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## **Eurostat Progress Report on Geo-referenced information**

Paper prepared by Eurostat

*(for discussion)*

# Eurostat Progress Report on Geo-referenced information

## Request to DIMESA

The DIMESA is asked to take note on:

The progress on the definition and delineation of regions

the evolution of regional/urban statistics

the provision and linking of geographic information geo-referenced statistical data to the Commission and the EU (GISCO).

the status of work on INSPIRE

## REGIONAL/URBAN STATISTICS

### o Areas delimitation

The **NUTS Regulation 2010**<sup>1</sup> which shall apply, with regard to the transmission of data to Eurostat, from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012, has been finalised in its regulatory process. A Regulation covering the back-casting of important regional statistics in order to have valid time series is currently in the adoption process.

Proposals for Statistical Regions for candidate countries were discussed with the Statistical Institutes of Albania, Montenegro and Serbia.

The **NUTS - Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics** dedicated website<sup>2</sup> on the Eurostat Internet is online. It replaces the previously existing NUTS page. The Internet page also explains the broad background and history of the NUTS Regulation. The new page provides details about the NUTS classification and several links to background information as well as downloadable correspondence files.

The harmonisation of the **annual Local Administrative Units (LAU) lists** has been successfully completed in 2010. All Member States were able to provide the national annual LAU data as within the first six month of 1010.

Eurostat also provided professional expertise for the setup of Eurostat's **Census LAU management tool** that is a prerequisite for the exchange of Census data at LAU level from 2011 onwards.

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<sup>1</sup> COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 31/2011 of 17 January 2011, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:013:0003:0054:EN:PDF>

<sup>2</sup> [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts\\_nomenclature/introduction](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/introduction)

Furthermore, in close cooperation with DG REGIO and the OECD, the optimal shape of defining **Metropolitan Regions** was tested and agreement was reached.

A very important agreement was also reached between the Commission and the OECD with respect of the distinction between rural, urban and intermediate regions (Urban-Rural Typology) The new methodology will have a significant impact beyond the narrow scope regional statistics. It is planned to base large scale EU surveys on this breakdown in order to produce comparable data across the EU.

- o **Regional data**

The management of regional statistics has been reviewed by Eurostat in 2010. As a consequence, the structure of the access to regional data has been reworked in part and the presentation improved. One of the conclusions was the strengthening of the coordination of regional statistics within Eurostat with the creation of a regular discussion group.

The value of regional statistics has been well proven by the **5<sup>th</sup> Cohesion Report**<sup>3</sup> published by DG REGIO. The report is in large parts based on ESS data and shows in an excellent way their usefulness for EU regional policy making. The report also shows the very good cooperation between Eurostat and the policy DG of the Commission.

As part of the regular work, **regional data** at NUTS level 2 and 3 has been regularly checked and updated for the various domains of regional statistics: agriculture, population, structural business survey, transport, environment, research and development, tourism, health and education. This work includes making occasional improvements to the table structure in the dissemination database. In particular, **employment and unemployment** data have been checked and updated in the dissemination database. Dispersion indicators of employment and unemployment in the regions have been calculated, including indicators of underperforming regions.

The planned new web dissemination tool for regional and urban statistics CARP (**Cities' and Regions' Profiles**) was further prepared (functional and load tests). Necessary modifications were implemented in order to guarantee quick response time and user-friendly operations. Currently, CARP is being integrated into the Regional profiles tool of the Eurostat website. Due to integration issues into the Eurostat web portal and the existing series of dissemination tools, the roll-out of the tool to the public has been delayed. As a response, a stringent action plan has now been established in order to achieve a roll-out by autumn 2011.

The **Regional Yearbook 2011**<sup>4</sup> has been published with many interesting articles written by experts from the thematic units and the regional section. The yearbook illustrates the many aspects of regional and urban data and highlights the various types of analyses that can be performed with such data. In 2011 it contained 15 chapters, which is an all time record for this flagship publication. One of the many highlights was an article which describes the new urban

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<sup>3</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/cohesion5/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/cohesion5/index_en.cfm)

<sup>4</sup> [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/publications/regional\\_yearbook](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/publications/regional_yearbook)

rural typology of NUTS-3 regions. The 2012 edition of the Regional Yearbook is in preparation. It has a simplified text structure and relies more on maps compared to the previous edition.

As in previous years, the **Reference Guide** was updated and revised in spring 2010, giving a complete overview of all regional and urban statistics on the dissemination website of Eurostat.

#### o **Urban data**

The ongoing **Urban Audit** data collection made good progress. The data received are currently in the validation process within Eurostat as well as in cooperation with the Member States.

The need to consolidate the Urban Audit data collection was recognised by Eurostat and the Member States. An initial attempt to consolidate the core part of the Urban Audit through a EU Regulation proved not successful. The discussion led to the conclusion that a general overhaul of the entire domain was required. At the same time, its importance for EU policy making was confirmed in consultations between DG REGIO and representatives of the ESS. As a consequence, a new design of the Urban Audit has been developed with a stronger focus on key policy indicators, quality and data availability. This concept is currently in discussion within Eurostat.

A part of revision of the Urban Audit data collection was the development of a common concept for cities based on population data in cooperation with DG REGIO.

### **Geographical information and geo-referenced data (GISCO)**

Eurostat participated in wide range of **GIS related initiatives** carried out by Commission DGs and focused on providing specialised services to the GIS community both in the Commission and in Member States.

It was successfully contracted a tender for the supply of **Topographic and Administrative Boundaries** geographic dataset at the scales of 1:100 000, 1:250 000 and 1:1 000 000, and related maintenance and support services. These tenders will provide the datasets for the regular updates (at least one per year) of the GISCO database for a period of 4 years. The acquisition of licenses for a high resolution transport network geodata set at the scale of 1:10 000, including detailed traffic information and intended for high resolution spatial analysis also continued.

The main layers of information available in the GISCO database are Administrative boundaries (NUTS0-3 and LAU1-2, urban audit, urban morphological zones, less favourite areas, structural funds, ...), Hydrography (rivers, lakes, canals, coastline, ...), Transport (roads,

railways, waterways, ferry lines, airports, ...), Degree of urbanisation, LUCAS survey points and pilot information from the Geostat project on grid demographic data. This information can be combined with other data layers available on different servers in the Commission and the Agencies (e.g. Corine Land Cover).

Parts of the datasets above, where no licensing restrictions prevent their public dissemination, are made available on the GISCO dedicated section of the Eurostat web site<sup>5</sup>.

More than 300 maps were produced, for the Eurostat Regional Yearbook and for individual or regular requests coming from Eurostat, other Commission DGs and, to a limited extent, external users. On the EUROSTAT website all the maps are available and downloadable in the form of pdf files. The GISCO section on the Eurostat web site underwent a deep restructuring, in order to provide users an improved and easy access to its data and available maps.

An important part of the activities consisted of providing support for Commission DGs and Services in the application of geographical data and information services. In particular involvement in the **Water Information System for Europe**<sup>6</sup> (WISE) project, the **GMES programme**<sup>7</sup>, and spatial analysis projects in support of Eurostat and Commission DGs.

In 2010 projects were started aiming at extending the availability and use of GIS services to less specialized Eurostat and EC staff, seeking to facilitate the joint use of Geographic Information and statistical data. The goal of these ongoing activities is to develop web tools allowing the map presentation of wide range of statistical data.

Eurostat organised several meetings at different levels. The annual joint working group meeting with the National Statistical Offices and National Mapping Agencies enabled participants to discuss of INSPIRE-related activities. The progress of the GEOSTAT<sup>8</sup> project, aiming at creating harmonised population grids for Europe; the overall vision to which the project is contributing is the establishment of a European Statistical and Spatial Infrastructure that gives access to spatial and statistical information on population statistics through a single information system

Eurostat also played an active part in the INSPIRE conference and in the annual meeting of the European Forum for Geostatistics in Tallinn. A one day seminar on spatial statistics was organised in the context of the 58th plenary session of the UN Conference of European Statisticians<sup>9</sup>, which took place in Paris in June 2010.

In parallel with the availability of the complete results of the second LUCAS survey, whose primary data and tables are available in the statistical section of the Eurostat database, the geographical location and attributes of all the 265.000 points of the survey have been

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<sup>5</sup> <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/gisco/geodata>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.water.europa.eu/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.gmes.info/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.efgs.info/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://live.unece.org/stats/documents/2010.06.ces.html>

integrated as a new information layer in the GISCO database. This same information has also been made available in geographic format on the GISCO dedicated section of the Eurostat website<sup>10</sup>.

## **INSPIRE**

In 2010 Member States for the first time had to report to the Commission on the implementation of a National spatial Data Infrastructure in compliance with the **INSPIRE Directive**. This activity was coordinated by Eurostat, in cooperation with the JRC for the development of reporting tools, and with DG ENV for what concerns the legal aspects of reporting<sup>11</sup>.

New **INSPIRE Implementing Measures** were defined and adopted, through the now well established process implemented by the three DGs cooperating on INSPIRE. Commission Regulation (EU) No 1088/2010 as regards download services and transformation services and Commission Regulation (EU) No 1089/2010 as regards interoperability of spatial data sets and services (Annex I) were adopted by the Commission in November 2010, while Commission Regulation (EU) No 102/2011 amending Commission Regulation (EU) No 1089/2010 (Code list) obtained the positive vote of the INSPIRE Committee in June 2010 and was adopted by the Commission early in 2011.

The development of the Geoportal for the access to Geographic Information available in the Commission, with the possible extension to EU and Executive Agencies (**INSPIRE@EC**) continued, the objective of making available a first operational version by spring 2011 has been accomplished as the portal is operational since early May. The objective of the INSPIRE@EC geoportal is making available to Institutional users all the Geographical Information datasets existing in the Commission and, where feasible, Agencies, establishing links to their repositories rather than copying them into a centralised database. The portal offers searching, browsing, viewing and, where possible, downloading capabilities. Currently, beyond the data available in the GISCO database, the portal provides access to a selection of datasets from DG REGIO, DG MOVE, DG AGRI, DG ENV, JRC.

In cooperation with the JRC, a call for tender for the development of the **INSPIRE EU Geoportal**<sup>12</sup> (to provide access to Geographic Information portals hosted by Member States in compliance with the INSPIRE Directive) was prepared, launched and evaluated. This portal will become operational end 2012.

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<sup>10</sup> [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/gisco/popups/references/land\\_cover/](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/gisco/popups/references/land_cover/)

<sup>11</sup> <http://inspire.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>

<sup>12</sup> prototype already available at: <http://www.inspire-geoportal.eu/>

## Geo-referenced information. An overview

