

Greetings from Eurostat for the Statistics Day - 20 October 2016

Eurostat, the Statistical office of the European Union has the great pleasure to address you on the occasion of Statistics Day 2016, which is at the same time celebrated as the first time as the European Statistics Day. Unfortunately we are not able to be with you in person today, however we hope that through this message we join you in your celebrations today and can pass some messages of support from Eurostat, along with the general motto of the day "Better data for better lives".

Eurostat is proud of its cooperation work in supporting countries outside the EU to develop their statistical systems. Each country and region is unique of course, but for many of them – and for the countries covered by the Eastern partnership and Moldova in particular - there are a number of general objectives to developing a strong statistical system that apply to each and every system across the world.

Three words, each of them starting with the letter 'I': Independence, Importance and Innovation describe these general objectives.

- **Independence** is a necessary precondition for trust, trust in statistical results, in their neutrality and robustness as well as their availability for every citizen, decision maker or entrepreneur. There are a number of steps that statistical institutions can take towards independence and impartiality. One example is the definition - in the statistical law – of rules for the appointment of the head of the statistical office based on professional competence only and rules for the dismissal of the same head that are not linked to professional competence. Other examples include the positioning of the statistical office in the government structures that allows the head of the statistical office to have SOLE responsibility for deciding on statistical methods, as well as establishing clear and fixed timetables for the publication of headline indicators (such as inflation, GDP and unemployment rates).
- **Importance** means relevance and sufficient resources. Statistics has to be policy relevant but not politically driven. Providing evidence for decision making is however only possible with adequate resources, in particular human resources. Importance also means having sufficient administrative powers and standing. Only a strong national statistical office can actually coordinate data producers in other administrations.

- **Innovation** is absolutely crucial in the age of digitalisation. Only if statisticians use each and every opportunity to modernise their processes, to integrate available data sources and to cooperate with researchers and data scientists, they will survive in this more and more competitive environment.

Finally the benefits of strengthening quality and quality assurance frameworks in your institution should be mentioned. We have developed a number of such quality tools, methodologies and approaches in Europe, which we are keen to share with you and which will be of help for you to develop a quality mind set. Quality is a journey - not a destination.

Before concluding - a few words about the 2030 agenda. This global exercise showcases the role of statistics to transform societies. The development of statistics and societies is a two-way dynamic interaction. No individual indicator will be perfect, but together they are a chance to add rigour and backbone into the implementation of the global and national goals. Moreover, this challenge for the global statistical community is an opportunity for all statisticians in the world to prove our relevance and innovativeness and a chance to demonstrate on how we can address these challenges and deliver what is needed for policy making and decisions.

Finally, we would like to assure you that Eurostat stands ready to continuously support you in your important work, we wish you a nice celebration of the day!

Signed

Eurostat