Eurostat podcast: Stats in a Wrap

How do people and companies in Europe use the internet and digital technologies?
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SPEAKERS

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Jonathan Elliott

Stats in a Wrap, the podcast series from Eurostat.

Jonathan Elliott

Welcome to another episode of Stats in a Wrap, the podcast series from Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union. If you've been listening to our podcasts, you will know that we think data are delicious. And we like nothing better than to slice, dice and wrap them into bite-sized morsels whilst enjoying the intriguing stories, the fascinating conversations and startling truths about the everyday and not so everyday stats that surround us. Now you're listening to this podcast on a digital device because it is distributed via the internet. A statement, you may think of the absolutely obvious, you can't hear this on a radio, you can't order it on a CD, or vinyl or audiocassette, you need an internet connection and a smartphone or a tablet, or a laptop or a desktop computer. We take these and many other devices for granted these days, the internet is everywhere and our access to it is no longer a novelty. It is in fact central to the efficient running of our lives. From shopping to telephony, from local government to education and the media, we are all now heavily dependent on information and communication technology or ICT, the wonderful machines we use for the gathering, storing, transmitting, retrieving, and processing of information. And it is not just the internet of course, if you're listening to a podcast, there's a good chance you make Word documents or Excel spreadsheets, you take digital photographs with your phone and share them on social media. These are skills that have emerged with relatively recent technology and are more or less taken for granted, but it has not always been so. And of course, there are many people who don't have these skills.

The EU is determined to raise the level of our skills as well as access to digital technology and the internet and, to measure its progress, it has to gather as much information as possible on how young and old, individuals and businesses are using these in their social and working lives. One of the most powerful tools to do this is two annual surveys that the EU Member States carry out on what their citizens get up to with all things tech, from e-commerce to Amazon's Alexa.

To tell us about these surveys and the fascinating insights they reveal, we're lucky enough to have two Eurostat statisticians with us: Urška Arsenjuk who takes care of ICT statistics on enterprises, and Andrea Attwenger, who handles ICT statistics on households and individuals, and to help us gather an outsider's perspective, we have Pierre Montagnier who is an economist and statistician specializing in

ICT at the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development - the OECD, headquartered in Paris. Welcome all of you to Stats in a Wrap.

All experts
Hi Jonathan, Great to be here!

Jonathan Elliott
Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful. Well, thank you very much for coming into the wrap café today. Technology and the internet, ICT, it's an exciting and fast-moving area, innovation is everywhere. Possibilities are endless. And the controversies that go with it, too. We all have our devices, but we have mixed feelings about them too. And the constant presence of the internet in our lives.

Person on street
I probably spend six hours a day like on the web, you know, I mean, like, me, like, looking up sites on Google and researching information. But I mean, even when I'm in the gym, I'm listening to podcast or kind of like getting music on Spotify, so they're using the internet as well, so…

Person on street
I would say I use the internet probably an unhealthy amount, at least compared to my friend. I think that, you know, even I even find myself when I'm in class having a hard time being off of it.

Jonathan Elliott
Andrea, I'm gonna ask you: Are you an "always on" kind of person? Do you get worried messages from friends if you don't reply to them within seconds? Or are you somebody who just says right, I look at my inbox once a day and that's it. So how available do you make yourself?

Andrea Attwenger
I mean, I would say I'm a very typical like digital native in that way of my screen time is a bit shocking to me at times. I tried to rein it in a bit but I feel like I fall more on the "constantly on".

Jonathan Elliott
Urška, what about you? Andrea had a hint of guilt about her screen time there? Are you or do you monitor your screen time and your use of devices? Or are you a digital native who just dives right in there?

Urška Arsenjuk
Not at all. I would say that I am the opposite of Andrea because I try to be not all the time online and available. And this is especially the case when I'm traveling or when I'm on holidays. Because many times, you know, we have the feeling that we are too much on the screen.

Jonathan Elliott
Pierre? What about you? You're sort of more my age bracket I'm guessing - if I may say that. You must remember a time when you didn't have a phone that was on all the time in your pocket? I certainly do. Have you given in and embraced the smartphone? Or are you keeping it at arm's length?

Pierre Montagnier

I resisted a long time having a smartphone. But I have to recognize having a smartphone is very convenient to be connected with the family. A significant amount of my time I'm really offline. I'm reading paper books. Can you believe that? So, I am somewhere in between. So to say.

Jonathan Elliott

It's good to have a mix, I think. Actually, a book is an amazing piece of technology, I think. It's just fantastically usable. And I hate reading the news or novels on a screen or reading text for a long time on a screen. It's just doesn't feel right somehow. But then I'm that's just probably me. Now, before we talk about the surveys, I'm going to ask our contributors to tell us a little bit about themselves, and in particular about how they came to work in this fascinating area. Pierre, you're an economist at the Directorate for Science, Technology and Innovation at the OECD, where you study the digital economy. How did you get into this particular field? Just tell us a little bit about your professional journey here.

Pierre Montagnier

I've been working at the OECD for many years. My background is in industrial economics. And now I am working in the area of digital economy. My job is specifically focusing on measurement and analysis of the digital economy. When I started, it was already qualified as a moving target, it's still a moving target, where things are never frozen.

Jonathan Elliott

Well, it is very much a moving target, as you say. Urška, what about you? What led you to this particular area? Were you a statistician and data scientist first or did you start out working in the ICT field? And what led you to Eurostat?

Urška Arsenjuk

Before joining Eurostat, I worked for many years at the Statistical Office of Republic of Slovenia, namely on R&D statistics. And actually, this is now the second time that I have joined Eurostat. The first time, four years ago, I worked as a seconded national expert in this unit and I worked on R&D statistics. Then after two years, I returned to Slovenia for one year, and then another opportunity to work in Eurostat came up. And since the first experience enriched me a lot, I would say professionally and personally, I decided to take the opportunity again. So, I re-joined the same unit and now I work on the ICT usage and e-commerce in enterprises survey.

Jonathan Elliott

Andrea, what about you?

Andrea Attwenger

I come from the other side. So, I'm actually not a statistician. I have a background in computer science and well, digital media. But already during my study, I was always more interested in how digital technologies shape society and what they do to us. And of course, Eurostat is like one of the sources of information on that topic. So, I would still say I have always been a stats person, because I've always been reading a lot of news and then of course you appreciate good data. And even before I worked here, me and my friends, we used to send each other infographics from Eurostat to prove a point in a

discussion. So, it's really great for me that I'm at the source now - I'm always the first one who has the data.

Jonathan Elliott
So, tell us a little bit about the importance of doing this kind of work on ICT. Why do we need to understand it and study it? Give us a bit of context here about just how critical this field is?

Andrea Attwenger
So yeah, digitalization, I mean, this big, big word of digitalization, it's just one of the key topics of our time. I mean, it's transforming our daily lives, but also how our economy works, how our society works, changing how we work, how we communicate, how we get information. And also, from the policy side of things - this "Europe fit for the digital age" is one of the priorities of the current European Commission for this time now. So, it's really a hugely important topic and in order to make evidence-based decisions in this area, we really need good and high-quality data. So, we need to know: What are people doing on the internet? Where do they have problems? What kind of technologies get adopted? And on the other side, also, how are companies adjusting to the digital transformation? And, yeah, a lot of that information is actually collected by the Member States. But Eurostat is in there in a coordinating role between, yeah, the data users - what kind of data we need - and the data collection of what and how we are getting it.

Urška Arsenjuk
Perhaps I would just like to add that Eurostat, Member States and data users discuss on the data needs. And once there is an agreement on the data needed to measure the uptake of technologies, these data are included in the legal acts. And this makes it mandatory to Member States to collect these data and to transmit them to Eurostat on a given date. Data can come from different sources, but normally, countries organize yearly national surveys in households and of individuals and in enterprises to collect this data. And once the data are collected, they are sent to Eurostat where they are validated and at the end published. Of course, technology evolves very fast and in very different areas, which makes that we cannot collect all the data needed in the same year. We have to minimize the burden on the Member States, respondents, which means that we have to review the data we collect yearly, just to be sure that we remain relevant in the data we collect. And here it's also I think important to mention that in order to ensure the highest level of comparability when data is collected using surveys, Eurostat works every year with the Member States to design the model questionnaires and methodological manuals that can be used by them to collect the data in a harmonised way across EU.

Person on street
I could live like without social media and everything, even though it would be kind of difficult. But yeah, with the studies, you're obliged to have internet.

Person on street
No! I could not imagine living without the internet, this is far away from my thoughts. And I don't want to live without the internet!

Jonathan Elliott

I want to sort of dive in here to the work of the OECD. And so, Pierre, tell us a little bit about what it's doing in this field. Digital technologies really have spread into so many more areas of our lives - and so quickly compared to just a few years ago, haven't they, and the OECD has been tracking them.

Pierre Montagnier

The OECD is at the heart of international cooperation. All 38 member countries work with other countries, organizations, and stakeholders worldwide to address the pressing policy challenges of our time, and digital transformation is one such area. The OECD is responsible for developing evidence-based policies that first stimulate the growth of a digital economy that is accessible, innovative, open, inclusive and trusted, and second, leverage the potential of ICTs in particular the internet to achieve key socio-economic goals, improving productivity, providing opportunities for new jobs, contributing to mitigate environmental pressures, and improving health outcomes and the quality of life in general. As you can hear, the agenda is very broad. In the area of the digital economy the OECD has invested effort in setting up statistical definitions, for example, on electronic commerce or on the ICT sector and the ICT goods and services, and developing model surveys on how to measure ICT access and usage by households and individuals and by firms.

Jonathan Elliott

Now, the surveys which are carried out by the EU's Member States are particularly significant, because we hear a lot from the private sector, from tech companies, about their products and their customers or their preferences, but not so much analysis from the state sector. Andrea, it's important to have research on ICT from the public sector too, isn't it?

Andrea Attwenger

Of course, and but still, it's the question of what policymakers can then base their decisions on, so we need accessible data, but also data that we can trust. It's very important to have standards, to have harmonized data, so you can actually make comparisons between different countries, and to have transparency of how this data was collected. And yeah, there's a lot of misinformation out there or just data that isn't easily accessible and it is actually the Eurostat policy that the data should be publicly available for everyone. So, I'd like to invite everyone who's listening to this podcast, please have a look at our website. You can access the data, all the indicators we're talking about in these podcasts, you can have a look, you can see how they were collected, you can browse around and yeah, it's data that comes from the public, so it should also be available to the public.

Jonathan Elliott

Absolutely right! The sheer scale and variety of information about internet use, and digital device use is immense and available to us all - just google "Eurostat ICT survey", and you'll see what I mean. Urška, I want to come to you here to talk a bit about the business and enterprise side. I mean, it's important to say that when we talk about ICT, we're not just talking about the devices we carry around with us. It's about things we never see: sensors in satellites, for example, large-scale enterprise technology, which really the everyday person doesn't come into contact with very much. E-commerce is one of those things you cover. Could you just talk us through that a bit more?

Urška Arsenjuk

As Andrea said in the beginning, a large part of our data is used to measure the progress of the implementation of one of the main political priorities - this is "Europe fit for the digital age". And to implement it, the EU has come up with a set of digital targets for 2030. The goals are to improve the digital skills, the digital transformation of businesses, then to have secure and sustainable digital infrastructures, and the last one is the digitalization of public services. So, the data we collect about enterprises is used to measure the level of digital intensity of EU enterprises. And actually, raising the level of digital intensity is one of the goals linked to the digital transformation of businesses. And another thing that we also measure is the number of ICT specialists, which is also another target linked to the digital transformation of businesses.

Person on street

Mostly I use the internet for kind of research or this typical social media stuff like Instagram and Facebook.

Person on street

For communicating with people. And publishing my aesthetic. Instagram, for example, we use it for photos, and generally for our aesthetic.

Jonathan Elliott

Now, let's deep dive into the surveys themselves. They're complicated and wide-ranging. Andrea, could you tell us more about the survey the countries organize to collect data from households and individuals? Tell us about the survey itself, the key features, some of the variables that you use and the scale and scope of it. It's a really big, chunky piece of research, isn't it?

Andrea Attwenger

The ICT household survey is an annual survey. So, we ask people once a year, and we survey almost 200 000 people between 16 and 74 years old across all EU Member States. So quite a lot of people. And yeah, basically, on a very simple level, we try to answer the question: What do people do on the internet or with digital technologies? So, on a very simple level that's: How often do people use the internet? Do they have access to the internet? Which activities are they doing? What are they buying online? But then of course, we also get into more specific technologies or more specific topics. One, for example, is this topic of e-government, which is of course very interesting to policymakers. So yeah, increasingly, governments and public services offer their services online. And it's also a priority of the Commission to do that. There we try to find out what services people are using and what their experiences are with them, so: Are they doing their tax declarations online? Do they use electronic identification? Then, if you want to improve those services, of course you have to ask what the problems are that people currently have with them.

Jonathan Elliott

Every year, Eurostat and Member States agree on questionnaires to collect relevant data. And since 2003 there have been something like 1700 questions on every conceivable aspect of our ICT usage. So, how do you decide what to include and what to leave?

Andrea Attwenger
Yeah, that's the that's a big question every year. So yeah, ICT is a topic that changes a lot and very quickly, so of course we need to stay up to date. But it's also this constant balance, like you said, between trying to be relevant and to include new topics, but at the same time you kind of want those long-time series so you can actually compare things to how they were 10 years ago, 20 years ago. So yeah, it's a constant balance, decisions are taken in discussions with the countries, so they are bringing the experience from the data collection, and then also our data users who tell us, okay, what are the things they need information on. And of course, then we also base it on actual developments and uptake in society.

Jonathan Elliott
Absolutely! Pierre, I mean, at the OECD, you watch these Eurostat surveys very carefully, they must provide a very valuable insight.

Pierre Montagnier
Those surveys are extremely useful. And having used them for many years, I can say that in some cases they are really a gold mine. At the OECD we have four types or levels of usage: We can use Eurostat data as simple indicators, with country rankings broken down by age or educational attainment and similarly for firms by size or by industry. We use some of those indicators for our ICT usage databases, as well as for the OECD Going Digital Toolkit. The second is that we can aggregate indicators to calculate indexes. The third is microdata level: By linking microdata and connecting with data from other databases, you can unveil underlying explanatory factors which do not appear at the first glance. Fourth: The methodologies - differences in the formulation of the questions, how they are ordered in the questionnaire, the glossary use etc. are also important to understand more in depth how indicators are produced. This allowed to increase the comparability, and work towards a better harmonisation at the international level. One concrete illustration: We recently published a review on AI measurement in the ICT usage surveys, and we will soon release a report on measuring the IoT. In both of those OECD publications the Eurostat approach has been very useful for our analysis.

Jonathan Elliott
Urška, tell us a little bit about your area, statistics on the use of internet communication technologies by businesses, and what kind of data you're collecting.

Urška Arsenjuk
In general, we collect data from enterprises to understand their digital transformation, and we focus on the enterprises with 10 or more employees and self-employed persons, classified in certain economic activities. We have many different subjects in our model questionnaire. For example, we are asking about how many persons employed have access to the internet for business purposes, whether an enterprise has a web page and use any social media, then we have a module on e-commerce, which covers e-commerce sales, then we have, I already mentioned before, ICT specialist and skills. Then we have one module on ICT security, use of cloud computing services and use of the internet of things. In 2023, we include also a module on data utilization, sharing, analytics and trading. The purpose of this module is to measure the use of data by enterprises in various business processes, and the main focus was on data analytics. We are asking about the use of robotics, then 3-D printing, invoicing. We have

also a module on artificial intelligence, where we obtain information on what kind of technology they use, and for what purposes they're using.

Person on street
I cannot imagine living without internet, because I think all things in life have two sides, the good side and the bad side.

Person on street
Putting your life more and more on the internet in different ways of kind of how can you interact with people in different ways on the internet? I don't know if I love that. I mean, like I do kind of value this like offline kind of communication.

Jonathan Elliott
Andrea, I just wanted to ask you, it is interesting, isn't it, how we don't log on anymore - if I can use that term - the internet is always on. We're always connected somehow. There's this stream of constant information around us. Intensity seems to be accelerating in the personal and domestic sphere. Is that what you've been finding? Is that what your experience is?

Andrea Attwenger
Yeah, definitely. I mean, we, one of our first questions is basically when did you last use the internet? And then it goes into if you use it every day, like, do you use it more often every day? And at least from personal experience I'm like, this is a stupid question. Like, of course, of course I do, every single day...

Jonathan Elliott
Do I use the internet? What do you mean? I mean....do I breathe?

Andrea Attwenger
Exactly, exactly! But, but it's increasingly, increasingly challenging then in a bit this way of like, how do you phrase the questions to incorporate both, maybe, I don't know, a 70-year-old woman who doesn't use the internet every day, if ever, and then maybe you have a 16-year-old who is online all the time, and who doesn't think of how, I don't know, messaging their friends or something would be, would be also using the internet. So, you have to strike that balance of quite extreme differences in internet use in the population.

Jonathan Elliott
Exactly. For so many people now the internet is not something that is out there that you have to go to - it's always on, it's on a wristwatch, it's coming through your earbuds, and it has a personality like Alexa and so on, which I guess it sort of brings us naturally to artificial intelligence. Urška, this is on everyone's lips right now - a big noise, even though it's been around for quite a long time - AI seems to be a critical part of business and enterprise now - certainly if you listen to the people who are marketing it. Tell us how AI is showing up on the radar for enterprise.

Urška Arsenjuk

In fact, despite that AI being in the news a lot recently, our data shows that 8% of EU enterprises actually use artificial technology in 2021. And it also shows that large enterprises used AI more than small and medium enterprises. The difference might be explained, for example, by the complexity of implementing AI technology, or, for example, with the cost, because we know that investment in AI may be more affordable for the large enterprise. Results show as well that some economic activities use artificial intelligence technology a lot more than others. So, this might indicate that AI is more relevant for certain activities, and according to results, for example, the information and communication sector and professional scientific and technical services activities stood out with the highest share of enterprises that used AI.

Person on street

You know, it seems to be that we're heading in the direction where AI and other future technological, you know, mediums are, in a lot of ways, probably going to be able to replace in some ways what people currently do, just like the ability to like access information and answer so readily.

Person on street

And all this conspiracy theories that AI will take over; I think that's not gonna happen.

Jonathan Elliott

AI is exciting, of course, but also has its controversies. I'm just wondering if you managed to include any of that in your questions?

Urška Arsenjuk

We know that AI technology has many benefits, but at the same time can also do harm and can pose a wide variety of risk. And this was the reason that we included in the model questionnaire for 2024 two optional questions on AI-based bias. And the purpose is to obtain information whether an enterprise has any measure to check the results generated by AI technology for possible biases.

Jonathan Elliott

Pierre, now just tell us about another growing area in the digital economy, the so-called Internet of Things, this is the network of devices often called smart devices that sometimes we don't even notice - they range from fire alarms to door locks, sat-nav's to medical devices, but also ones that are hugely popular like those speaking assistants, Siri and Alexa and friends. Just tell us a bit more about the Internet of Things.

Pierre Montagnier

By 2025, the number of Internet of Things-connected devices will reach 10s of billions, generating a huge, huge and increasing volume of data. Machine-to-machine communications, which are composed of sensors for smart cities, agriculture, and manufacturing, are part of Internet of Things. And the average number of machine-to-machine subscriptions per 100 inhabitants in the OECD has tripled between 2015 and 2021 from 10 to 32. This is one example.

Jonathan Elliott

Now, you can't talk about our relationship with the internet these days without talking about the pandemic lockdown and 2020. Andrea, the way we use the internet changed because of the pandemic in lots and lots of different areas, not least the way we used it to make phone calls or Zoom calls as they became known. Can you tell us more about that?

Andrea Attwenger

Yeah, I mean, that's really the prime example where we've seen a really clear jump in use of the internet for making phone calls. I mean, everyone I think remembers that first lockdown, where we were all at home. So, like, calling our friends, calling our relatives and yes, in 2020, it's gone up by 10 percentage points. So, it's really, really a significant, quite high jump. But then, of course, we also have some indicators that are a bit more specific to this area of what we call eHealth - so health services that are partly online. And we have a selection of different indicators on this, where we can definitely also see a certain impact of COVID. So, the main thing is seeking health information online, which is something where we've seen a clear increase during the peak COVID years - just people, yeah, googling their symptoms, finding out information, and then the other one is making appointments online or accessing your health information online.

Jonathan Elliott

So, how did the pandemic impact enterprise that's to say, the business use of ICT?

Urška Arsenjuk

Actually, the pandemic forced many enterprises to increase or even fully shift towards digital technology to be able to maintain their activities due to restrictions in mobility. So here remote access to e-mails or to other ICT system or use of internet communication software really created a possibility for employees to continue performing their tasks and sustain the enterprise's activity. And also, our data shows that in 2020, one third of enterprises increased the share of staff having remote access to companies' e-mails or other ICT systems. And the majority did so at least partially due to the pandemic. Very similar are remote meetings - half of EU enterprises increased the number of remote meetings, and again, the majority did so at least partially due to the pandemic.

Jonathan Elliott

And school and college students and their teaching staff - in fact, anyone in education - had to move online during lockdown. And it offered to my mind at the time anyway an opportunity to kind of take teaching to the internet. So, we would never need physical schools and colleges, education could all happen remotely. But that's not quite how things turned out - everyone seemed at the end of lockdown, to want to go back to school, and that's what seems borne out by the numbers.

Andrea Attwenger

Yeah, exactly. So, the latest data we have is from 2022, and there we have, interestingly, seen a slight decrease, again, of people having or attending online courses. Some preferred the in-person education after all and offered the courses in person after that. So, it's quite interesting to see for which indicators it is really just like a bump during the COVID years and which changes are lasting.

Person on street

I definitely think younger people have the advantage of, you know, again, being able to access information more readily and more efficiently. But I am generally cynical about the use of the internet and how, you know, at such a young age, you know, young children are engaging so heavily with, particularly social media, I think it's definitely troubling.

Person on street

I would say that younger generations have an advantage using internet because they grew up with it so they're more accustomed to it. And whenever it changes, they immediately get it.

Jonathan Elliott

Now let's just talk a little bit about digital skills. Not everyone uses the internet in the same way. They don't use the same devices and they don't use the same software or apps. And when they do, many don't have all the skills they need to use them at their best. I mean, Urška, could you just tell us a bit more about what you found?

Urška Arsenjuk

Results show that almost one quarter of EU enterprises provided training to their staff in order to enhance their ICT-related skills. Here is also a big difference between large and small enterprises. The share of large enterprises that provided training to their staff in order to boost their ICT-related skills was almost four times higher than for small enterprises. Unfortunately, here we do not measure what are the reasons for not providing trainings. But of course, we can imagine that this difference may be explained, for example, by costs, that it's more affordable for large enterprises, or perhaps time for the trainings, perhaps small and medium enterprises have less possibilities and resources.

Jonathan Elliott

Workplace training and ICT is important for businesses to compete in a global economy. So, tracking that helps EU Member States make sure that their companies are keeping up. But just as important are the 447 million individuals who need to use the internet in work and as citizens. Digital skills are now critical. Google "Europe's digital decade" to find out more; the most important for our discussion is the target to get us all fit for the digital age. Andrea, this is your area, tell us more.

Andrea Attwenger

Yeah, so "digital skills" is one of those priorities set by the Commission for this digital decade that we're currently in. So, the goal is for 80% of the EU population to have at least basic skills by 2030. So, what does "at least basic" mean? We do measure a bunch of different activities and see if people have performed them. They are in different areas. So, it's, we have digital content creation, we have communication and collaboration, information and data literacy, safety and problem solving. So different areas, kind of like seeing, okay, is this something people can perform. And just as a quick number, currently, we're at about half the EU population who has at least basic digital skills. It's interesting to see a bit where the gaps are. So, one of the highest impacts is the level of education, of formal education. So, if we only look at people with very high formal education, we're almost at this 80% target that we want to achieve. But it is much lower for people with a lower formal education. Another impact being discussed already today is age. So digital skills are highest among those aged 16

to 24, and then it kind of goes down until the lowest level that we have. If you combine those two, so students which are young and usually highly educated are very close to that 80% target.

Person on street

Especially about smartphones or new technologies, I am not the kind of person that if I have a new smartphone in the market, I'm going to run and buy it, no. I would just buy a new technology or a new device when mine is completely old and not working.

Jonathan Elliott

Now we are nearly completely out of time, but I do want to ask Andrea about sustainability because ICT does generate mountains upon mountains of electronic waste. A lot of it is dead mobile phones sitting in drawers. Andrea, it's a growing problem, isn't it?

Andrea Attwenger

Yeah, I do think this is a very interesting topic that is very close to my heart. And it's actually an example of something that we have introduced very recently. So, we started measuring it in 2022, actually, due to its growing importance. And yeah, this topic of green ICT is a bit at the intersection between digitalization and sustainability. So, we basically investigate two main topics. The first one is: What do people do with old devices that they are no longer using? Are they recycling them? Are they giving them away to be used second-hand by someone else? Are they just throwing them away? Or are they still lying around at home, which is the truth for most people. And I have to admit, I'm sometimes also guilty of this, of having an old phone in some drawer somewhere still, which of course isn't very green. And then the second topic we are investigating is motives for purchase decisions. So, is this characteristic of a device being green? Is this something that is important to people when they're buying or selecting which device to buy? So, these are characteristics like recyclability, or how modular is the design of these devices, so they can be repaired easily, and ideally, not be thrown away quickly.

Jonathan Elliott

Well, that's a whole other podcast, which we'll have to do another day - sustainability and technology - a huge subject. And we haven't even touched on the growth of data centres and the sustainability issues they bring too - great stuff. But we've run truly run out of time. And it only remains for me to say a huge thanks to my wonderful guests for their amazing insight and depth of knowledge, and the variety of perspectives that we've been introduced to in this podcast. Thank you very much to Urška Arseniuk, and Andrea Attwenger at Eurostat and Pierre Montagnier at the OECD. Thank you all for joining us today.

All Guests

Thank you very much. Thanks a lot... A pleasure.. Thanks a lot, it was great fun.

Jonathan Elliott

If you've enjoyed the show, don't forget to share with friends and colleagues where Stats in a Wrap can be found - on Spotify, Apple, Google, and all the usual places. And if you'd like to know more about the subjects discussed today, just search "Stats in a Wrap Eurostat". And of course, join us for the next episode, when the Wrap Cafe will be dishing up more flavoursome insights - this time about the

neighbours, that's right, the people next door, or rather the countries in the EU's immediate neighbourhood, especially to the east and the south - and why stats are so important in maintaining good relations with them.

Join us then to find out more, but for now, goodbye.