47th Meeting of the European Statistical System Committee

Warsaw - hybrid meeting

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Item 3 of the agenda

ESS contribution to the European Green Deal

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. RECOMMENDATION FOR ACTION

This document proposes an Action plan 'statistics for the European Green Deal'.

The ESS Committee is invited to endorse the proposed Action plan.

2. BACKGROUND AND BRIEF HISTORY

The Commission presented the European Green Deal on 11 December 2019. It is a powerful driver of change in EU policies and, in turn, their data needs. The European Green Deal (EGD) points to a structural change about what information needs to be measured and monitored.

Following the announcement of the EGD, the ESGAB 2020 annual report recommendation number 7 invited Eurostat and the NSIs to develop a statistical action plan to underpin the European Green Deal.

In October 2020, the ESS Committee had a first discussion about statistics for the EGD and tasked Eurostat to develop an action plan in cooperation with the relevant Directors groups. Eurostat has reported progress regularly to the ESS Committee, last time in May 2021.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

The EGD is the first of the six priorities of the Commission for 2019-2024. It is a new growth strategy to make the EU's economy sustainable by turning climate and environmental challenges into opportunities. The EGD announces a set of new transformative policies across the economy and increased efforts to follow-up on current legislation and polices relevant to it. All sectors are concerned.

The EGD policy proposals will be central for a post-COVID-19 economic recovery that is green and sustainable.

4. Consequences for National Statistical Institutes

The proposed Action plan 'statistics for the European Green Deal' takes stock of activities in the ESS multi-annual action plan and allows the ESS Committee to give direction on the response related to EGD key political priorities or socio-economic phenomena. The Action plan coordinates and streamlines current statistical activities related to the EGD, as well as prioritises a few selected projects of particular relevance. Only a few of the new activities have legal basis. Selected examples of Action plan activities and their outcomes were presented to the Partnership Group in September 2021 (document PG_2021_80_3.1)

The ESS already produces a lot of valuable statistical information. Many existing data sets can provide essential information already. Therefore, the Action plan makes emphasis on enhanced communication and dissemination of currently existing statistical products.

Another important aspect is coordination, both inside the ESS and with other data producers. The European Green Deal is organised by a holistic approach cutting across traditional statistical areas such as energy, environment, finance, agriculture, etc. Thus, coordination and interconnections are particularly important. Examples of cross-cutting EGD topics are: climate change, circular

economy, industrial policies, farm-to-fork (agricultural, environmental and food health), financing the transition (sustainable finance), the EU as a global leader, etc. Cooperation with organisations beyond the ESS at national level is also very important. The Action plan supports a better cooperation with national and international organisations and the research community. An enhanced dialogue with both users and other actors like mapping agencies would also be beneficial for better understanding their concrete needs as well as for providing new statistics based on models or new data sources.

5. OUTSTANDING ISSUES

The Action plan has been developed in cooperation with Directors groups, as requested by the ESS Committee. The Director groups most directly concerned are the following:

- Directors of sectoral and environmental statistics and accounts (DIMESA)
- Directors group of agricultural statistics (DGAS)
- Business statistics Directors group (BSDG)

Among them, most concerned is DIMESA, having responsibility over environment, energy, transport, and land statistics. The proposed Action plan includes more than 20 activities under the responsibility of DIMESA. DGAS is also affected, with 5 proposed activities under its responsibility. The BSDG is concerned as regards the update of PRODCOM to better serve the EGD as well as possible use of micro-data from business statistics to produce indicators. Social statistics propose one action about Green Deal relevant characteristics of housing.

The Directors groups consulted found good the organisation of the table of activities and the granularity of the actions (table in annex).

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

The Directors group most directly affected by the Action plan, namely DIMESA, expressed concerned about the high ambition. Eurostat considers the Action plan reflects the level of ambition of the European Green Deal: the Commission wants the EU to lead the rest of the world in the fight of climate change and sustainability. In reaction to those concerns, Eurostat made some simplifications in successive versions of the draft Action plan, including dropping some of the activities discussed and making others lighter, in particular the most resource-intensive ones e.g. the new legal basis for environmental accounts.

Eurostat has launched this year a call for grants on statistics for the European Green Deal. Eurostat invites the ESS to use innovative methods for the EGD.

The European Green Deal offers opportunities, which should not be missed, to show-case the usefulness of statistics and put existing statistical products to new uses.

7. NEXT STEPS

As the Action plan takes stock of activities in the ESS multi-annual action plan, most of its activities are already running and a few of them are close to completion. It is proposed that the Directors groups follow up the implementation of the actions under their realm. The ESS Committee will be reported in case of significant deviations from planning.

ESS contribution to the European Green Deal Action Plan

1. Introduction

The European Green Deal is the new growth strategy to make the EU's economy sustainable by turning climate and environmental challenges into opportunities across all policy areas and making the transition just and inclusive for all. The European Green Deal announces a set of new transformative policies. All sectors of the economy are concerned; notably transport, energy, agriculture, buildings, and industries such as steel, cement, ICT, textiles and chemicals.

More and better data and statistics are needed to underpin the policies under the European Green Deal. Furthermore, the European Green Deal points to structural changes about information needs, measures and monitoring. For instance, an increased focus on renewable energy, electric cars & charging stations, refurbished buildings, circular economy, digitalization etc. will likely result in long-term changes for official statistics.

2. ESS CONTRIBUTION TO THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

The ESS already produces a lot of valuable statistical information related to the European Green Deal, for example on the Sustainable Development Goals or environmental accounts. There are official statistics in the domains of environment, energy, transport, agriculture, etc.

Providing more and better statistics in support of the European Green Deal and a green and sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 crisis requires a common effort of the ESS and creates new opportunities. It can be the occasion for a strategic reflection about anticipating and prioritising user needs, coordination inside the ESS, the boundaries of official statistics and how to best strive for innovation.

Such strategic document as an action plan allows the ESS Committee, as the main strategic body of the ESS, to take stock and give direction on the ESS response related to key political priorities or socio-economic phenomena. The action plan coordinates and streamlines current statistical activities related to the European Green Deal and helps to better prioritise and sequence the various activities of particular relevance.

This Action plan is fully aligned with the ESS multiannual action plan as the strategic planning document, as well as with the annual work programmes, and it further details the planned activities related to the European Green Deal as the key political priority.

The implementation of this Action plan is a collective endeavour of the ESS. The ESS Committee strategic guidance, together with the overall planning and timelines indicated in the ESS multiannual action plan, will facilitate implementation of the activities with the help of Directors' and working groups in the various domains concerned. This will then also allow Eurostat and the countries to better allocate resources.

3. ACTION PLAN STATISTICS FOR THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

The ESS already produces a lot of valuable statistical information. The Action plan enhances visibility of existing data through specific activities about communication and new indicators.

In addition, the Action plan focuses on a few selected statistical development activities particularly relevant.

The Action plan also includes activities, such as the ongoing pilot review on climate change related statistics, expected to provide recommendations on relevant user needs. An enhanced dialogue with both users and other actors like mapping agencies would also be beneficial for better understanding their concrete needs as well as for providing new statistics based on models or new data sources.

Cooperation with other organisations at national level is also very important. The Action plan supports a better cooperation with national and international organisations and the research community.

The ESS contribution to the European Green Deal is structured in the following strands of work:

i. Enhanced communication and dissemination of European statistics for the Green Deal. Many existing data sets can provide essential information already, including current macroeconomic, social, business, agriculture, environment, energy, transport and other statistics. These can be used to serve information needs related to the Green Deal. European statistics have been extensively used for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals for the EU, the circular economy and the Energy Union. Some other monitoring frameworks are a blend of statistical data and other types of data, e.g. provided by environmental agencies, the research community and non-official sources.

The activities in this area are mostly for Eurostat.

- ESS pilot review of climate change related statistics on improving the effectiveness of statistics of energy, transport and environment for climate ambition policies
- New digital publication on European Green Deal and modernise existing interactive Eurostat digital publications, such as 'Shedding light on energy in the EU'
- Improve existing and issue new interactive visualisation tools on energy statistics and circular economy, providing stylised facts and insights into the data at a glance
- Enhance communication of environmental accounts
- Update the EU monitoring framework for the circular economy
- Enrich the European Statistical Recovery Dashboard with short-term environment-related indicators.
- **ii. Update the legal basis for official statistics related to the European Green Deal.** New legal bases for agricultural statistics and environmental accounts are in preparation with the collaboration of Directors' and working groups. The amendment of the energy statistics regulation is in a mature state, currently with the European Parliament and the Council for a 3-month scrutiny period.

The activities in this area are mostly for Eurostat and the NSIs.

- Prepare a draft Commission delegated Regulation on environmental accounts that will improve quality and relevance
- Develop a draft amendment of Regulation (EU) 691/2011 on European environmental accounts to create new data for the European Green Deal
- Adopt the draft amendment of the Energy Statistics Regulation 1099/2008 to provide for more relevant, timelier and detailed energy statistics

- Prepare a draft Commission Implementing Regulation laying down the PRODCOM list with additional secondary raw materials
- Continue modernising the European agricultural statistics system (EASS) with the second step represented by the legislative proposal on Statistics on Agricultural Input and Output (SAIO)
- Prepare draft amending act for Economic Accounts for Agriculture to include the regional economic accounts for agriculture
- Prepare a draft implementing act for Integrated Farm statistics 2023 (core and modules on labour force, rural development, irrigation, soil management practices, machinery and equipment and orchards)
- Develop a draft Regulation for European fishery statistics (EFS) grouping together existing statistics on catches, landings and aquaculture and organic aquaculture statistics
- **iii.** Develop official statistics beyond legal basis, including new statistical products based on existing data, voluntary data collections, methodologies, etc. There is already a range of statistical initiatives ongoing. Some of this work should be developed very quickly in view of the increased priority due to the European Green Deal. This is also an opportunity to grow experimental statistics into mature products in specific areas. Focus and prioritisation in the experimental work will help.

The activities in this area are for Eurostat, the NSIs and in certain cases ONAs.

- Support the implementation of the degree of urbanisation worldwide based on the Methodological manual to define cities, towns and rural areas
- Publish first estimates of material footprints for all Member States
- Energy statistics to collect additional data, early estimates and adapt methodology for share of renewables
- Start data collection on food waste generation under the Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC) and Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/2000 (legal basis already in place)
- Complete the GEOSTAT 4 project and methodological guidance required by Member States to implement the GSGF-Europe
- Collect data on direct or indirect energy subsidies to corporations or households
- World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2020
- Improve quality of waste statistics, including quality of plastic packaging statistics that is also necessary for purposes of the new EU budgetary own resource
- Develop an ESS strategy on the integration of geospatial data and statistics
- Sustainable finance. Follow the work of the European Commission, under the lead of DG FISMA, to develop metrics of 'green investment' and establish a taxonomy of sustainable economic activities. Explore options for linking administrative information, non-financial reporting or other sources on 'green investment' with business performance
- Develop LUCAS 2022 new specific module "landscape feature"

- Ecosystem accounts: further develop methodologies for estimation of ecosystem services, establish EU-wide estimates
- Pilot an ESS data collection on passenger transport by inland waterways
- Develop modal split indicators covering all transport modes
- As part of the evaluation and impact assessment of European statistics on population, conduct consultation on data needs regarding Green Deal relevant characteristics of housing.

ANNEX: COMPLETE LIST OF ACTIVITIES IN THE ACTION PLAN

Statistical initiative	Timing	Responsible	EGD actions served	
Enhanced communication and dissemination of European statistics for the Green Deal				
ESS pilot review of climate change related statistics that will focus on improving the effectiveness of statistics of energy, transport and environment for climate ambition policies. The review will issue recommendations	2021 Q3 to report recommendations to ESSC 2022-23 implementation of recommendations	Eurostat and volunteer Member States participating in the pilot Eurostat and Member States to implement review recommendations	Climate ambition Clean, affordable and secure energy	
 Eurostat digital publications. Issue a new Eurostat interactive digital publication on European Green Deal, using existing European statistics Modernise existing interactive Eurostat digital publications, such as 'Shedding light on energy in the EU" to make it more appealing and increase relevance of already existing statistics Digital, interactive publications on the results of Agricultural Census 2020 	2021 Q4 2023	Eurostat. No additional workload on Member States Consultation with working group of Sustainable development indicators, on data availability and quality in all areas	All elements of the European Green Deal	
Improve existing and issue new interactive visualisation tools on energy statistics and circular economy, providing stylised facts and insights into the data at a glance	2021 Q3	Eurostat	Clean, affordable and secure energy Circular economy	
Enhance communication of environmental accounts as regards early estimates, environmental footprints and combined presentations of economic and environmental figures	Continuous 2021 - 2024	Eurostat	Climate ambition Circular economy	

Statistical initiative	Timing	Responsible	EGD actions served
Update the EU monitoring framework for the circular economy and the related dashboard of 23 indicators. New indicators included in the dashboard, using existing data	2021 Q4	Eurostat	Circular economy
Enrich the European Statistical Recovery Dashboard with short-term environment-related indicators. In particular release of quarterly greenhouse gas emissions and monthly air quality indicators, derived from existing sources	2021 Q4	Eurostat and volunteering Member States	Climate ambition
Update the legal basis for official statistics related to the	European Green Deal		
Prepare draft Commission delegated Regulation on environmental accounts that will improve quality and relevance of European environmental accounts as regards shorter transmission deadlines and streamlining across modules, up-to-date lists of characteristics, classification breakdowns and reporting tables Develop a draft amendment of Regulation (EU) 691/2011 on European environmental accounts to create new data for	2022 Q1 for adoption of Commission delegated Regulation 2022 Q2 for first data transmissions 2021 Q4 for Commission adoption	Eurostat, ESSC, DIMESA and related working groups for preparation Regulation (done) Member States and Eurostat for the implementation ESSC, DIMESA and related working groups for preparation	Circular economy Mainstreaming sustainability Climate ambition Farm to Fork Strategy
the European Green Deal	of draft 2023 for adoption by EP and Council 2025-26 for first data transmissions	Regulation Member States and Eurostat for the implementation	Preserving and protecting biodiversity
Develop a draft amendment of the Energy Statistics Regulation 1099/2008 to provide for more relevant, timelier and detailed energy statistics to support the monitoring of the Energy Union and the European Green Deal	2021 Q2, now in 3 months scrutiny period for EP and Council under the regulatory procedure ending on 22/12/21	ESSC, DIMESA and related working groups for preparation Regulation	Climate ambition Clean, affordable and secure energy

Statistical initiative	Timing	Responsible	EGD actions served
	2022 January for Commission adoption 2022 January or February entry into force	Member States and Eurostat for the implementation	
Prepare a draft Commission Implementing Regulation laying down the PRODCOM list with additional secondary raw materials	Q3/Q4 2022 for adoption Commission implementing Regulation Q2 2023 for first data transmissions	Eurostat, ESSC, BSDG and PRODCOM working group for preparation Regulation Member States and Eurostat for the implementation	Circular economy
Continue the modernisation of the European agricultural statistics system (EASS). It provides data to develop, implement and monitor the main objectives of the common agricultural policy with the second step represented by the legislative proposal on Statistics on Agricultural Input and Output (SAIO). SAIO groups together the existing statistics on animal and crop production, agricultural price statistics, nutrients and plant protection products, as well as new data requirements, with a view to improving the relevance, quality, comparability and coherence of European agricultural statistics. SAIO will cover existing statistics of plant protection products and agricultural nutrients, which suffer from important weaknesses and strongly need improvement to be fit for purpose; SAIO will consolidate organic farming statistics; agricultural price statistics will be consolidated and modernised	2022 for adoption of SAIO Regulation by EP and Council Followed by implementing acts, likely in 2023 2024 for first data transmissions	Eurostat to follow negotiations between the Council and the European Parliament on the Commission proposal COM/2021/37 Member States and Eurostat for the implementation	Farm to Fork Strategy Towards a zero- pollution ambition for a toxic free environment (pesticides) Chemicals strategy for sustainability (pesticides) Biodiversity Strategy CAP reform
Amending act for Economic Accounts for Agriculture to include the regional economic accounts for agriculture	2021-2022 for adoption by EP and Council	For Eurostat to follow up the negotiations between the	Farm to Fork Strategy

Statistical initiative	Timing	Responsible	EGD actions served
	2022-2023 for first data transmissions	Council and the European Parliament on the Commission proposal COM/2021/54	CAP reform
		ESSC, DGAS and related working groups	
Implementing act for Integrated Farm statistics 2023 (core and modules on labour force, rural development, irrigation, soil management practices, machinery and equipment and orchards)	2021 for adoption of Commission implementing act Data to be available in 2025	ESSC, DGAS and related working group	Farm to Fork Strategy Biodiversity Strategy CAP reform
New Regulation for European fishery statistics (EFS) grouping together existing statistics on catches, landings and aquaculture and organic farming statistics as well as new data requirements on regional, organic and environmental statistics	2022 for adoption of the Commission proposal 2024 for adoption by EP and Council Followed by implementing acts, likely in 2025 2026-2027 for first data transmissions	ESSC, DGAS and related working group For Eurostat to follow up the negotiations between the Council and the European Parliament	Farm to Fork Strategy Biodiversity Strategy
Develop official statistics beyond legal basis			
Support the implementation of the degree of urbanisation worldwide based on the Methodological manual to define cities, towns and rural areas for international comparisons This will achieve internationally comparable data in support of SDG monitoring for urban and rural areas.	2024	Eurostat to lead	The EU as a global leader (support measurement of SDG 11)

Statistical initiative	Timing	Responsible	EGD actions served
Publish first estimates of material footprints for all Member States	2021 Q4 for Eurostat's first estimates	Eurostat	Circular Economy
Material footprints data for all Member States are needed for the update the circular economy monitoring framework. A few Member States currently do not produce footprints. Eurostat can publish first estimates for those countries.	2022 onwards improved country estimates	Member States to take over production of country material footprints	
 Energy statistics to collect data on: new fuels (e.g. e-fuels) transformation of renewable fuels early estimates to calculate the main indicators on energy efficiency and share of renewables adapt the methodology for monitoring the share of renewables to the updated version of the Renewable Energy Directive large-scale batteries or data centres below the mandatory thresholds 	2021 and 2022 for preparation 2023 first data transmissions (reference year 2022)	Proposals discussed in the Working group energy statistics and at task force level	Clean, affordable and secure energy Climate ambition EU Industrial strategy
Start a mandatory data collection on food waste generation under the Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC) and Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/2000. Legal basis already in place	Pilots in 2020 (done) and 2021 June 2022 first mandatory transmission	Working group waste statistics following discussions	Farm to Fork Strategy Circular economy
Complete the GEOSTAT 4 project and methodological guidance required by Member States to implement the GSGF-Europe This will achieve a broader application of the Geospatial Global Framework (GSGF), underpinning harmonised procedures, processes, standards and formats and hence of	Early 2022 GEOSTAT results	Eurostat to contribute further to the development of the framework Member States to further develop and harmonise their geospatial data infrastructures	The EU as a global leader Climate Pact Mainstreaming SDGs in the European Semester

Statistical initiative	Timing	Responsible	EGD actions served
geospatial data. This supports the creation of Pan-Union geospatial datasets			
Collect data on direct or indirect energy subsidies to corporations or households	2021 Q4 launch discussions at technical level	Working group Energy statistics following discussions	Climate ambition. Revision (2021) of the Energy Taxation Directive
World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2020 Collection of Integrated Farm statistics 2020	2022 to disseminate results (Under IFS Regulation)	For Eurostat to validate and disseminate the data timely and interactively. For Member States to provide data by the deadline	The EU as a global leader Farm to Fork Strategy
Improve quality of waste statistics, including quality of plastic packaging statistics that is also necessary for purposes of the new EU budgetary own resource, which applies from 1 January 2021 onwards	2022 Q4	Eurostat to improve guidance Member States to improve estimates Working group waste statistics to exchange best practices	Circular Economy Towards a zero- pollution ambition for a toxic free environment
Develop an ESS strategy on the integration geospatial data and statistics, with a view to enlarge the role of Eurostat at the Commission and foster closer cooperation between mapping authorities and National statistical institutes This will achieve clarity on what kind of services and core geospatial data sets GISCO aims at providing at pan-Union level, and how these services and data can be used for spatial analysis of different kinds. Member States are asked to provide geospatial core data on administrative/statistical units, buildings, addresses, postal codes, cadastral and land parcels, transport networks and utility services "as-is", so	2022 presentation to the ESSC 2023 adoption by the ESSC	Eurostat to show the way towards establishing core pan-Union geospatial datasets and enable spatial analysis Member States to improve geospatial data provision concepts and to get comparable pan-Union data	The EU as a global leader

Statistical initiative	Timing	Responsible	EGD actions served
that additional burden for the Member States can be avoided.			
The Commission is developing concepts and metrics about 'green investment' based on environmental accounts. Draft lists of 'green' and 'brown' activities are being developed. Eurostat is co-chairing the CMFB TF on the statistics on sustainable finance and climate related risks. Eurostat is engaged in climate change related discussions with the IMF Eurostat follows the work of the European Commission, under the lead of DG FISMA, to develop and establish a taxonomy of sustainable economic activities. The taxonomy aims to a reference labelling of financial products as 'sustainable' or 'green' (to avoid 'greenwashing'). Environmental accounts can give some important background info regarding the size of public financing for environmental purposes and regarding economic incentives for the green transition. The taxonomy is also relevant as a possible future data source for statistics. For example, business statistics may launch pilot projects to develop statistics on the direct link between sustainable finance and business behaviour/performance, subject to access to appropriate sources. Eurostat liaises with Commission DGs for possible statistical applications.	2023	Eurostat to lead methodological discussions in the relevant working groups and liaise with leader Commission services. Once the taxonomy is fully established Member States can run pilots with support of Eurostat grants	Climate ambition Circular economy Industrial strategy Towards a zero- pollution ambition for a toxic free environment Preserving and protecting biodiversity
Develop LUCAS 2022 new specific module "landscape feature" on landscape features in agricultural area, enabling further assessments of the CAP impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services	2022 run LUCAS survey 2023-24 dissemination results	On behalf of AGRI, Eurostat to implement the LUCAS landscape features, which are technically developed by the JRC	Preserving and protecting biodiversity

Statistical initiative	Timing	Responsible	EGD actions served
Ecosystem accounts. Further develop methodologies for estimation of ecosystem services. A task force will be set	March 2021 UNSC approval (done)	For Eurostat and volunteer countries	The EU as a global leader
up to further develop methodologies, based on the experience by JRC in project INCA	2023 Q4	Countries have no obligation to use the methodologies	Preserving and protecting biodiversity
Establish EU-wide estimates to help Member States by providing a standard frame and approach, including in cooperation with European environmental agency and the Commission Joint Research Centre.	Continuous 2021-2024	Working group Environmental accounts following discussions	Towards a zero- pollution ambition for a toxic free environment
Pilot an ESS data collection on passenger transport by inland waterways. This data are currently missing at ESS level	2022 for methodology 2024 for amendment of Regulation (EU) 2018/974 on freight transport by inland waterways	Eurostat and Member States to define a methodology for this data collection. Working groups transport statistics following discussions Member States to engage and coordinate relevant authorities for the collection of data on passenger transport	Sustainable and smart mobility. Initiatives to increase and better manage the capacity of railways and inland waterways
Develop modal split indicators covering all transport modes. Eurostat to finalise methodology for territorialising international maritime transport, develop distance matrices for each transport mode. The indicators will monitor with annual periodicity the share of goods and available data on passengers shifted to more environmentally friendly transport modes.	2022 for methodology finalised 2024 for data dissemination	Member States to provide timely statistics for all modes of transport.	Sustainable and smart mobility
As part of the evaluation and impact assessment of European statistics on population, conduct consultation on data needs regarding Green Deal relevant characteristics of housing	2021Q2-2022Q1	Eurostat	Circular economy (renovated, energy efficient buildings)