



Council of the  
European Union

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### **OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Delegations

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Subject: Statistics

- Council Conclusions on EU Statistics (8 December 2015)

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Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on EU Statistics, adopted by the Council (ECOFIN) at its 3435th meeting held on 8 December 2015 in Brussels.

## **Council conclusions on EU statistics**

"Following the priorities set in the previous ECOFIN Council Conclusions on priority setting, robust quality management, the Status Report on Information Requirements in EMU and the EPC report on Requirements for structural statistics, and taking into consideration the statistical needs that must underpin the procedures of economic governance, the ECOFIN Council has reviewed the progress made in these areas.

### **Quality assurance of key statistical output**

- The Council TAKES NOTE that the policy areas set out in the new Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change may entail new needs for additional, high quality statistics, which could exacerbate existing resource constraints within the ESS.
- The Council WELCOMES the efforts made by Eurostat and Member States to further strengthen the quality of EDP and government finance statistics, recalling the provisions of Regulation (EC) 479/2009.
- The Council WELCOMES the successful launch of ESA 2010, and CALLS ON the ESS to address outstanding issues in the implementation of ESA 2010 in terms of data timeliness, completeness and reliability.

### **The 2015 EFC Status Report on Information Requirements in EMU**

The Council ENDORSES the 2015 EFC Status Report on Information Requirements in the EMU. In particular, the Council:

- WELCOMES the progress since 2014 in terms of availability of PEEIs generally, while the quality of several of the indicators has been positively influenced by improved coverage by countries. However, timeliness of the PEEIs has not significantly improved since 2014 for most indicators, and a harmonised indicator on house sales (quarterly) is not yet fully available.

- WELCOMES the efforts of EU Member States to adhere to the IMF SDDS Plus initiative at an early stage.
- WELCOMES the reinforced institutional framework for statistical work at G-20 level and CALLS UPON all stakeholders to promote the regular flow of comparable and high quality data across the G-20 economies in the second phase of the Data Gaps Initiative. Furthermore, the Council TAKES THE VIEW that the provision of G20 aggregates, in addition to quarterly GDP and monthly CPI, fulfilling the data quality frameworks in place, would be required.
- INVITES Eurostat and the ECB to provide an updated EFC Status Report on the fulfilment of the updated EMU statistical requirements in 2016.

#### **Statistics for the Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure and structural statistics**

- The Council RECALLS that the Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure must rely upon sound and harmonised official statistics. The Council WELCOMES the close cooperation of the ESS and the ESCB, using existing fora, in ensuring the reliability of the statistics underlying the Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure (MIP) and their comparability, WELCOMES the production of the first ESS-ESCB quality report on MIP statistics and ENCOURAGES the two statistical systems to give high priority to taking forward this programme.
- The Council WELCOMES progress made to meet the needs on structural statistics and ENCOURAGES further work in this area, as outlined in the EPC Report.

#### **The modernisation of the European Statistical System**

- The Council WELCOMES the progress achieved towards the modernisation of the European Statistical System and actions to improve the efficiency of the production processes for European statistics and with due regard for national statistical needs. The Council UNDERLINES that the strategic modernisation goals have to be commonly agreed between the ESS partners, and be accomplished by achievements in specific statistical areas, as identified in close cooperation between ESS members.

- The Council RECOGNISES that information demands increase as a consequence of evidence-based decision-making. The need therefore arises to balance new statistical demands with efficiency gains and effective priority-setting, with a greater focus on limiting the overall burden on respondents and on producers of statistics stemming from regulation at EU and national level. Therefore, the Council ENCOURAGES co-operation between the ESS and policy makers to agree priorities.
- The Council WELCOMES the objectives of the ESS Vision 2020 as a part of the response to these challenges, and SUPPORTS continuing work on cost-effective Vision Implementation Projects (ESS-VIPs) aimed particularly at realising the ESS vision in the coming years.
- Therefore, the Council ENCOURAGES the ESS to work on measures to implement the agreed Vision 2020 and CALLS UPON Member States and the Commission to secure and prioritise resources, while recognising that the resources available in Member States and the Commission are limited.

**Seventh report by the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB) on implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice**

- The Council WELCOMES the seventh report of the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB), providing an independent overview of Eurostat and of the European Statistical System as a whole as regards the implementation of the Code of Practice.
- Official statistics are an essential element for policy making. The Council SUPPORTS ESGAB's recommendations for ensuring that the European Statistical System is adequately resourced and that cost accounting systems for official statistics are improved so as to support efficiency in the production of statistics.
- The Council TAKES NOTE of ESGAB's recommendations as regards the preparedness of the European Statistical System to respond to the challenges stemming from data revolution and regionalisation."

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