

First meeting of the 2008/2009 Bureau

Washington D.C. (United States), 20-21 October 2008

Item 2e of the Provisional
Agenda

FOLLOW-UP TO THE IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF CULTURE STATISTICS

Note prepared by Eurostat

1. The Bureau made an in-depth review of culture statistics in February 2008. It was suggested that a joint meeting on culture statistics be organised by UIS, Eurostat and possibly UNECE in early 2009. The Bureau will be informed about the follow-up actions on culture statistics.

2. According to the plans presented in the last CES meeting, Eurostat re-launched the Working Group on Cultural Statistics. The first meeting (after a 4-year-break) took place on 30 June/1 July 2008 (Minutes in Annex). The participants of the meeting welcomed the initiative to re-launch the work on cultural statistics at the EU-level and agreed with the proposal to create the ESSnet-culture (European Statistical System network) as the most appropriate method of collaboration at this time. Many countries expressed their wish to participate actively in the ESSnet-culture and the following themes were kept as priorities:

- (a) Framework of cultural statistics;
- (b) Industrial perspective: cultural/creative industries;
- (c) Expenditure on culture;
- (d) Social aspects of culture (cultural employment can be included in one of the four large thematic groups).

3. During the meeting, the representative of UIS (UNESCO Institute of Statistics) had the opportunity to gather several comments on the new UNESCO proposal for the framework for cultural statistics; other suggestions can be sent by countries to the UIS by the end of the year. ESSnet-culture will work on this topic as well and should propose a revised European framework for cultural statistics.

4. ESSnet-culture should begin its work in January 2009. Then the first meeting between Eurostat and coordinators of the ESSnet can take place for the refinement of the work programme for two years. The meeting foreseen at international level, involving Eurostat with the ESSnet-culture, UNESCO, UNECE and other interested organizations, could be then organised in February/March 2009.



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Meeting of the Working Group "Cultural statistics"

Luxembourg, JMO Building, Room M1

30 June - 1 July 2008

Draft minutes

- **Please send us your comments/proposals for modifications (in track changes if possible) by 15th September 2008.**

Thank you in advance!

Draft minutes

Meeting of the Working Group on cultural statistics 30 June/1 July 2008

1) Introduction and address by Mr M.Glaude, Director of Social Statistics of Eurostat

The chairman, Jean-Louis Mercy - Head of Unit "Education, science and culture", welcomed participants coming from nearly all EU-Member States, Norway and Turkey. He underlined importance of this meeting, after four-years-break in the Eurostat activity in the domain of cultural statistics. During this meeting countries should express their opinion about the future work - its priorities and method.

Mr M.Glaude in his address also greeted all participants and expressed his satisfaction to see the positive result of the debate about re-launching activity on cultural statistics which had happened in Eurostat during the last months. He presented his expectations about interesting discussions during the meeting, willing to restart the common project and good collaboration in preparation of proposals for future work.

2) Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved.

3) Recent policy developments at EU level

Sylvain Pasqua from DG EAC (Education and Culture) gave a presentation on recent activities of the European Commission in the field of culture. In 2007 European Agenda for Culture was adopted by the EC, the Council of Ministers and the European Council. The way to progress chosen is open method of coordination. Among five main objectives we find "Developing data, statistics and methodologies while improving their comparability". The principal demand concerns better measuring of the positive effects of the cultural sector on the wider economy (within a Lisbon strategy). DG EAC will follow with a great interest work conducted by Eurostat in the domain of cultural statistics and collaborate in the whole project.

Participants expressed their opinions about the most important issues to be tackled by cultural statistics from the point of view of policy makers. It's certainly an interest in measuring importance of culture within Lisbon strategy but also social aspects of culture should not be neglected. The role of audiovisual sector should be taken into account.

The future work should be based on achievements of the previous WG and TFs.

Possible European regulation for cultural statistics was asked as well (making data collection obligatory could help national institutions to promote this field..). Being at the start of the project, Eurostat does not see the possibility nor necessity for such a regulation for the moment.

4) Overview of the recent activities of Eurostat

Eurostat reminded the Working Group that after four years of suspension of Eurostat activity in the field of cultural statistics, the growing interest for them from the policy makers allowed the preparation of the ground for re-launching of the work.

In 2007, thanks to the contract with the French Ministry of Culture, it was possible to publish a first Eurostat publication (pocketbook) on cultural statistics containing all available Eurostat (harmonised) data related to culture (with some statistical information coming from other data sources). This pocketbook was very well received (interest in it required even its re-printing).

In parallel, a methodological report on international data sources was elaborated - it can serve now as a good point of departure for future work.

In autumn 2007, Directors of Social Statistics of the NSIs expressed their support to re-launch the work on cultural statistics at EU-level.

In 2008, debate in Eurostat (within Directors meeting) took place about removal of cultural statistics from the negative priorities. Finally, it was decided to re-start the project by allocation to it of limited internal resources (one part-time post) and by approval for the ESSnet(work) method if the WG agrees with this approach. Financing for this project (500.00 €) is already foreseen for 2 years.

Therefore, the adoption by the WG of the ESSnet as method of future work is so important for the whole project to develop cultural statistics.

Eurostat mentioned as well growing interest in cultural statistics at international level and expectations expressed towards the EU from such organisations as: UNESCO, UNCTAD, ECE/CES, OECD.

5) Pocketbook on cultural statistics - comments

Eurostat briefly reminded the content of this publication and asked for comments, mainly on coverage and acceptance of external sources used, relevance of contextual data, quality of data (possible discrepancies noted with national statistics) and interest of national users in this publication.

Several participants expressed their appreciation for the pocketbook and underlined a need for such European publication. It was suggested to publish it regularly (every 2-3 years?), including new available data. It's an interest in data (not possible yet to include in the pocketbook) on public expenditure on culture, on audiovisual and cultural tourism, as well as on European identity and diversity (languages, minorities). Regional approach would be also welcomed.

As in some countries statistics presented in the pocketbook were watched with interest, an access to more detailed national data used for publication was required. Eurostat replied that the majority of data are available in New Cronos in specific domains; for cultural employment data extracted from the EU-LFS can be provided on demand. Italian example was mentioned - comparison of data on cultural employment coming from national LFS and from pocketbook. Differences noted came mainly from the level of details for ISCO and NACE levels used for crossing occupations with economic activities (estimations used in the matrix were not necessary at national level). This case shows a necessity for updating method used for calculation of cultural employment (estimations, annual averages + new versions of NACE and ISCO).

It was mentioned on this occasion that the collaboration with the Council of Europe would be very welcomed as concerns preparations at national level of "Compendium of cultural policies and trends". Countries will welcome common proposal how to provide comparable data (mainly on public expenditure) for these reports.

6) Eurostat report on international data sources for cultural statistics

The report, elaborated by the French Ministry of Culture, was briefly presented - in particular its recommendations concerning future possible work on existing data sources.

Some comments from countries concerned data sources used to obtain information on public expenditure on culture: warning about the use of national accounts for this purpose, availability of details used in COFOG. There is certainly much work to be done in this field (as continuation of the work already initiated by the Task Force on cultural expenditure).

The Community Innovation Survey was cited as a potential data source on creative sectors (but there would be a need for larger NACE coverage and for additional questions in the questionnaire). Recommendation for provision (by several surveys) of harmonised data at 4-digits-level will be welcomed by cultural statistics. This proposal should be transmitted to concerned Eurostat unit.

IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations) was mentioned as source of data on libraries.

7) UNESCO proposal of reviewed framework for cultural statistics

The proposal for a new framework for cultural statistics was presented by Ellis Simon from the UIS (UNESCO Statistical Institute).

The main reasons for updating of this framework (the last version dates from 1986) are: globalisation of culture including digital production and dissemination, need for a holistic view of culture incorporating heritage assets (especially intangible heritage), need to fully reflect cultural products and practices from different countries/regions, new UNESCO conventions on cultural heritage and diversity.

As there are no resources for culture statistics in developing countries, we must be pragmatic (start with what does exist) and flexible (choice of sectors must to some degree be left to countries to reflect cultural realities). Europe is the region with the most experience in cultural statistics and should be able to refine definitions and produce statistics to lead the way. Therefore UNESCO is grateful for all comments coming from European countries; some were already sent but UNESCO will still take into account all additional observations. The calendar for next steps of elaboration of the new framework was presented.

Participants underlined the importance of languages and minorities' cultures, cultural practices, local feasts and festivals and crafts. Cultural statistics should try to consider (even if it is difficult) that cultural sectors and participation concern national culture as well as culture coming from other countries. For the framework, it is important to cross cultural domains with functions, using existing classifications (taking into account their recent revisions - ISCO, NACE). Certainly, framework should be flexible but it should be also possible to know clearly what is included/excluded in national frameworks (and updated EU framework) in comparison with that proposed by Unesco.

It was agreed that countries can still send their comments on the proposed framework during the autumn. Anyway, the future work on cultural statistics at EU-level should include as priority the discussion about updating of the European framework dated from 1999.

8) EHS (European Household Survey) project and proposal for the module on culture

A. Elodie Carmona from Unit F3 "Living condition and social protection statistics" gave a presentation on the new project of the European Household Survey, which is an integrated and coordinated programme of social statistical survey with the aim of rationalisation of existing and future household surveys (ICT, AES, ..) and increasing of flexibility and timely response to user needs (through ad-hoc modules). The proposal concerning the method and timetable was explained.

B. It was proposed that in 2010 or 2011 an ad-hoc module on culture could be included in the EHS. The very first proposal (elaborated by the contractor) for the content of the module had been sent to the participants just before the meeting. This proposal deals mainly with cultural participation, but a small part is also devoted to intercultural dialogue.

Participants expressed their worry that the deadlines mentioned for the possible implementation of the module in 2010 are very short and quality of results of such a survey is questionable.

Two different opinions emerged concerning the usefulness of a module as proposed in the EHS structure. Countries with experience of large surveys on cultural participation don't consider this possibility as an added value. In the other hand, countries without such experience welcome this initiative.

Countries with existing surveys on cultural participation mentioned several methodological issues which should be taken into account while preparing the module on culture (method of data collection, period of fieldwork, languages and behaviour specificities, memory effects, other quality issues...).

Some flexibility in implementation of such a module should be allowed, taking into account national experiences. But the methods should not have a negative impact on the comparability of data between countries. It was suggested that consultation with the countries is necessary, maybe in the form of the group working specially on this issue (Task Force or thematic group of the ESSnet).

Some comments were given concerning the proposed content of the module: the draft proposed list of variables is too long, questions on barriers and drivers are maybe not necessary (core social variables able to explain behaviour?), questions on languages could be useful even if difficult to formulate, there is a need for clear explanations on terms used in questions, questions on intercultural dialogue are interesting but need more careful preparation, etc.

It was proposed to the countries to send to Eurostat their first comments by the end of July. It will be a first overview of the situation in different countries, of needs and possible methodological proposals.

9) Proposal for ESSnet-culture

A. Presentation of the ESSnet concepts and implementation

Rainer Muthmann, Head of Unit "Methodology and research", presented the rules of functioning of the ESSnet projects in Eurostat.

An ESSnet is a network of several organisations of the European Statistical System aimed at providing results that will be beneficial to the whole ESS.

Detailed technical proposals for the retained ESSnet projects are to be sent by coordinators to Eurostat who evaluates these offers and can suggest modifications. A responsible staff member from Eurostat follows-up and watches over a good execution of the project. A Steering Committee is designed to assure the progress within ESSnet and dissemination of information within the whole ESS.

As countries do not know well the functioning of this type of network, they asked Eurostat for assistance. Eurostat ensured to provide countries with all necessary information and to give all required assistance during the whole project.

B. Work programme of the ESSnet on cultural statistics

J-L.Mercy presented the possible work of the ESSnet on cultural statistics with the more practical approach. ESSnet can work on the basis of the multi-beneficiary grant given to interested countries (with the principle of co-financing of 90% of eligible costs). There is a need for one main coordinator of the ESSnet (at least for administrative issues). The work is organised on a limited number of themes/work packages. Each work package include: one theme coordinator, some participants (with costs) and some members (not signatories of the grant).

Outcomes of the work of the work packages are disseminated to all countries, for comments if deemed useful. The Eurostat Working Group on Culture Statistics remains the final forum for adoption of proposals. Eurostat team supports the ESSnet work and provides advices.

As concerns timetable for the launching ESSnet culture, following was proposed:

- formal launch of the call for proposal - September 2008 (only addressed to the countries identified as potential participants) with deadline for submission: end of October 2008
- signature of the grant: by the end of the year 2008.

At the end of the two years life of the ESSnet evaluation has to be realised.

Eurostat presented proposals for themes to be treated by the ESSnet-culture:

- Framework of cultural statistics and field of creative industries
- State of the art in cultural statistics at national and international level
- Cultural employment
- Cultural/creative industries
- International exchanges of goods and services
- Expenditure on culture (private and public)
- Social aspects of culture (mainly cultural participation and provision in cultural goods and services)

After discussion following themes were kept as priorities:

- Framework of cultural statistics (including possibly state of the art in cultural statistics)
- Industrial perspective: cultural/creative industries
- Expenditure on culture
- Social aspects of culture

Work on cultural employment was considered as priority as well but its place should be probably included in one of the thematic groups. Moreover, Eurostat itself has to be involved in this data collection as holder of the EU-LFS database. Methodological work in this field (updating of the method) could be done within the group working on horizontal methodological issues (framework).

- Following countries presented their potential interest in active participation in the ESSnet (several with precaution on necessity to consult their respective authorities):
 - the United Kingdom
 - Denmark
 - Italy (?)
 - Spain
 - Austria (?)
 - Slovenia (?),
 - France
 - Finland
 - Luxembourg (?)
 - the Netherlands (?)
 - Slovakia (?)
 - Sweden (?)
 - Germany (?)

10) International collaboration

It was proposed that Eurostat maintains collaboration with UIS and OECD, enters in contact with Council of Europe and invite to discussions/meetings organisations judged competent in specific domains of work. ESSnet could also propose such collaboration.

11) Conclusions, next steps

- Participants of the meeting of the WG on cultural statistics expressed their agreement for the creation of the ESSnet on culture.
- 13 Member States (Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain, Slovenia, Slovakia, Sweden, the United Kingdom) declared the willing to participate actively in the ESSnet, some other would like to be involved in the less binding way.
- WG members are asked to send to Eurostat their definitive declarations about participation in the ESSnet by the 15th of July 2008.
- Luxembourg kindly declared its wish to organise at the end of July the first meeting of the countries which will indicate the possibility to be coordinators of the thematic groups.
- Eurostat will provide interested countries with all available information related to the multi-beneficiary grant to be launched after the summer.
- Expecting the start of the work of the ESSnet in January 2009, the next WG meeting will be proposed probably for November 2009.

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