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ANNEX 2

ANNEX

to the

COMMISSION DECISION of 19.12.2017

**on the adoption of the work programme and financing decision for 2018 for the
implementation of the European statistical programme 2013-2020**

Annex 2A

Eurostat Annual Work Programme 2018

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. POLITICAL AND LEGAL CONTEXT

In 2017 the European Union (EU) celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Treaties of Rome, a turning point in the European integration process. This anniversary also marked the start of an important debate about the future of the European project: recent political and economic developments have sparked growing mistrust among Europeans and cast doubt on the project's very existence. The European Commission has contributed to the debate in a White Paper¹ summarising the common challenges and opportunities for EU Member States and suggesting how, together, they can take them up. Clearly, any fundamental changes to the EU that emerge from this debate will also have an impact on the European Statistical System, or ESS.

European statistics are a basic public good in democratic societies. The unique value of impartial and high-quality statistics in informing the European public and policy-makers has probably never been more apparent than in these turbulent times: more objective information is in demand and at the same time is increasingly questioned in the so-called 'post-truth' era.

The Annual Work Programme for 2018 is the first to implement the extended European statistical programme (ESP) to 2020². The extension will pave the way for a range of ambitious actions to give the ESS greater capacity and flexibility. As a result the system will be able to react faster to new demands, increase timeliness in key areas and embrace new sources like big data and geospatial data. In addressing high-level requests from policy-makers, the ESP extension includes measures for higher-quality, timelier statistics to support the Commission's 10 political priorities³ and the European Parliament's political agenda. The ESP will also be linked to the United Nations' Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development: it will support an indicator framework to monitor progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at EU level.

The 2018 work programme will also help carry forward the ESS Vision 2020⁴, covering key areas such as user needs, data sources, dissemination and communication.

In this first work programme under the extended ESP, the ESS is sending a clear message that it intends to live up to the new demands and expectations from its users. Moreover, Eurostat and the national statistical institutes have started looking at how, beyond 2020, European statistics can remain the primary source of relevant and trusted data for informed Europeans and for better decisions.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/white-paper-future-europe-reflections-and-scenarios-eu27_en.

² Regulation (EU) 2017/1951 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2017 amending Regulation (EU) No 99/2013 on the European statistical programme 2013-17, by extending it to 2020 (OJ L 284, 31.10.2017, p. 1).

³ The links between the actions in the 2018 work programme and the Commission's priorities are explained in chapter 3.

⁴ As agreed at the ESS Committee meeting on 15 May 2014 (see ESSC 2014/21/7a/EN).

2. PRIORITIES FOR 2018 BY DETAILED ESP OBJECTIVE

QUALITY STATISTICAL INFORMATION TO SUPPORT EU POLICIES

This part of the work programme implements objectives 1 and 4 of the ESP:

Objective 1: Provide statistical information in a timely and cost-effective manner, without unnecessary duplication of effort, to support the development, monitoring and evaluation of the policies of the Union properly reflecting priorities, while keeping a balance between economic, social, territorial and environmental fields and serving the needs of the wide range of users of European statistics, including other decision-makers, researchers, businesses and European citizens in general.

Objective 4: Ensure that delivery of such statistics is kept consistent throughout the whole duration of the programme, provided that this does not interfere with the priority-setting mechanisms of the ESS.

INDICATORS

1. Europe 2020

ESP detailed objective 1.1: Provide high-quality statistical information, which shall be made available in a timely manner for the European Semester, to monitor the implementation of Europe 2020. New indicators shall, to the extent possible, be based on available statistical data.

2018 priorities: The statistical measures underlying the Europe 2020 strategy for ‘smart, sustainable and inclusive’ growth, along with the measurement of progress, well-being and sustainable development, will continue to challenge the ESS’s capacity to produce statistics that are relevant for developing, monitoring and evaluating EU policies. The ESS must deliver European, national and regional statistical indicators to help monitor the Europe 2020 strategy, its headline targets and flagship initiatives. The indicators cover in particular:

- resource efficiency;
- sustainability;
- employment;
- research and development;
- innovation;
- the information society;
- the digital agenda for Europe;
- energy;
- climate change;
- education;
- the environment;
- social protection; and
- people at risk of poverty and social exclusion.

Developments will focus on statistics arising out of the Commission’s 10 priorities. In particular, the Commission has strongly underlined the importance of social indicators to support its key priorities: creating growth and jobs; reducing poverty, social exclusion and inequality; and boosting skills and mobility. The key indicators must remain consistent over time, i.e. free of breaks in the series, but still be able to adopt improved methodologies. Efforts will continue to provide more timely indicators and estimates on spending on employment, income, poverty and inequalities, innovation and social protection. Indicators on learning mobility will be analysed and those on

resource efficiency will be further improved. Work on the 'GDP and beyond' roadmap will be based on the 2015 action plan. It will include better information on income, consumption and wealth and further add to the quality-of-life indicators. Development work will be implemented in 2018 on year-on-year labour market flows. The improvements to asylum and managed migration statistics will follow the policies stemming from the Commission priority 'Towards a European agenda on migration'.

Producing indicators from the data available from environmental accounts will be another priority, as will work on the EU set of indicators to measure progress towards the 2030 Agenda's global SDGs and targets. Work on the circular economy indicators will also take place. Lastly, the general conceptual and communication bases for indicator sets will undergo further development, in line with the 2015 Lisbon memorandum *Indicators for decision-making and monitoring*.

2. Economic governance

ESP detailed objective 2.1: Develop new and enhance existing statistical information relevant for Union decision-makers and the public at large in relation to the strengthened and integrated economic governance of the Union and the surveillance cycle integrating the Stability and Growth Pact and the economic policy.

2018 priorities: The ESS will continue to support the economic governance of the EU with high-quality statistical input for the Stability and Growth Pact and the Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure, in particular for the European Semester. The main focus will be on a more reinforced monitoring to ensure that the European system of national and regional accounts (ESA 2010) and the sixth Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Manual (BPM6) are implemented correctly. This includes assessing their data transmission programmes for compliance and quality, using the established quality assessment framework. The expiry of the ESA 2010 derogations granted to Member States, in the period between 2017 and 2020, will be strictly followed. A robust quality monitoring system for statistics for the macroeconomic imbalances scoreboard will remain in place. A quality assessment process for ESA 2010 will be pursued.

Progress on ESA 2010 will be assessed for the first time and reported to the Council and the European Parliament. ESA 2010, the Manual of Government Deficit and Debt and Regulation 479/2009, which governs the statistics for the Excessive Deficit Procedure, will together serve as a basis for verifying government finance statistics. Eurostat will continue following developments in the investment strategy launched by the Commission, and will provide input as required.

The ESS will also fully participate in global discussions on the further development of national accounting and balance of payments standards.

Building on the progress achieved in 2017 towards introducing European Public Sector Accounting Standards (EPSAS), in 2018 technical work on developing the EPSAS framework and standards will continue alongside support measures to increase public sector accounting maturity in EU Member States. EPSAS is an enabler of efficiency and effectiveness of public finance also in support of deepening the internal market (capital market), and is an initiative which itself provides an investment boost. Given the challenge and potential impact of EPSAS for the local and regional level in some Member States, emphasis is being given to the engagement of local and regional authorities in EPSAS discussions.

ESP detailed objective 2.2: Provide Union decision-makers with reliable statistics and indicators for administrative and regulatory purposes and for monitoring specific Union policy commitments.

2018 priorities: Verification work on statistics used for administrative purposes will be pursued, notably in the ongoing GNI verification round, which is substantially shorter than previous rounds. The provision of high-quality statistics for the excessive deficit procedure and the enhanced Stability and Growth Pact will continue.

3. Economic globalisation

ESP detailed objective 3.1: Enhance the indicators and statistical information available on economic globalisation and global value chains for Union decision-makers and for the public. That information should make for a better understanding of the economic, social and environmental impact of globalisation.

2018 priorities: The 2014 Riga Memorandum *Towards better measurement of the globalised economy* was assessed in 2017. Several outstanding or slowly progressing measures will need to be tackled in 2018/2019. This concerns for example enhanced cross-country cooperation and the asymmetries in particular business statistics domains.

Measuring structural changes in multi-national enterprise groups needs to be improved as well, as the impact of such changes risks undermining the credibility of the ESS business statistics. The focus here will be on awareness-raising, better understanding globalisation, improving methodology, stepping up collaboration between Member States and communicating better with users. Increasingly regular European profiling activities across the ESS should help us to better understand and measure the impact of structural changes in these groups.

The further development of statistics on the services sector is mentioned in the Riga Memorandum. This will focus both on the four modes of supply for international trade in services on the one hand, and on the ‘services trade by enterprise characteristics’ (i.e. international trade in services broken down by business type). In addition, work will be carried out on the international sourcing of business functions, on establishing an internationally agreed business function classification reflected also at UN level. Further progress should be made with national accounts and balance of payments statistics. Implementation of international recommendations on measuring global production will be pursued for the accounting frameworks. Work to address the challenges that globalisation presents to statistical compilation will be taken forward in a number of priority areas, including interpreting conceptual rules, improving information exchange between relevant countries, and strengthening communication.

This work will be conducted in close collaboration with international partners, including the OECD, the European Central Bank and the UN, so as to avoid duplication of effort.

Further initiatives that are already underway will be continued, in particular collaborative projects in macroeconomic and business data (FIGARO, IGA, international profiling, enhanced data exchange, etc.).

The network of statistical business registers (including the EuroGroups Register) needs to offer better coverage, timeliness and other quality-related aspects. These registers should provide a solid basis for the analysis of enterprises/enterprise groups and for the production of European business statistics. Overall, without high-quality business registers there can be no high-quality European business statistics.

Work will continue to extend the coverage of data on growth, productivity and competitiveness that are available to users. New statistical needs that may emerge from the productivity boards will be addressed, in particular in relation to the quality of data. Experimental EU/Euro Area inter-country input-output tables will be compiled after developing an appropriate methodology and by reusing available data. A feasibility assessment will be followed by preparatory work for regular data production and dissemination. This work will be conducted with international agencies such as the OECD and the UN, the aim being to include the EU tables in the global ones.

ACCOUNTING FRAMEWORKS

4. Economic and social performance

ESP detailed objective 4.1: Supplement measurement of economic performance by different dimensions of globalisation, the quality of life, access to goods and services, environmental sustainability, health, well-being, social cohesion and social inclusion. Develop a framework for the analysis of globalised production.

ESP detailed objective 4.2: Provide key macroeconomic and social indicators and Principal European Economic Indicators (PEEIs) as a coherent set of indicators addressing the Union and global statistical data requirements and adjust PEEIs to meet evolving users' needs.

2018 priorities: The economic crisis has highlighted the need for high-quality macroeconomic indicators to better understand and analyse economic fluctuations and structural developments and give the right support to policy-making. For that reason, the improvements to the underlying statistics will continue. The prime objectives will be:

- data production meeting the highest standards, including more stringent compliance and quality monitoring;
- improved validation tools and techniques; and
- work to lift national derogations from the ESA transmission programme.

Work will continue on data consistency between the accounting frameworks for national accounts and balance of payments, and on curbing asymmetries in bilateral flows in balance of payments. A report to the European Parliament and to the Council will be prepared addressing the suitability of the owner-occupied housing price index for integration into the HICP coverage.

In line with the Commission's key priorities to create growth and jobs, to reduce poverty, social exclusion and inequality, and to boost skills and mobility, the social indicators should help give the social dimension of the EU and of the economic and monetary union a higher profile within the European Semester, the European Pillar of Social Rights, the macroeconomic imbalances procedure, and the social and territorial impact analysis of macroeconomic policies. This is why more timely social statistics, in particular on inequalities, poverty and social exclusion, and on social protection expenditure as well, are so important. Significant efforts will be made to make data in these fields more readily available. Work on links with the national accounts framework in social protection, health and education will continue so that, where possible, the data compiled for these three areas become gradually more consistent and timely. This, in turn, will support integrated socioeconomic analyses. Work will continue in the area of skills, and in particular on developing satellite accounts for education and training, also with the aim of providing information for skills and human capital. Methodological progress and regular release of experimental statistics in all those areas will complement existing social statistics.

Economic and social statistics will support an indicator framework to monitor progress towards the SDGs.

5. Environmental sustainability

ESP Detailed objective 5.1: Provide environmental accounts and climate change-related statistics, taking into account international developments in this area.

2018 priorities: Work will focus on further improving data quality for the new set of environmental accounts modules (accounts for energy flows, the environmental goods and services sector and environmental protection expenditure). Implementation of the European strategy for environmental accounts 2014-2018 adopted by the ESS Committee will be completed. Work also will focus on developing timely indicators derived from the accounts, publishing analytical results based on the integrated economic-environment accounting framework, and developing new environmental accounts modules. Climate change related statistics will be further advanced, including by further

developing links with air emissions accounts and energy accounts as well as further improving cooperation with greenhouse gas inventory compilers.

DATA

6. Business

ESP Detailed objective 6.1: Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of statistical production processes. In line with the Better Regulation Agenda, the existing legislation relating to the pillar of business statistics needs to be streamlined. In this context, due consideration should be given to the limited resources available to producers and to the overall burden on respondents in line with the Commission Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme (REFIT). Provide high-quality statistics on key areas where enterprises are the centre of interest, such as business statistics, short-term indicators, their investment in human capital and skills, international transactions, globalisation, internal market monitoring, research, development and innovation, and tourism. Special attention should be paid to the availability of data in high value-added industrial and services sectors, in particular in the green, digital, collaborative, health, education and social economies.

2018 priorities: ESS business statistics are in high demand because of the support they offer to decision-making processes. More than that, however, they also help Europe's people and businesses to understand business behaviour and the impact of a large number of EU policies. This has prompted moves to create an integrated statistical system for business and international trade statistics that can guarantee high-quality output and remain relevant in a globalised world. So as part of its REFIT Programme, the Commission is proposing a regulation to establish an integrated European business statistics system (FRIBS). FRIBS and its related implementing measures must be finalised and implemented in the Member States as a matter of priority.

FRIBS will bring improvements in ESS business statistics. These will mainly include:

- better coverage of the service sectors;
- redesigned external trade statistics;
- more consistent data for users, thanks to more standardisation of data structures, definitions, exchange and production processes; and
- improved responsiveness to user needs.

The work to modernise intra-EU trade in goods statistics will continue using the existing deployment plan, which includes in particular analytical and conceptual methodological work and preparation for micro-data exchange readiness.

New and innovative data sources (e.g. based on direct access to data held by internet platforms or big data sources) will also be used increasingly to produce and disseminate ESS business statistics. These data sources need to be investigated and stabilised before regular production can occur. Efforts to produce statistics on the collaborative economy will intensify.

In response to the 2014 Riga Memorandum, work is ongoing on using approaches such as profiling to boost the quality of statistical business registers and compliance with the 1993 Statistical Units Regulation. Further progress should be made with statistics on enterprise groups. Eurostat will focus on developing a strategy to better portray the globalised business economy in structural terms. Work will be carried out on the international sourcing of business functions. Business statistics on the service sector are being expanded to include international trade in services by the four modes of supply, the 'services trade by enterprise characteristics' and infra-annual business statistics. Work on streamlining the production requirements for ICT surveys and on integrating new and innovative data sources (e.g. big data or data on the collaborative economy) will continue.

The 2015 Frascati Manual on research and development statistics will be implemented with a focus on better harmonisation and comparability. Steps will be taken to improve the timeliness of data on government budget allocations for R&D. Building on the revised Oslo Manual and enhanced statistical guidelines on concepts, definitions, classifications and measurement approaches, the next

round of the innovation survey will be prepared. The links between R&D, innovation, ICT and other statistics will be further explored, with particular attention on inputs and incentives on the one hand and outputs on the other.

7. People's Europe

ESP detailed objective 7.1: Provide statistics on the main areas of social policy where the citizen is the centre of interest, such as: well-being; sustainability; social cohesion; poverty; inequalities; demographic challenges, in particular population ageing, depopulation, population dispersion and migration; the labour market; education and training, including childhood education, adult learning, vocational training and learning mobility of young people; culture, physical activity; quality of life; safety; health; disability; consumption; free movement and the internal market; mobility of young people; technological innovation and new lifestyle choices. Where appropriate, those statistics shall be disaggregated by gender for groups that are of special interest to social policy-makers. Priorities shall be set in accordance with Article 6. In line with the Better Regulation Agenda, the existing legislation relating to the pillar of social statistics needs to be streamlined. In this context, due consideration should be given to the limited resources available to producers and to the overall burden on respondents in line with REFIT.

2018 priorities: Social statistics must move towards a level of robustness and timeliness that will fully support the policy agenda. The modernisation of social statistics along the lines promoted by the DGINS conference in Wiesbaden in 2011 will gather pace in 2018. This will increase responsiveness to user needs, timeliness, quality and efficiency, reflecting the high importance of social indicators in supporting the Commission's key priorities.

European Parliament and Council discussions on a proposal for a draft framework regulation on integrated European social statistics, covering the collection of micro-data from households and individuals, should make good progress. The framework regulation will make it possible to implement reviewed processes for the Labour Force Survey, the Survey on Income and Living Conditions, the Survey on Information and Communication Technologies usage in households and other surveys such as the Adult Education Survey and the European Health Interview Survey. Associated implementing regulations for the labour force, income and ICT surveys will be drafted. This will allow for more crossover between surveys, consistency with other data sources and consistency with international standards, including the relevant ILO resolutions, especially the 19th ICLS (International Conference of Labour Statisticians) Resolution on Statistics of Work, Employment and Labour Underutilization.

A plan to modernise population statistics will be consolidated. It will include a renewed strategy for population and housing censuses after the 2021 census round and demography data, along with a more harmonised population definition based on in-depth methodological work. The provision in the 2021 census for data based on geo-referencing will take shape.

The use of administrative data will continue to be promoted to help modernise social statistics and implement the censuses in 2021 and beyond, chiefly through the VIP.ADMIN project. The aim here is to support the use of administrative data as input for data production, robust sampling frames and their quality assessment, including exchanges of good practices and cooperation with data owners.

In response to requests from major users, the ESS will work to improve the timeliness of social indicators. Better timeliness should be achieved through the earlier delivery of statistics on income, material deprivation (including for new items), inequality and social protection expenditure, combined with advanced estimations. The ESS will work for better coverage of the multidimensional agenda of poverty and social exclusion, including regional poverty indicators, and for a better description of the flows and transitions in the labour market, in particular the risk of poverty and exclusion.

Work on migration statistics will be given priority to respond to a new, more dynamic policy environment, with particular emphasis on migrant integration (including labour market integration) on migration enforcement including return and asylum seekers. Labour mobility data will be further developed, using existing data sources. In parallel, the work towards a possible revision of

Regulation (EC) 862/2007 will be started with the view to addressing user data priorities including new and emerging requirements.

Work on crime statistics will be pursued, with particular emphasis on gender-based violence.

The production and methodological development of high-quality data and indicators for the Education and Training 2020 strategy will be very high on the agenda. The same is true of new requests relating to health (in particular the gradual development of morbidity statistics and data on occupational diseases) and social protection statistics (with the links to national accounts data). As the Sponsorship Group on Measuring Progress, Well-being and Sustainable Development has recommended, the availability and quality of data on the different quality-of-life aspects will be further improved. Analyses of the joint distributions for income, consumption and wealth will receive special attention. In particular, two strands of work will be further developed: better links between national accounts and micro-data; and the gradual integration of wealth-related aspects into the ESS social statistics, in line with the Vienna 2016 DGINS memorandum.

Work on the methodology and procedure for population projections will continue. This is based on the experience of the first wave of population projections, which followed a new approach, and the first annual update production. To support this work, training could be offered to boost methodological knowledge across national statistical institutes.

8. Geospatial, environmental, agricultural and other sectoral statistics

ESP detailed objective 8.1: Support evidence-based policy-making by a more flexible and increased use of spatial information combined with social, territorial, economic and environmental statistical information for regions, regional typologies, cities and the degree of urbanisation.

2018 priorities: To meet this objective, a greater role for the ESS in integrating geospatial and statistical data will continue to be a priority. The focus will be on geocoding the 2021 census, on defining a geocoding strategy for the ESS, and on creating more relevant indicators for monitoring the SDGs using geospatial information. Eurostat will continue to coordinate the use of geographical data in Commission services. Geographical information is increasingly used by many Commission services and communication initiatives. This requires a particular focus on quality and harmonisation aspects in all Commission services. Eurostat will actively support the work of the European branch of a UN initiative for global geospatial information management. It will focus especially on stepping up cooperation between the statistical and geographical communities and achieving synergies.

A comprehensive range of regional and urban data will support the EU's cohesion, rural development and maritime policies. The EU's Urban Agenda initiative creates new challenges collecting detailed geographical data with a focus on individual cities, their commuting zones and metropolitan regions, as well as the degree of urbanisation. Particular emphasis during data collection will be given to support for the SDGs with regional and urban input and to the contribution from geospatial information. The amendment of Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS) concerning territorial typologies will be applied in the operational work on regional and urban statistics.

ESP detailed objective 8.2: Provide environmental statistics to support the policy-making process of the Union.

2018 priorities: Quality aspects and expanding the scope of waste statistics will remain a priority. Eurostat will work on further improving the quality, methodology and timeliness of municipal waste statistics and will continue to contribute to work around food waste. Eurostat will also continue to contribute to work relating to ecosystems and biodiversity, in particular the development of experimental ecosystem accounts.

ESP detailed objective 8.3: Provide energy and transport statistics to support the policies of the Union. In line with the “European Energy Union” priority of the Commission, and, to the greatest possible extent based on existing data, particular focus will be given to statistics related to energy consumption, energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, energy dependence, aspects of energy poverty and security of supply and the circular economy. Furthermore, energy statistics will need to support the 2030 climate and energy framework that aims to make the Union's economy and energy system more competitive, secure and sustainable.

2018 priorities: The ESS will continue to optimise and adapt high-quality energy statistics to specific needs stemming from the ‘European Energy Union’ strategy. In particular it will focus on statistics related to energy consumption, energy efficiency, renewable energies, energy dependence and security of supply. Quality and timeliness will be a priority in developing, compiling and disseminating the respective energy-related indicators. In particular, more timely early estimates of energy balances will be developed. Furthermore, energy statistics will need to support the 2030 policy framework for climate and energy that aims to make the Union's economy and energy system more competitive, secure and sustainable.

The Regulation (EU) No 2016/1952 on European statistics on natural gas and electricity prices will be implemented enabling a complete, comprehensive energy price system with the main objectives to ensure and adapt data collected to new policy needs of the Resilient Energy Union and to enforce the Third Energy Package.

In the longer term, the ESS will continue developing new statistics providing a higher level of detail on final energy consumption, broken down by economic sector (transport, industries, services) and main energy uses (see Article 9 of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2008 on energy statistics).

In line with the Energy Union governance process, cooperation with other organisations involved in collecting energy statistics will be strengthened. The aim here is to reduce the administrative burden for Member States in the form of planning, reporting and monitoring obligations. In particular, energy statistics will contribute to the Energy Union Governance process in helping with the preparation of National Energy and Climate Change Plans.

The ESS will continue to develop and produce the statistics needed to assess progress in meeting the quantitative targets in the 2011 Transport White Paper on the volume and performance of each transport mode, on passenger mobility and on road traffic. Statistics will also be provided for the Commission’s transport modelling activities and for new policy initiatives stemming from the 2016 low-emission mobility and 2017 Europe on the move strategies. The pilot data collection exercise based on the guidelines on Passenger Mobility and harmonised indicators will continue in 2018. In addition, the guidelines on compiling intermodal statistics at national level using the ‘German approach’ will be used for a pilot exercise in collecting intermodal indicators. As regards modal split indicators, work will continue to develop distance matrices and methodology for territorialising freight volumes transported by all means of transport by distance class, and will be extended to cover passenger data. Cooperation with other international and European organisations will be stepped up for three reasons: (i) to harmonise and exchange collected statistics; (ii) to reduce the reporting burden; and (iii) meet the new requirements of the amended transport statistics regulations on rail and inland waterways. Work to produce a methodology for passenger data collection travelling by inland waterways and to assess the feasibility of collecting this data will be done in close collaboration with the Member States.

Work on establishing and further developing the circular economy indicator set will be given priority.

ESP detailed objective 8.4: *Provide agriculture, fisheries and forestry statistics for the development and monitoring of the Common Agricultural and Fisheries Policies, reflecting key Union strategic objectives related to sustainability, as well as to rural development, by carrying out regular activities related to the development, production and dissemination of statistics. In line with the Better Regulation Agenda, the existing legislation relating to the agricultural statistics needs to be streamlined. In this context, due consideration should be given to the limited resources available to producers and to the overall burden on respondents in line with REFIT.*

2018 priorities: The 2018 Land Use and Coverage Area frame Survey (LUCAS) will be conducted after intensive consultations with the various Commission departments and Member State administrations. In the meantime the LUCAS methodology has been further adapted to user requirements and refocused to best serve a wide range of environmental and climate-related policy initiatives. Close cooperation with the Commission departments that use LUCAS *in situ* data and statistics directly is essential in this process. Particular emphasis has been placed on collecting higher-quality data. In parallel, cooperation with Member States will continue, with the aim of including national data in the overall initiative to increase the knowledge of land use and land cover in the EU. In addition, particular attention will be given to how LUCAS *in situ* data is used in the work on ecosystems accounting.

The ESS will continue to develop and produce agriculture and fisheries statistics to specific needs stemming from the Common Agricultural (CAP) and Fisheries (CFP) Policies, along with environmental, food- and health-related policies, including the recent EU action plan on anti-microbial resistance. Results from the Farm Structure Survey carried out in 2016 will become available.

Modernisation of the European agricultural statistics system will continue on three fronts:

- (i) the legal framework for farm-level information should be finalised to provide the legal basis for the 2020 agricultural census;
- (ii) a legal proposal for statistics describing input to, and output of, agricultural production should be concluded and then submitted to the legislator;
- (iii) the legal basis and production of the Economic Accounts for Agriculture will be reviewed and the methodology will be updated.

The ESS will pursue steps to reduce the burden on respondents. It will do so through:

- rationalisation, simplification and optimisation of the data collection and validation processes;
- coordination of users' data needs at the Commission; and
- efficient use of existing data sources. In particular, the use of administrative data will be fostered through increased cooperation between the statistical authorities and owners of administrative records.

Work to streamline and simplify European fisheries statistics will continue.

NEW METHODS OF PRODUCTION OF EUROPEAN STATISTICS

This part of the work programme implements objective 2 of the ESP: *Implement new methods of production of European statistics aiming at efficiency gains and quality improvements.*

9. ESS quality management

ESP detailed objective 9.1: *Implement a quality management system in the ESS based on the Code of Practice. Strengthen the sharing of good practices in the implementation of the Code of Practice and ensure that quality reporting is targeting different user needs.*

2018 priorities: Implementation of the quality key area of the ESS Vision 2020 will continue, the aim being consistency with the common quality framework in the ESS, adding to it where appropriate. The Central Statistical Office of Poland is to host the Q2018 conference in Krakow. Work to monitor the 2014-2015 peer review improvement actions will continue as planned, as will implementation of the quality-related amendments to Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European statistics. This will focus on quality reporting in accordance with the applicable ESS standard (SIMS) and the dissemination of the ESS quality reports. The revised ESS handbook for quality reports will be published and the related training course will continue.

Now that the ESS Committee has adopted the revised version of the European Statistics Code of Practice, the High-Level Group on Quality will discuss the next round of peer reviews, followed by the ESS Committee.

10. Priority-setting and simplification

ESP detailed objective 10.1: Implement a priority-setting mechanism for the ESS in order to simplify reporting requirements and to adjust to new needs for statistics while taking into account the constraints on the producers, the response burden and the needs of users.

2018 priorities: Activities towards effective priority-setting and simplification will continue in response to the resource constraints throughout the ESS. The analysis, discussions and decisions on priority-setting will be based on the 'catalogue of statistical products', in line with the procedure agreed and monitored by the Resource Directors Group. The work on cost analysis of European statistics in the ESS (including other national authorities and regional offices), which is important for priority-setting, will continue. By the end of 2018 all statistical products will be covered.

11. Multipurpose statistics and efficiency gains in production

ESP detailed objective 11.1: Put in place gradually, taking into account costs generated in the ESS by implementation, an ESS business architecture allowing more integrated production of European statistics; harmonise and standardise statistical production methods and metadata; enhance the horizontal (across statistical domains) and vertical (across ESS partners) integration of statistical production processes in the ESS in respect of the principle of subsidiarity; use and integrate multiple data sources; produce multi-purpose statistics. Particular attention will be given to confidentiality issues that will arise with increased use, reuse and exchange of micro-data and administrative records.

2018 priorities: The modernisation of statistical production will continue in 2018, based on the priorities in the ESS Vision 2020. Through its enabling projects, the ESS Vision 2020 implementation portfolio will lay the groundwork for the infrastructure needed to produce European statistics:

- a reinforced analysis of and responsiveness to user requirements and improved communication of European statistics (DIGICOM project);
- use of new sources (big data and ADMIN projects);
- establishment of an ESS quality approach (QUAL framework);
- modern production processes (network for data exchange – ESDEN; service-oriented architecture – SERV; dedicated business projects); and
- a new, modern dissemination chain.

The related frameworks, such as quality and the ESS enterprise architecture and standards, will continue to frame and steer the priority given to the various initiatives.

The ESDEN and SERV projects will enter their third and final phase, focusing on deployment aspects (the delivery of the new EDAMIS system and its roll-out within the ESS) and on putting the results of the VALIDATION project into practice.

In 2018 the main focus of the ESS.VIP ESBRS (European System of Interoperable Business Registers) project will be on piloting the interoperability framework. Profiling of multi-national

enterprise groups will continue across the ESS and the results will be used to promote quality improvements in national business registers and the EuroGroups Register. These activities will be based on a detailed assessment of previous experience, including changes to the methodological guidelines.

The big data project will enter a new phase in 2018 as more results from the first ESSnet become available. The ESS will initiate activities related to the integration of selected big data sources (often involving webscraping, geospatial data, machine learning techniques and other innovative approaches) into statistical production. The results of the work on horizontal issues, especially the training and communication strategies, will be implemented from 2018 onwards. With the launching of a second ESSnet on big data, Eurostat aims at exploring and assessing additional big data sources for their potential inclusion in the ESS production process. Based on the results of a 2017 study on smart statistics, Eurostat will launch a number of thematic projects in 2018 addressing specific issues around the production and roles of official statistics in an Internet of Things environment. Work on horizontal issues such as ethics, legal implications, training needs and communication guidelines will be stepped up and revisited under the Internet of Things angle. Jointly with other DGs, Eurostat will further explore specific big data applications for policy-making⁵, and will actively participate in UN, OECD and other international big data-related activities.

Based on the different usage cases and pilots launched in 2017, a new architecture for data integration and data analytics, compatible with new sources, will be defined and gradually implemented. New business services building on this architecture, like ‘data as a service’, will come into being and will be provided to users. These services will be summarised in a catalogue so as to increase transparency and facilitate user interaction.

The Reference Architecture Framework will be consolidated to foster interoperability and the reuse, in selected domains, of solutions developed as part of the ESS Vision 2020.

As regards the Eurostat reference environment for dissemination, the renovated Eurostat dissemination chain will provide new functionalities. Reuse of data and metadata will increase thanks to open and linked data policies and will continue to expand, with the offer of a reusable solution for the dissemination of statistics and related services (‘dissemination as a service’). The creation of a unified metadata layer (or an integrated metadata chain) will deliver corporate metadata management at Eurostat and a smooth communication among ESS partners and with international organisations.

As regards metadata and standards, progress in implementing reference standards (such as SIMS) at the ESS level is expected to continue. Support services for the EDAMIS single data entry and exchange point will be provided throughout the year. Special attention will be given to the new EDAMIS, where testing, training and further capacity-building measures will be executed. It will include guidelines and end-user documentation. Implementation of the SDMX data exchange standard will be continued and further aligned with the roadmap 2020 strategy adopted by the SDMX Sponsors Committee in 2016. In addition, alternative standards (such as DDI or XBRL) will be further examined. ESS standards based on common architecture models will be rolled out across more domains of European statistics. These standards, together with validation and other shared services, will also be made available to the ESS and within the European Commission.

Activities will continue in 2018 to put in place a secure exchange of EU micro-data through a secure network infrastructure (ESDEN). Actions will also focus on stepping up IT security controls in the ESS to enhance trust-based partnership in the ESS. This will rely on delivering data confidentiality, availability and integrity of the highest standard.

⁵ In particular, Eurostat will undertake concrete initiatives in the framework of two Commission Communications: (i) Data, information and knowledge management at the European Commission, and (ii) Free Flow of Data [the exact references will be added when the Communications are adopted].

ESP detailed objective 11.2: *Ensure the good functioning and coherence of the ESS through effective collaboration and communication.*

2018 priorities: Implementing the ESS Vision 2020 will involve exploring innovative and flexible cooperation models within the ESS and, if possible, putting them into practice.

12. Dissemination and communication

ESP detailed objective 12.1: *European citizens should be able to draw easily and without obstacles on European statistics to enable them to use such data for their education and decision-making. That objective will be implemented by enhancing the user-friendliness of European statistics and by facilitating access to data. Special attention should be paid to easy retrievability and convertibility of statistical data for practical use, including through graphs and maps. More citizens should benefit from European statistics, thereby contributing effectively to enhancing the dissemination of statistical information throughout society.*

Make the ESS the first data source on European statistics for all users and, in particular, for public and private decision-makers, by providing a high-quality statistical information service based on the principles of free and easy access to European statistics. Intensifying and extending the dialogue between users and producers of statistics to meet user needs for high-quality statistics. An early involvement of users in new developments is key to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the ESS. Extend and rationalise the range of dissemination products to meet the needs of users using new technologies. Set up a cost-efficient, integrated and secure infrastructure within the ESS for access to confidential data for scientific purposes.

2018 priorities will be strongly linked to the main activities and deliverables of the DIGICOM project. The project, featuring close collaboration among ESS partners pursues the following aims:

- more dialogue between users and producers of European statistics;
- the development of innovative dissemination products adapted to user needs and new technologies;
- a more robust Eurostat re-dissemination policy (open data access); and
- the promotion and branding of European statistics.

In 2018 work will continue on the development of tools, such as social network platforms and literacy products. Strategies on communication and open data will be finalised. They will factor in the results of the user profiling exercise, which has taken account of the needs of non-users of European statistics and of a 2017 branding study.

There will be further improvements to the Eurostat website and development work will continue on major reengineering of the dissemination chain.

In its publications and dissemination activities, Eurostat will continue to develop innovative products, such as digital publications and interactive infographics, to better reflect new users' behaviour. It will also continue to release cross-cutting publications that are highly relevant for users and EU policy-makers.

User support will continue, taking Eurostat's priorities into account.

Work to grant scientific researchers remote access to selected data sets will be carried forward and implemented as part of Eurostat's Remote Access Facility project.

13. Training, innovation and research

ESP detailed objective 13.1: *Satisfy learning and development needs in the ESS based on a combination of training courses and learning and development opportunities. Improve the collaboration between ESS members for the transfer of knowledge and sharing and implementation of best practices and common innovative approaches in the production of statistics. Organise the activities, participation and contribution of the research communities in the improvement of the statistical production chains and of the quality of official statistical information.*

2018 priorities: Now that it has undergone evaluation, the European Master in Official Statistics (EMOS) project should continuously focus on further developing collaboration patterns between academia and statistical producers, and on building up quality assurance mechanisms and EMOS's European dimension. The EMOS Board will be renewed once its current term expires at the end of 2017.

The European Statistical Training Programme will be continued with the aim of further harmonising European statistics and in particular addressing the skills needed to make the ESS Vision 2020 a reality.

Activities in the research and methodology area will be devoted to support the implementation of the ESS Vision 2020 and modernise statistical areas. The focus will be on following up on the statistical research projects launched under the Horizon 2020 research framework programme.

PARTNERSHIP WITHIN THE EUROPEAN STATISTICAL SYSTEM AND BEYOND

This part of the work programme implements objective 3 of the ESP: *Strengthen the partnership within the ESS and beyond in order to further enhance its productivity and its leading role in official statistics worldwide.*

14. Partnership

ESP detailed objective 14.1: *Implement the enhanced ESS governance framework. The objective will be implemented by the implementation of the revision of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 and Commission Decision 2012/504/EU of 17 September 2012 on Eurostat;*

ESP detailed objective 14.2: *Enhance the coordinating role of the Commission (Eurostat) as the European Union's Statistical Office.*

ESP detailed objective 14.3: *Strengthen the cooperation with the ESCB and the European and international organisations involved in the production of data for statistical or administrative purposes through common projects and coordinated developments. Ensure consistency between Union and international standards.*

2018 priorities: To further enhance the ESS's leading role in official statistics worldwide, its strategic priorities will focus on strengthening the partnership and governance within the ESS and on boosting cooperation with European and international organisations involved in producing data for statistical or administrative purposes. Participation in common projects with other international organisations to coordinate statistical developments and standard-setting, and to avoid overlaps, will remain a crucial objective.

In line with amended Regulation (EC) No 223/2009, initiatives to enhance the role of national statistical institutes as coordinators of their respective national statistical systems will continue. At the same time, Eurostat's coordinating role within the ESS and within the European Commission will be reinforced. In addition, the discussions launched in 2017 to prepare the ESS's strategic priorities beyond 2020 as part of the next ESP will be intensified.

Furthermore, work will continue to establish innovative and flexible cooperation models within the ESS with a view to achieving a stronger, more efficient and more integrated system. This will involve, in particular, acting on the recommendations of the Task Force on cooperation models. Any future cooperation model should be flexible enough both to accommodate the needs of over 30

members and to respond to new needs. Sustainable results and knowledge-sharing will be essential if the full benefits of cooperation are to be felt.

ESP detailed objective 14.4: Promote and implement statistical advisory and statistical assistance activities in countries outside the Union in line with the priorities of the foreign policy of the Union, with particular emphasis on enlargement and the European Neighbourhood Policy.

2018 priorities: To make sure that good quality data are available to monitor enlargement and the revised European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), measuring how enlargement countries comply with European standards on statistics will remain a strategic priority, as will supporting enlargement and neighbourhood countries alike in their efforts to provide good quality data that meet European standards. For the ENP East countries a new regional statistical cooperation programme will become available and needs to be contracted. For the ENP South countries Eurostat will continue to provide technical advice on implementing the Medstat IV programme. Medstat IV seeks to broaden application of European/international standards in transport, energy, trade, migration, labour market and business statistics, and to deliver improvements in quality management and serving user needs.

Furthermore, to promote and implement statistical advisory and statistical assistance activities beyond EU, enlargement and European neighbourhood countries, cooperation with other third countries will focus on three main pillars:

- governance (Code of Practice, quality, etc.);
- generic tools; and
- regional cooperation, with a focus on Africa and support for the African Union Commission statistics department.

The pan-African programme on statistical cooperation is ongoing and has begun delivering data to support African integration processes.

3. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT WITH EU PRIORITIES

The table below shows how European statistics in 2018 will support the Commission's political priorities.

Commission priorities	Relevant European statistics ⁶	Main projects in 2018 ⁷
1. A New Boost for Jobs, Growth and Investment	<p>Europe 2020 indicators</p> <p>National Accounts including GDP, productivity, gross value added, investment and employment by industry, balance of payments</p> <p>EU regions; regional accounts</p> <p>Material flow accounts and waste statistics</p> <p>Business demography (including high-growth enterprises), structural business statistics, international trade in goods and services</p> <p>Statistics on high-tech industry and knowledge-intensive services, Community Innovation Survey, R&D</p> <p>Globalisation indicators</p> <p>Statistics on employment and unemployment, quarterly flows, unemployment rate, job vacancies, labour costs, earnings</p> <p>Education and adult learning</p>	<p>Growth and productivity accounts, statistics on competitiveness, resource efficiency and the circular economy</p> <p>Development of entrepreneurship indicators, further work on quarterly and regional indicators related to business demography</p> <p>Coordination of work on indicators and development of conceptual approaches</p> <p>Smart statistics — implications of the Internet of Things on official statistics</p> <p>Production of statistics on the collaborative economy and improvements in the quality of existing data collections</p> <p>Integration of statistical and geospatial information</p> <p>Regulatory framework for social statistics</p> <p>Work on annual labour market flows</p> <p>Dissemination of 2017 module on self-employment</p>
2. A connected Digital Single Market	<p>Digital agenda for Europe (primary data and indicators)</p> <p>Information society (enterprises, households and individuals), ICT sector</p>	<p>Development of a stronger statistical framework for ICT statistics</p>
3. A Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy	<p>Statistics on energy dependence, security of supply and energy efficiency; energy prices</p> <p>Energy balance sheets, share of energy from renewable sources</p> <p>Annual production, trade, energy transformation and consumption, monthly energy supply and oil stocks</p> <p>Early CO₂ emission estimates, air emissions accounts and energy flow accounts</p> <p>Statistics on international trade in goods</p> <p>Agri-environmental indicators</p>	<p>Implementation of the Regulation on European statistics on natural gas and electricity prices</p> <p>Indicators on heating degree days and cooling degree days</p> <p>Development of climate change related statistics</p> <p>Monitoring of 2020 strategy regarding energy indicators</p> <p>Early estimates of energy balances</p> <p>Further disaggregation of the statistics on final energy consumption</p> <p>The Future Energy Information System</p> <p>Update of energy questionnaires</p> <p>Update of the energy balances methodology</p>

⁶ Selection based on the Annex 'Catalogue of products'.

⁷ Selection based on the Annex 'List of activities and outputs'.

<p>4. A Deeper and Fairer Internal Market with a Strengthened Industrial Base</p>	<p>Structural business statistics</p> <p>Statistics on the production of manufactured goods, trade in goods</p> <p>Labour market conditions, income and living conditions (including employment and social policy indicators)</p> <p>Annual Government Finance (including taxes and tax indicators)</p> <p>Statistics on agriculture and fisheries</p> <p>Transport statistics, trade in services</p>	<p>Framework Regulation Integrating Business Statistics (FRIBS): development of an integrated legal framework and implementation requirements for European business statistics</p> <p>Development of entrepreneurship indicators</p> <p>Modernisation of Prodcom statistics</p> <p>Regulatory framework for social statistics</p> <p>Further work on indicators to support analyses of worker mobility, migration and integration and on skills, vocational training and adult learning</p> <p>Regulatory framework for agricultural statistics</p> <p>Design and implementation of a new, fully integrated approach to future agricultural statistics</p> <p>Modernisation of Economic Accounts for Agriculture</p> <p>Streamlining and simplification of fisheries statistics</p> <p>Dissemination of results from the farm structure survey 2016</p> <p>Modernisation and integration of the Transport Information System</p> <p>Implementation of a redesigned and modernised Intrastat system</p>
<p>5. A Deeper and Fairer Economic and Monetary Union</p>	<p>Principal European Economic Indicators, including advanced EU/EA GDP flash estimates</p> <p>Scoreboard of indicators for the Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure (MIP)</p> <p>Harmonised Indices of Consumer Prices (HICP)</p> <p>Annual and quarterly national accounts, Annual Government Finance statistics, government deficit and debt data, EDP data</p> <p>Balance of payments and international investment positions</p> <p>Employment and unemployment statistics</p> <p>Income and living conditions (including social policy indicators, material deprivation, well-being)</p> <p>Social protection statistics</p> <p>Statistics on health</p>	<p>Feasibility study for early EU/EA employment estimates</p> <p>First publication of national data on pension entitlements in social insurance</p> <p>Implementation of quality assurance system for MIP statistics</p> <p>Modernisation of the HICP production system</p> <p>Reinforced Role of Social Indicators (RRSI)</p> <p>Regulatory framework for social statistics</p> <p>Redesign of Survey on Income and Living Conditions: timeliness, flash estimates, regional coverage, development of revised material deprivation, methodologies for advanced estimations of risk of poverty, improving low work intensity indicators</p> <p>Redesign of the Labour Force Survey (LFS), development of future LFS modules on youth and on retirement</p> <p>Development work for better integration of income consumption and wealth</p> <p>Improving timeliness, including pilot data for some Member States on early estimates by function, and relevance of social protection statistics (links with national accounts)</p> <p>Final dissemination of five-yearly European Health Interview Survey</p>

<p>6. A balanced and progressive trade policy to harness globalisation</p>	<p>Statistics on foreign direct investments</p> <p>Statistics on international trade in services and in goods</p> <p>Globalisation indicators</p> <p>Statistics on trade in services by enterprise characteristics</p> <p>Statistics on foreign direct investments</p>	<p>Full International and Global Accounts for Research in Input-Output Analysis</p> <p>Developing the area of global value chains and production of improved indicators on economic globalisation</p>
<p>7. An Area of Justice and Fundamental Rights Based on Mutual Trust</p>	<p>Statistics on health</p> <p>Statistics on health and safety at work</p> <p>Gender and discrimination, gender pay gap</p> <p>Crime and criminal justice</p>	<p>Gender and discrimination statistics</p> <p>Regulatory framework for social statistics</p> <p>Implementation of 2018 LFS module on reconciliation between work and family life</p>
<p>8. Towards a New Policy on Migration</p>	<p>Statistics on asylum and managed migration</p> <p>Demography and migration statistics</p> <p>EU population and housing census</p> <p>Labour Force Survey data</p>	<p>Improvement in population statistics quality and methodology</p> <p>Asylum, managed migration and migrant integration including parallel work towards possible revision of Regulation (EC) 862/2007</p> <p>Design and implementation of 2021 and post-2021 censuses of population and housing</p> <p>EU population and housing census: harmonising and expanding the use of administrative data</p> <p>Development of Labour Force Survey (LFS) regulation, including future LFS module on migrants</p>
<p>9. A Stronger Global Actor</p>	<p>Sustainable development indicators (2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals) and statistics needed for the SDGs</p> <p>Enlargement and ENP East and South countries</p> <p>High Income countries, Global Statistical System</p> <p>Balance of payments</p>	<p>Cooperation programme to improve statistics in the ENP East countries</p> <p>Integrated Global Accounts and Global Production</p>
<p>10. A Union of Democratic Change</p>	<p>Production of European statistics in accordance with very demanding quality criteria while ensuring the privacy of data providers and the confidentiality of the information they provide.</p> <p>A fully documented, freely available and professionally independent methodology</p> <p>Dissemination of European statistics in a professional, impartial and transparent manner</p>	<p>Digital communication, user analytics and innovative products (DIGICOM)</p>