

Priorities in the field of statistics during the German EU Council Presidency

July 2020

Statistical results provide fundamental information on the developments in society, the economy and the environment. The present coronavirus pandemic is an extraordinary challenge for the EU and creates new information needs. High-quality statistics are an important basis for fact-based decisions and political measures in the EU, especially in times of crisis. To ensure the relevance of official statistics, it is therefore necessary to provide the relevant information as timely as possible, to close existing data gaps and to see to a resource-efficient implementation for all concerned.

As the corona pandemic has shown, the established production, coordination and communication processes in the field of official statistics need to be adjusted. Cooperation across borders is required to maintain a coherent statistical system. This is the only way for official statistics to provide robust responses to the effects of the corona pandemic and thus support fact-based decisions in the EU. To be adequately prepared for similar future situations, the insights gained from the crisis will be the basis of European statistical programme planning during the German EU Council Presidency.

(1) Identifying data needs. Providing information.

The corona pandemic has revealed gaps in the current statistics programme regarding data availability and timeliness. To supply European decision-makers with relevant data on the effects of the corona pandemic, it is necessary to close existing gaps, improve the timeliness of information already available and make it crisis-proof.

The aim is a programme coordinated across Europe which provides relevant indicators for policy-making.

> Development of a European dashboard with data from

Economy and finance

Energy and the environment

Health

Social affairs

Mobility

Information and communication technologies

> Creating the preconditions to be able to supply current data for (future) situations of crisis in a flexible manner, e.g. by limiting a survey to the time of crisis, integrating ad hoc modules into existing surveys and requesting information on specific issues.

(2) Seizing the opportunities of digitalisation. Improving timeliness.

It is essential to have access to alternative data sources, calculate (early) indicators and use experimental and new digital data in order to supply politicians and the public with information at short notice in times of crisis.

The aim is to seize the opportunities of digitalisation to improve timeliness and enable their permanent use for preparing high-quality statistics.

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| > Use of new data sources | Use the new data sources in a comparable way by means of a coordinated methodology |
| > Optimising processes | Use of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning |
| > Creating the preconditions | Allowing for permanent access to new data sources |

(3) Crisis-proofing communication. Accelerating action.

Coordination processes and communication channels have to be efficient and flexible especially in situations of crisis.

The aim is to establish coordinated crisis communication within the ESS to be able to act faster in future situations of crisis.

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| > Coordinated crisis communication within the ESS | Set up an EU Crisis Squad
Prepare a crisis protocol |
| > Ensuring a basic supply of statistical information | Maintain a priority list of statistics for a state of crisis
Monitor non-response and delivery problems |
| > Identifying and meeting decision-relevant data needs in a timely manner | Develop communication strategies for new products which respond directly to crises
Develop a crisis-relevant dashboard |