3% of advanced users.

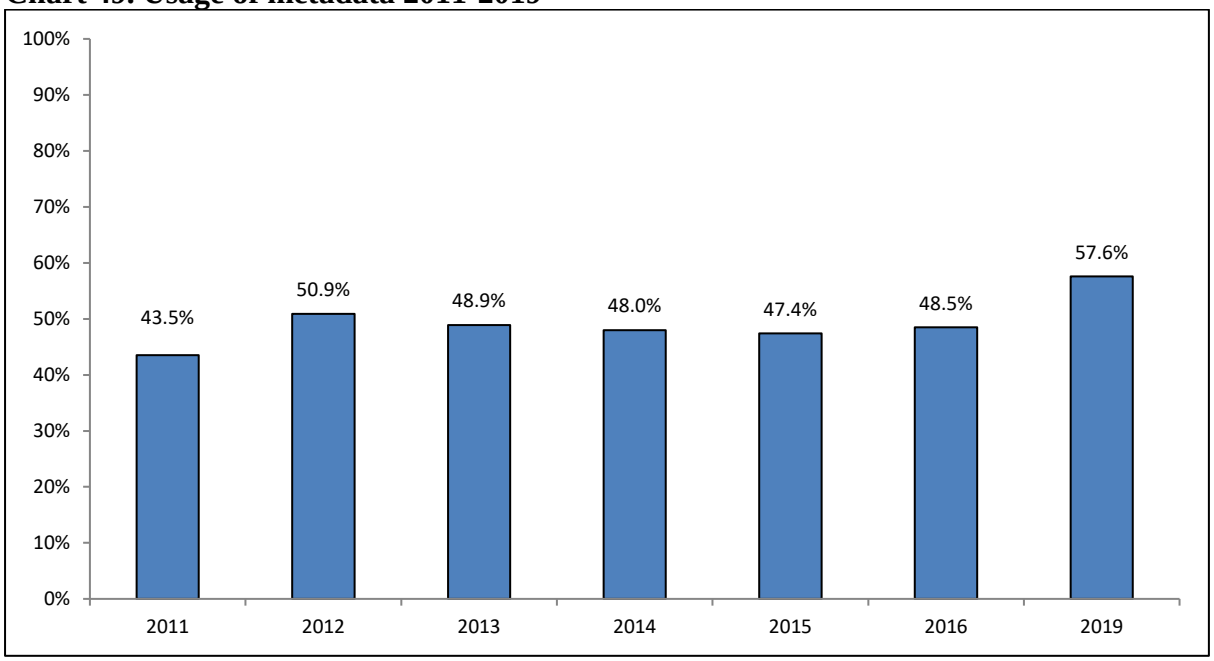
Chart 48. Use of metadata by user types, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

With the biggest increase since 2011, in 2019 the share of the respondents using metadata is the highest ever registered.

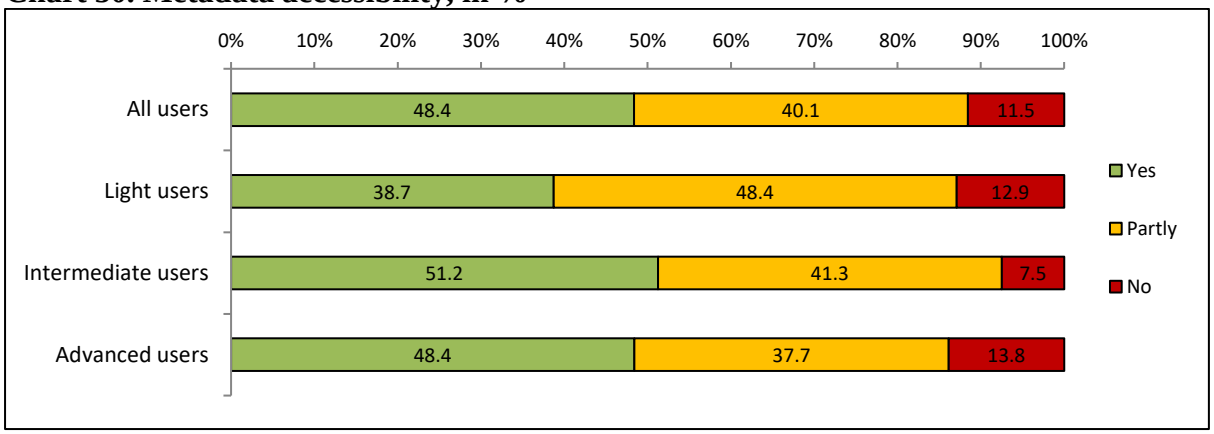
Chart 49. Usage of metadata 2011-2019



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

Metadata users were also asked about their accessibility. Results of Chart 50 reveal that this year the share of respondents who find it easily accessible is slightly less than a half (48.4%). A share of 40.1% thought it was partly easy to find and 11.5% experienced difficulties.

Chart 50. Metadata accessibility, in %

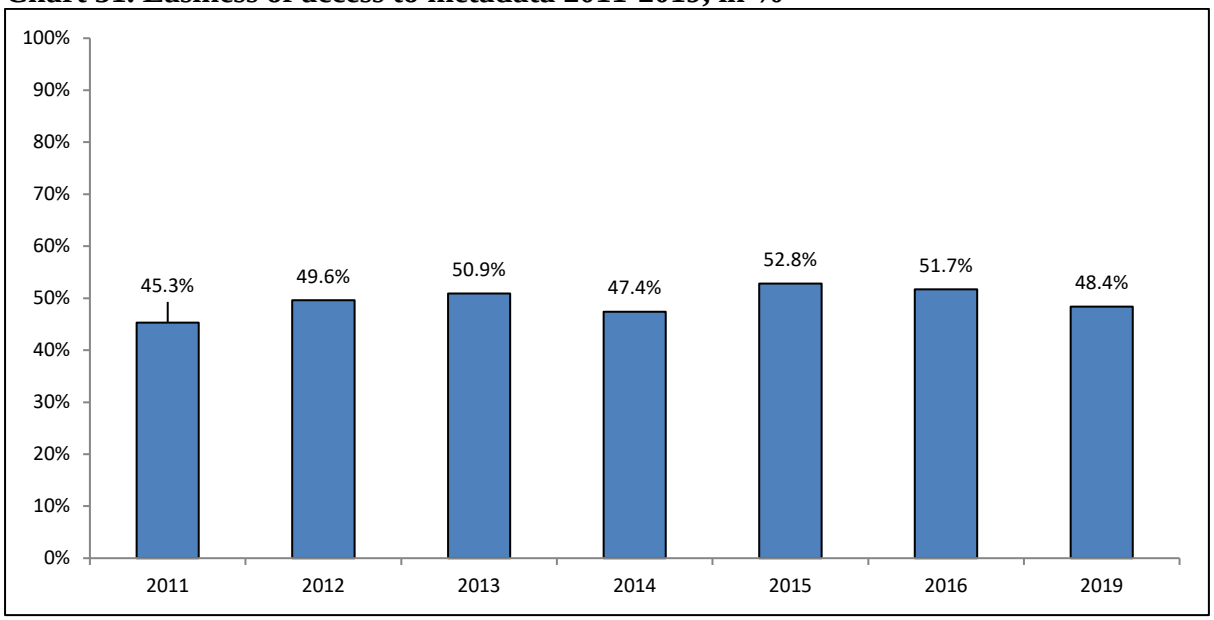


Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

Intermediate users were surprisingly a bit more satisfied with the metadata accessibility (51.2%) than advanced users (48.4%), while light users were the least happy (38.7%).

As can be seen from Chart 51, after the peak registered in 2015, which could have been due to the new website, user satisfaction with this aspect of the metadata has been slightly decreasing.

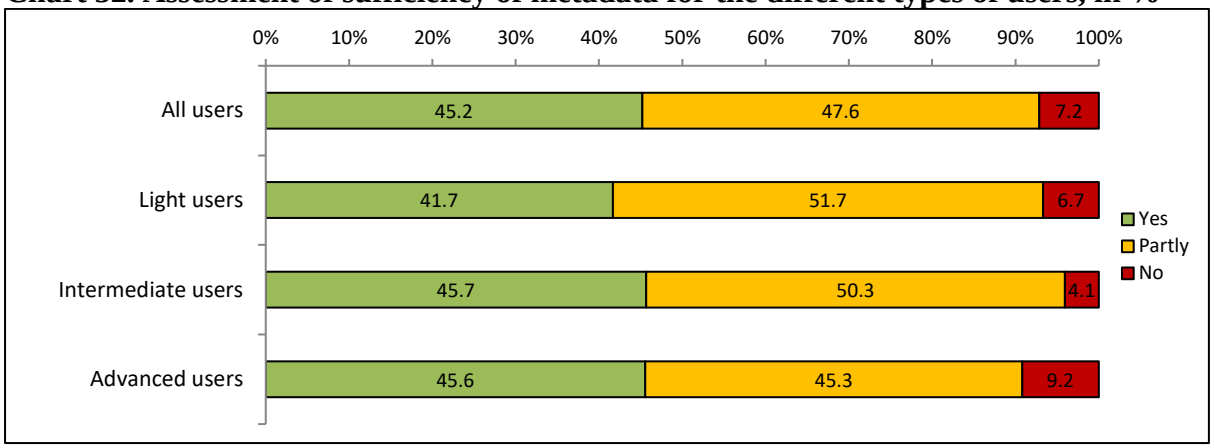
Chart 51. Easiness of access to metadata 2011-2019, in %



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

A bit less than half of the metadata users (45.2%) were also satisfied with its sufficiency (Chart 52). On average 45.2% found metadata sufficient for their purposes. This is 8.9 percentage points less than in 2016 and the largest registered decrease of all questions. Another 40.8% of users found metadata partly sufficient and 7.2% stated that metadata was not sufficient. In this case, the shares of intermediate and advanced users who were satisfied were almost identical (45.7% and 45.6%), while the one of light users was lower (41.7%).

Chart 52. Assessment of sufficiency of metadata for the different types of users, in %

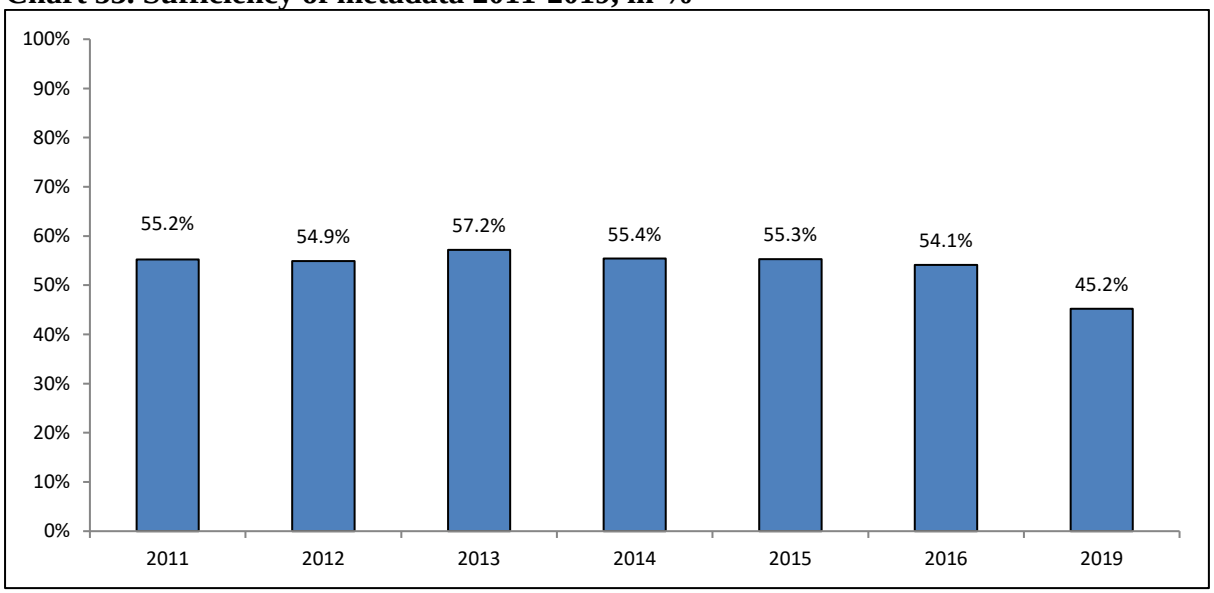


Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

While some users reaffirmed in their comments that metadata are clear, complete and better than those of other data providers, have improved, others still found them not easy to access, not clear enough, too long or too technical. The main suggested further improvements included to provide some more basic metadata, easy to understand and in plain language for non-specialists, to provide metadata at more detailed level and for all indicators, and to give clearer and more complete definitions of all codes. Other respondents wished to get more information on the production of statistics and the used methodology, also to understand more easily the differences among countries. Finally, metadata should be consistent over time and among different statistics and always updated in case of changes in the methodology.

As Chart 53 shows, 2019 proved to be the year when users were the least satisfied with this criterion after a period of stability.

Chart 53. Sufficiency of metadata 2011-2019, in %



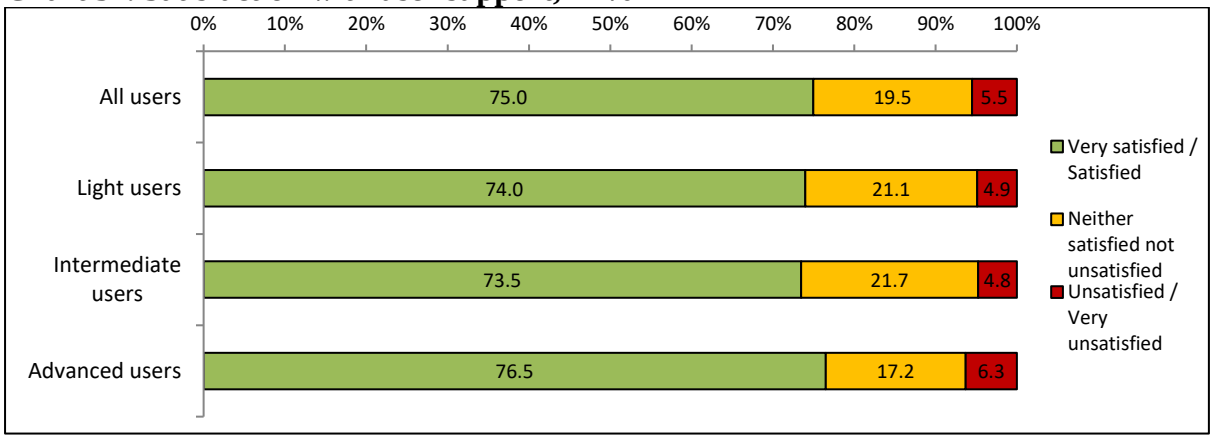
Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

3.4.5 User support

In the survey, users also had the opportunity to express their opinion on the support services offered by Eurostat. Results are presented in Chart 54.

Leaving out those with no opinion or not aware of the user support function, the degree of satisfaction remains the highest of all services with 75.0% of the respondents saying that they were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the support service provided by Eurostat. The share of unsatisfied users was 5.5% this year. All types of users were very satisfied. – Advanced users were the most satisfied (76.5%), a bit more than light users (74.0%) and intermediate users (73.5%).

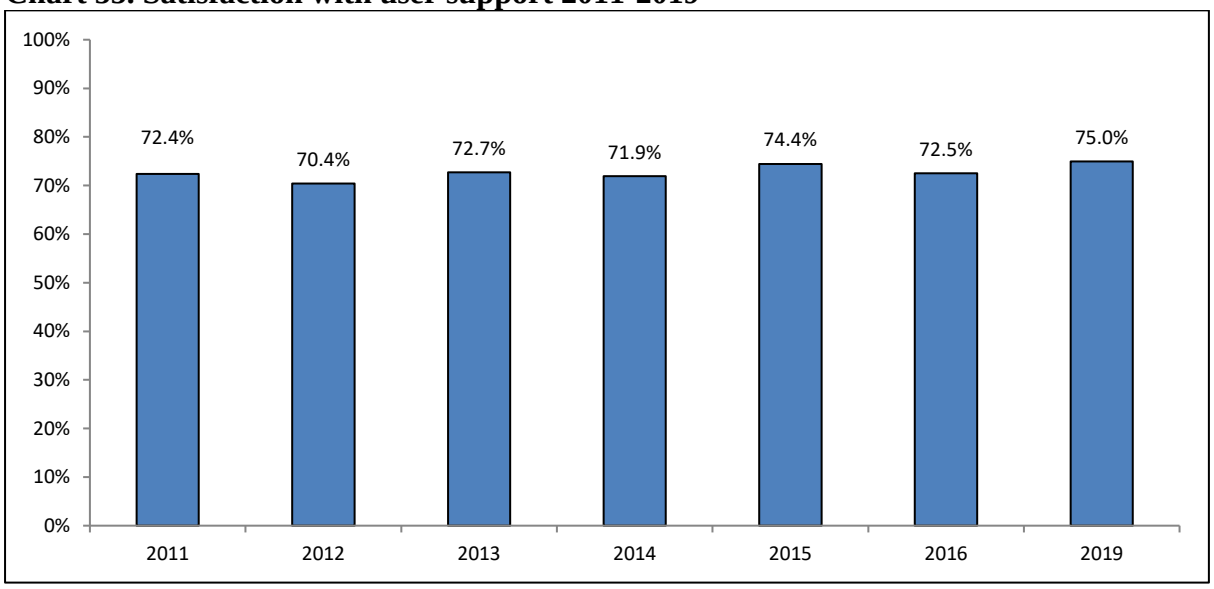
Chart 54. Satisfaction with user support, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

Between 2011 and 2019, overall satisfaction with user support has always been very high, reaching its highest value this year, as shown in Chart 55.

Chart 55. Satisfaction with user support 2011-2019



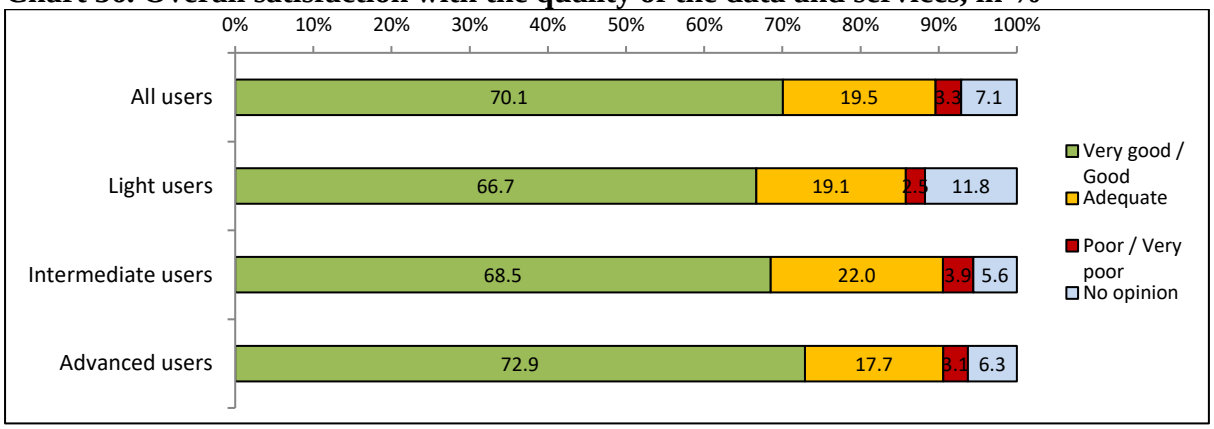
Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

Users' comments confirmed that they judge the service very good and the people really helpful. However, a few pointed out that the procedure to get the support can be problematic with the necessity to create an account.

3.5 Overall quality of data and services

Users were also asked to express their views on the overall quality of the *data and services* provided by Eurostat. As can be seen from Chart 56, the level of overall satisfaction remained quite high with 70.1% of all respondents evaluating data and services as "very good" or "good", 19.5% as "adequate" and only 3.3% as "poor" or "very poor". This share of "very good/good" was once again the highest for the advanced users (72.9%) compared to intermediate users (68.5%) and light users (66.7%).

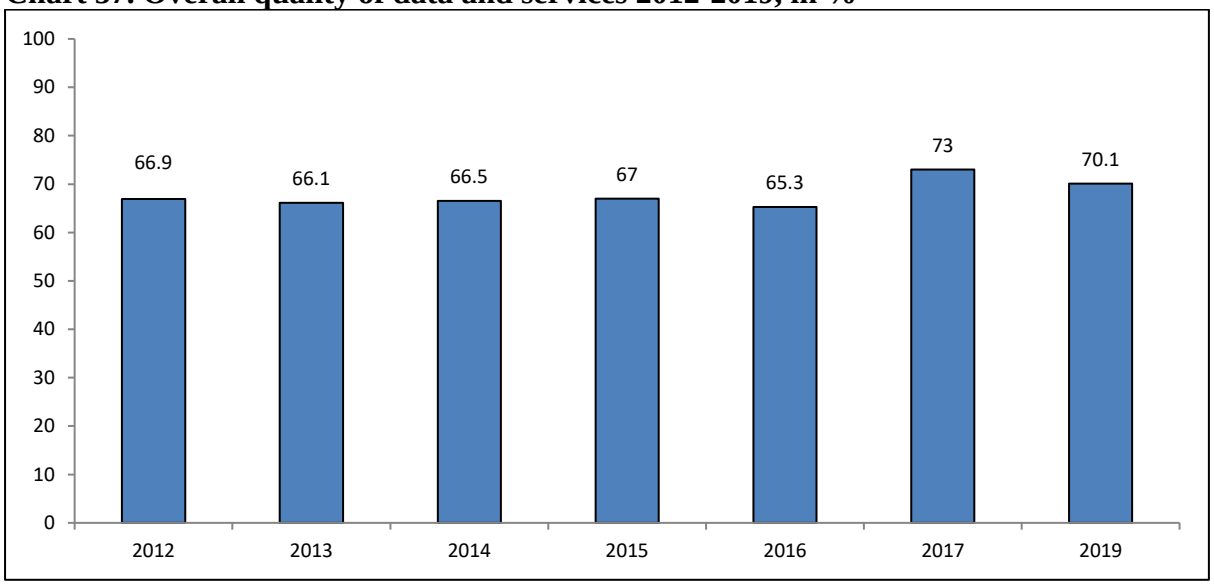
Chart 56. Overall satisfaction with the quality of the data and services, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

As Chart 57 demonstrates, the assessment of the overall quality of data and services was the second highest since 2012 and the difference with 2017 was only due to the largest share of respondents not giving an opinion (7.1% in 2019 versus 2.5% in 2017).

Chart 57. Overall quality of data and services 2012-2019, in %



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2019 user satisfaction surveys

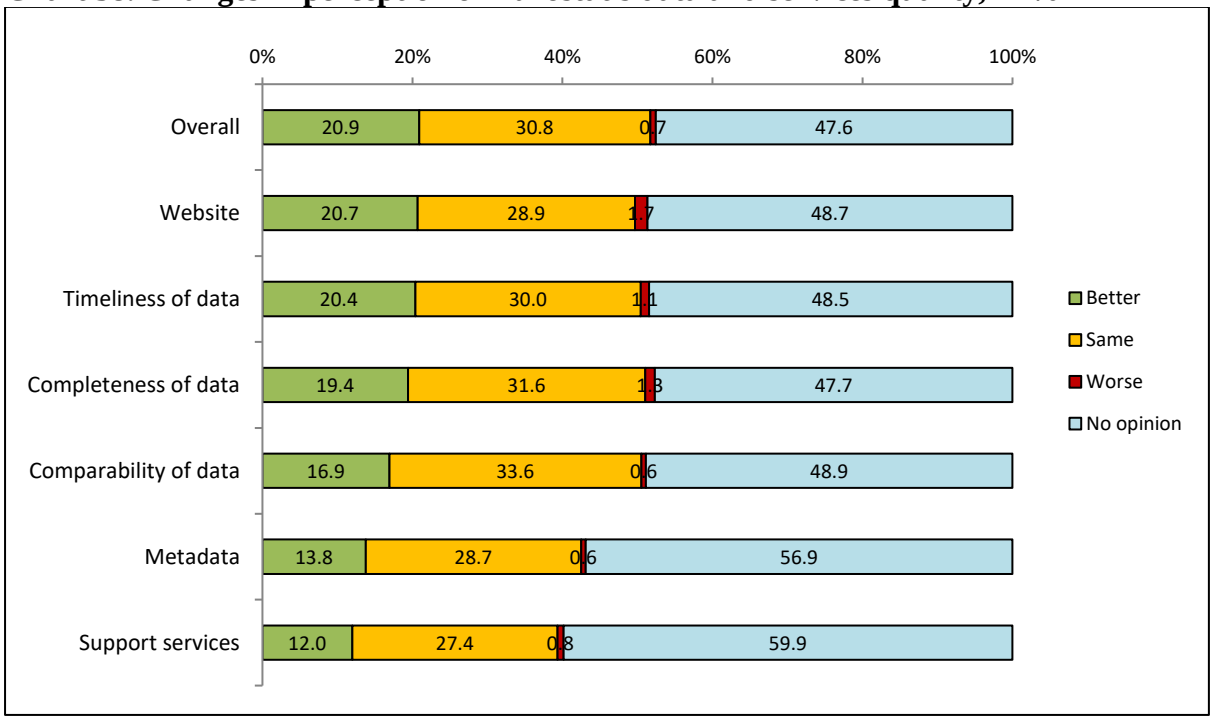
3.6 Comparison with previous survey

It is interesting to note that more positive feedback came again, as in the past, from the comparison of overall evaluation of Eurostat's data, products or services with those at the time of the previous survey (Chart 58).

Contrary to what was expressed in response to some other questions, a number of respondents stated that they saw data quality components and services as "better" than in 2017 when looking at the bigger picture. The most striking evaluation is for the website, which was considered better than in 2017 by 20.7% of respondents, even if the judgement on its quality went slightly down when asked directly about it. This phenomenon might also be explained by a potential continuous increase in quality standards that users expect from Eurostat. Users may see improved data or service quality from previous years, but are not necessarily more satisfied with it.

A high percentage of "no opinion" responses remained, even more than in the past, which can be partly explained by the fact that some users did not take part in the previous survey, did not recall their responses or simply did not have experience with the services.

Chart 58. Changes in perception of Eurostat's data and services quality, in %



Source: Eurostat 2019 user satisfaction survey

At the end users could add more comments of a general nature. Many of them just repeated what already said in responding to the previous questions. What several users added is their wish to get more statistics, in particular more regional statistics, at different levels, and more disaggregated data. In particular, of all themes, transport statistics, waste statistics and statistics on migration were mentioned more than once for an increased coverage. Another recurrent wish is to have Eurostat's website and publications in more languages.

4. Messages from the users

A list of suggestions for improvement was drawn taking into account both the quantitative analysis of the answers to different questions and the recurrent comments that respondents could give as a free text. Most of them have already been mentioned in the previous reports.

- To further improve the quality of statistical data especially by improving timeliness and reducing data gaps due to confidentiality and late sending of data for some countries.
- To provide data at a more disaggregated level and at a more detailed regional level.
- To correct data inconsistencies and provide explanations for abnormal data and outliers.
- To provide more microdata and to make microdata more easy to access for the users.
- To revise the Eurostat website, making it more modern, performant and user friendly, easier to navigate also for non-expert users.
- To improve the search engine, data extraction and download facilities.
- To provide an alert system when data are modified.
- To expand the geographical coverage of provided data on non-EU countries.
- To improve metadata by: (i) giving clear, easy to understand and less technical explanations, trying to avoid specialist language, (ii) providing metadata at a more detailed level, (iii) providing always definitions for all codes and explanations of methodology, (iv) regularly updating metadata (e.g. when the methodology changes).
- To have more topics covered by the release calendar and to include all expected updates.
- To lighten the procedure to get user support.
- To have Eurostat's website and publications in more languages.

Annex 1 - Statistical areas

1. *Economy and finance, composed of:*
   1.1. National accounts (including GDP, main aggregates, input-output tables and European sector accounts)
   1.2. Price statistics
   1.3. Government finance statistics
   1.4. Balance of payments
   1.5. Financial accounts and monetary indicators

2. *Population and social conditions, composed of:*
   2.1. Labour market (including labour force survey)
   2.2. Population
   2.3. Health
   2.4. Education and training
   2.5. Living conditions and social protection

3. *Industry, trade and services, composed of*
   3.1. Structural business statistics
   3.2. Short-term business statistics
   3.3. Tourism

4. *International trade statistics*

5. *Environment statistics*

6. *Agriculture statistics*

7. *Fishery statistics*

8. *Energy statistics*

9. *Transport statistics*

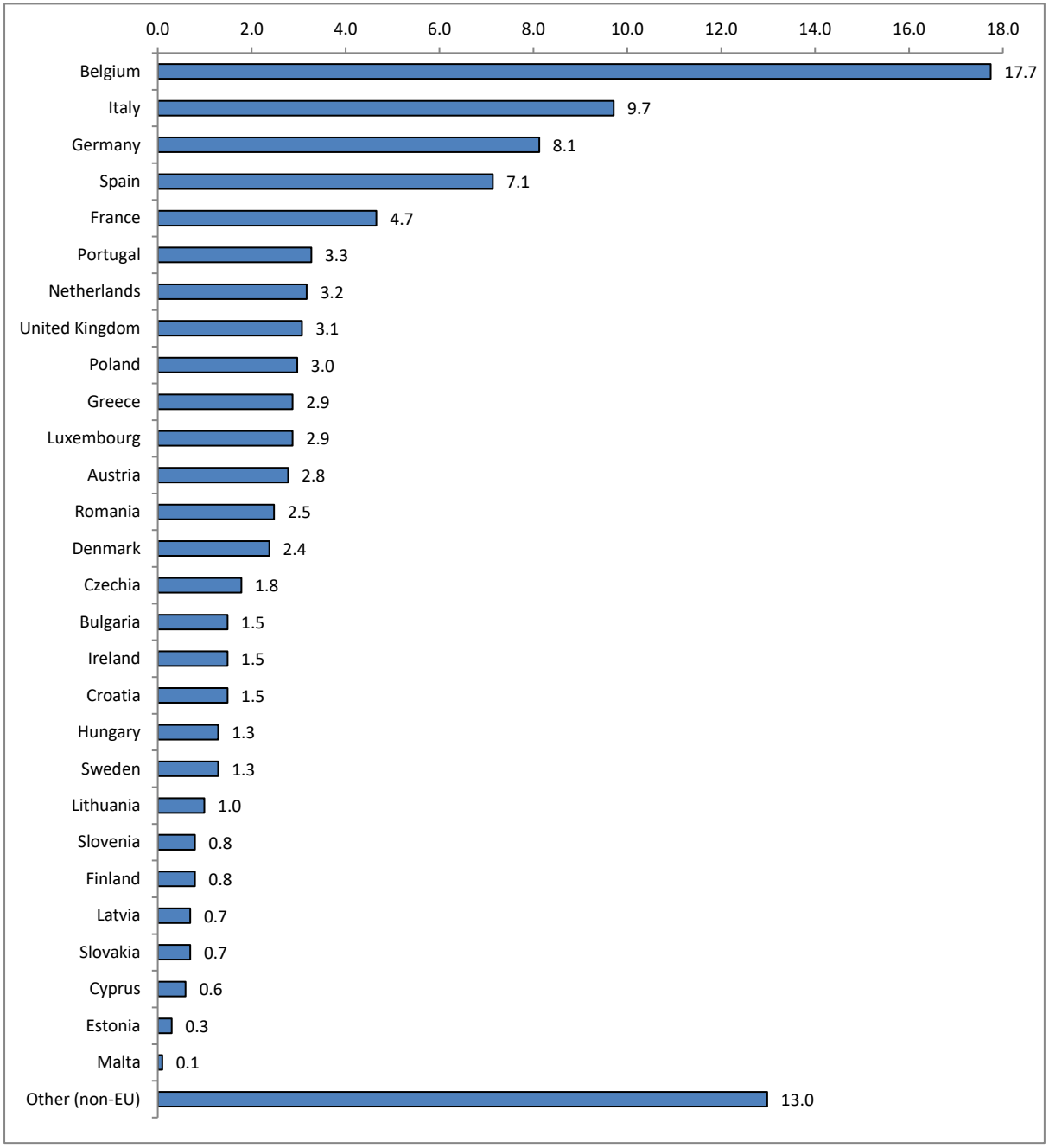
10. *Digital economy and society*

11. *Regional statistics*

12. *Policy indicators, composed of*
   12.1. Europe 2020 indicators
   12.2. Sustainable Development indicators
   12.3. Euro indicators / PEEIs (Principal European Economic Indicators)
   12.4. Globalisation indicators
   12.5. MIP (Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure) indicators

13. *Other*

Annex 2 - Breakdown of respondents by country of work place



Annex 3 - Example of calculations for the question on overall quality

Step 1. Detailed results for all statistical areas

Q_10: How do you rate the overall quality of European statistics?

Overall Quality	Very good	Good	Adeq.	Poor	Very poor	No opin.	Total
National accounts (including GDP, main aggregates, input-output tables and European sector accounts)	103	150	63	55	27	27	425
Price statistics	48	75	41	30	13	19	226
Government finance statistics	46	64	26	13	10	8	167
Balance of payments	30	50	21	19	6	6	132
Financial accounts and monetary indicators	22	38	17	11	4	6	98
Structural business statistics	36	79	43	32	9	17	216
Short-term business statistics	26	52	23	18	5	8	132
Tourism	20	26	21	12	5	9	93
Labour market (including labour force survey)	78	137	68	35	16	21	355
Population	86	118	55	33	20	17	329
Health	38	57	42	14	9	9	169
Education and training	44	79	47	24	15	13	222
Living conditions and social protection	62	100	52	22	12	10	258
International trade statistics	55	101	58	32	18	8	272
Environment statistics	33	68	46	29	7	7	190
Agriculture statistics	24	66	33	24	8	5	160
Fishery statistics	9	17	8	4	2	5	45
Energy statistics	37	63	41	21	8	10	180
Transport statistics	22	47	32	11	4	7	123
Science and technology and innovation	38	49	45	17	6	9	164
Digital economy and society	29	44	30	8	7	7	125
Regional statistics	46	80	47	26	9	10	218
Europe 2020 indicators	43	64	29	19	9	12	176
Sustainable development indicators	42	55	40	14	7	7	165
Euro indicators / PEEIs (Principal European Economic Indicators)	22	27	20	5	4	8	86
Globalisation indicators	18	29	11	9	7	4	78
MIP (Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure) indicators	17	16	11	5	3	3	55
Your other European statistics as specified under Question 1	10	16	5	2	1	8	42

Step 2. Results are aggregated under bigger areas

Overall Quality	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor	No opinion	Total
Economy and finances	249	377	168	128	60	66	1048
Industry, trade and services	82	157	87	62	19	34	441
Population and social conditions	308	491	264	128	72	70	1333
International trade statistics	55	101	58	32	18	8	272
Environment statistics	33	68	46	29	7	7	190
Agriculture statistics	24	66	33	24	8	5	160
Fishery statistics	9	17	8	4	2	5	45
Energy statistics	37	63	41	21	8	10	180
Transport statistics	22	47	32	11	4	7	123
Science and technology and innovation	38	49	45	17	6	9	164
Digital economy and society	29	44	30	8	7	7	125
Regional statistics	46	80	47	26	9	10	218
Policy indicators	142	191	111	52	30	34	560
Other	10	16	5	2	1	8	42
Total	1084	1767	975	544	251	280	4901

Step 3. "Very good" and "Good" and "Very poor" and "Poor" are merged

Overall Quality	Very good / Good	Adequate	Poor / Very poor	No opinion	Total
Economy and finances	626	168	188	66	1048
Industry, trade and services	239	87	81	34	441
Population and social conditions	799	264	200	70	1333
International trade statistics	156	58	50	8	272
Environment statistics	101	46	36	7	190
Agriculture statistics	90	33	32	5	160
Fishery statistics	26	8	6	5	45
Energy statistics	100	41	29	10	180
Transport statistics	69	32	15	7	123
Science and technology and innovation	87	45	23	9	164
Digital economy and society	73	30	15	7	125
Regional statistics	126	47	35	10	218
Policy indicators	333	111	82	34	560
Other	26	5	3	8	42
Average for all areas	2851	975	795	280	4901

Step 4. Final table with calculated percentages

Overall Quality	Very good/Good	Adequate	Poor/Very poor	No opinion
Economy and finances	59,7%	16,0%	17,9%	6,3%
Industry, trade and services	54,2%	19,7%	18,4%	7,7%
Population and social conditions	59,9%	19,8%	15,0%	5,3%
International trade statistics	57,4%	21,3%	18,4%	2,9%
Environment statistics	53,2%	24,2%	18,9%	3,7%
Agriculture statistics	56,3%	20,6%	20,0%	3,1%
Fishery statistics	57,8%	17,8%	13,3%	11,1%
Energy statistics	55,6%	22,8%	16,1%	5,6%
Transport statistics	56,1%	26,0%	12,2%	5,7%
Science and technology and innovation	53,0%	27,4%	14,0%	5,5%
Digital economy and society	58,4%	24,0%	12,0%	5,6%
Regional statistics	57,8%	21,6%	16,1%	4,6%
Policy indicators	59,5%	19,8%	14,6%	6,1%
Other	61,9%	11,9%	7,1%	19,0%
Average for all areas	58,2%	19,9%	16,2%	5,7%