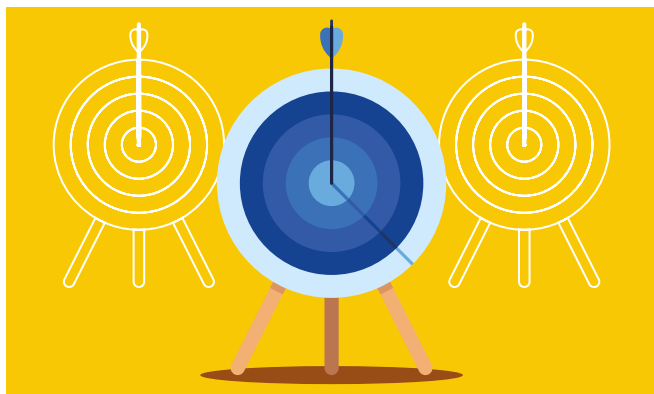


The European Statistical System



Since the early days of the European Community it was understood that decisions on and planning and implementation of Community policies must be based on reliable and comparable statistics. So the [European Statistical System](#) (ESS) was built up gradually with the objective of providing high-quality, comparable, timely and reliable statistics at EU level.



In fact, the European Statistical System is the partnership between Eurostat (the statistical office of the European Union) and the national statistical authorities in the EU Member States and EFTA countries. The national statistical authorities collect data and compile statistics for national and EU purposes.

The ESS functions as a network in which Eurostat's role is to lead the way in the harmonisation of statistics in close cooperation with the national statistical authorities. ESS work concentrates mainly on EU policy areas - but, with the extension of EU policies, harmonisation has been extended to nearly all statistical fields.

At the heart of the ESS is the [European Statistical System Committee](#) (ESSC), which was established by Regulation (EC) N° 223/2009 of the European Parliament and Council of 11 March 2009 on European statistics. This Committee, chaired by Eurostat, is tasked with providing professional guidance to the ESS for developing, producing and disseminating European statistics and is consulted, amongst others, on the development of new statistics and methodological issues.



The ESS cooperates with other Commission services, agencies and the European Central Bank, the enlargement countries and countries covered by the European neighbourhood policy, as well as with international organisations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.