

PASII - ECOBUSAF and SOCSTAF newsletter



n°4 – October 2025

Editorial

Welcome to the fourth and last edition of the ECOBUSAF and SOCSTAF newsletter!

As our project comes to an end, this issue takes a look back at what we've achieved together since 2022—with the funding of the European Union—and what we've accomplished in 2025.

This last issue is both a wrap-up and a reflection. It offers a subjective overview of our journey, featuring the perspectives of several consortium members. Beyond the clear benefits for the African Union countries involved, one thing stands out: the project has also transformed the way the consortium's national statistical institutes (NSIs) collaborate, proving that large-scale partnerships can drive both innovation and institutional growth.

We're proud to share some key figures that capture the project's impact: NSIs from 43 countries participated in at least one project activity (excluding training) and representatives from 51 NSOs joined our online courses, compared with 37 countries that shown their interest in the initial 2022 survey and helped shape our roadmap.

In this issue, you'll also find highlights of our latest activities: continued support for statistical business registers, development of a new version of the ERETES national accounts tool, technical missions in Lesotho and Eswatini on employment and the informal sector, and in Rwanda on communication through PXWeb. We also report on a study visit for the winners of the 2024 hackathon, and bilateral technical workshops in Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics. Meanwhile, our training programme continued as planned, strengthening skills and networks across the continent.

As we close this edition—and this project—we want to express our sincere gratitude to all participating countries for their trust, engagement, and commitment. Together, we've strengthened the capacities of African NSIs and fostered innovation across statistical products, processes, and institutions.

The story of ECOBUSAF and SOCSTAF doesn't end here—it continues in the skills, partnerships, and ideas that will keep driving Africa's statistical future forward.

Evaluating the Impact of PASII-ECOBUSAF and SOCSTAF programmes

As the PASII-ECOBUSAF and SOCSTAF programmes draw to a close, assessing their impact on African National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) has been both timely and meaningful. These initiatives marked a milestone in international statistical cooperation: for the first time, the European Union funded such programmes through direct grants to NSIs of EU Member States.

This innovative funding model required European partners to explore new ways of managing cooperation projects while adhering to EU grant regulations. The challenge was significant, but the outcomes proved highly rewarding—not only for African beneficiaries but also for the European institutions involved.

The PAS II project has been a unique opportunity to strengthen connections across Africa and Europe.

It has fostered collaboration not only between African and European NSOs, but also within each region—creating a true network of shared learning. Recognizing that each NSO faces its own challenges, this exchange of experience has helped identify solutions tailored to different contexts.

This openness and flexibility have been among the project's greatest strengths. It also allowed us to work with new African partners, discover fresh perspectives, and deepen mutual understanding. To everyone involved: thank you for the inspiring collaboration. We look forward to continuing this partnership and learning journey together.

Statistics Norway

A Peer-to-Peer Model of Cooperation

Unlike traditional development projects, PASII-ECOBUSAF and SOCSTAF were based on peer-to-peer exchanges. The programmes drew on a pool of experts from several European NSIs, facilitating the sharing of solutions, tools, and best practices already implemented across Europe. This approach strengthened partnerships and broadened the scope of cooperation with African countries, reaching regions and institutions that had previously had limited engagement with European counterparts.

Beyond Technical Support

The programmes went beyond standard technical assistance. They sought to ensure broad geographic coverage across Africa, promote exchanges among African NSIs, and encourage South-South cooperation. A key objective was to foster greater harmonization of statistics on the continent through the dissemination of common tools and methodologies.

The PASII programme has been a cornerstone of EU–Africa cooperation in statistics.

Through the ECOBUSAF and SOCSTAF grants, it has shown how cost-effective, targeted initiatives can deliver strong, tangible results for beneficiaries.

INE Spain's online training alone reached 412 professionals from 51 African countries—an outstanding example of scalable impact.

Beyond the numbers, PASII created a true peer-to-peer exchange between experts from both continents and strengthened professional bonds across regions.

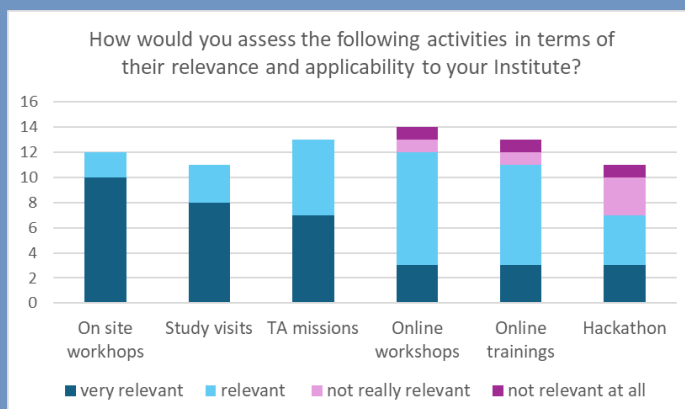
*Coordinating this project has been an immensely rewarding experience, and we hope the lessons learned over these four years will inspire and inform future EU-supported cooperation in statistics. **INE-Spain***

The PAS II project has been a rewarding and enriching experience for Statistics Poland. It has fostered close cooperation with European and African partners and demonstrated the importance of peer-to-peer knowledge exchange. Statistics Poland remains open to future collaboration initiatives under potential follow-up programmes such as PAS III, to continue supporting capacity development and international cooperation in official statistics.

*As members of the SOCSTAF consortium, Statistics Poland values the opportunity to work alongside colleagues from other European institutions and African national statistical offices. The experiences gained through PAS II will undoubtedly contribute to the success of future international cooperation projects in the field of statistics. **Statistics Poland***

Evaluation Findings

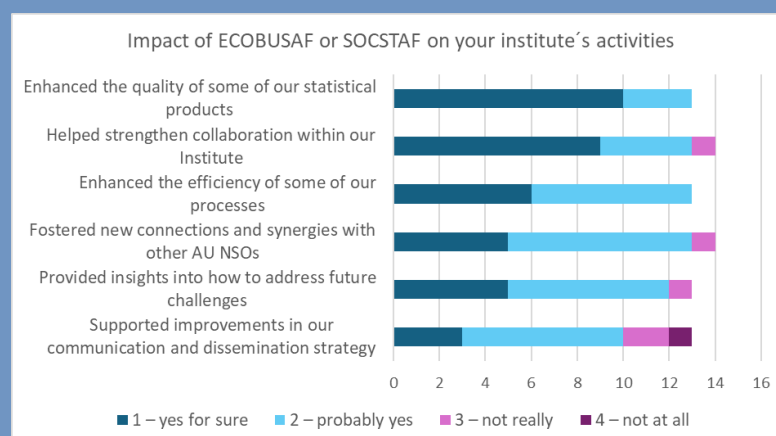
The impact evaluation combined a survey of African Union member NSIs with two field missions in countries that had been particularly active in the programmes. Although the response rate was modest (23 responses from 16 countries), the results were remarkably consistent.



All respondents expressed satisfaction—many reporting they were *satisfied* or *very satisfied*—with the support received under ECOBUSAF and SOCSTAF. On-site activities were particularly appreciated, being viewed as more effective than online sessions.

Respondents highlighted that the programmes had impacts extending well beyond their immediate objectives:

- strengthening collaboration within their own institutes,
- improving the quality of statistical production and processes, and
- building or reinforcing relationships with other African NSIs.



Looking Ahead



Respondents overwhelmingly expressed their willingness to take part in future programmes of this kind. They also provided constructive suggestions for improvement - both regarding thematic priorities and the cooperation modalities- as they appear in the word cloud.

Strengthening African Statistical Systems through Peer-to-Peer Cooperation: Insights from Mauritius and Côte d'Ivoire

As the PASII-ECOBUSAF and SOCSTAF programmes come to an end, their impact on African National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) is evident.

Mauritius and Côte d'Ivoire offer two compelling examples of how *peer-to-peer exchanges* and *technical assistance* can foster innovation, build institutional capacity, and promote lasting cooperation among African and European statistical systems.

Shared Benefits and Future Perspectives

Both Mauritius and Côte d'Ivoire benefited from a diverse range of activities that extended well beyond traditional technical assistance. The programmes promoted **mutual learning**, **South-South collaboration**, and the **adoption of modern statistical tools and methodologies** such as machine learning, dashboards, and data innovation platforms.

Participants from both countries underlined the benefits of **peer networking**—learning directly from colleagues in other NSIs facing similar challenges. This practical, collaborative approach not only strengthened technical skills but also encouraged creativity, openness, and institutional confidence.

Preferred Learning Models:

Both institutes found that, for the future, hybrid training - combining online theoretical sessions with practical face-to-face workshops- would produce the best results. It would improve motivation, deepen understanding, and encourage long-term engagement.

Shared Priorities for the Future:

- Sustained peer-to-peer and South-South cooperation, supported by dedicated funding mechanisms;
- Expanded training on data management, environmental accounts, and artificial intelligence;
- Stronger integration of administrative data into statistical production;

- The establishment of data innovation spaces and hackathons;
- Progressive training programmes with certification, ensuring continuity and accountability.

These experiences show that when technical assistance is built on partnership, reciprocity, and practical exchange, it generates lasting results and empowers NSIs to drive their own development while sharing expertise with peers across Africa.

Mauritius: Innovation and Integration through Technical Assistance

Key Achievements

- **Statistical Business Register (SBR):**

Mauritius improved its SBR following AfDB and EU guidelines, introduced machine learning for automatic coding, and developed interactive dashboards. Collaboration with Namibia and Senegal strengthened South–South exchanges, with Namibia later adopting the Mauritian model.

- **Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA):**

Participation in workshops increased knowledge of TSA methodologies and inspired the use of household expenditure surveys. The need for training of trainers was emphasized to support regional cooperation.

- **National Accounts:**

Staff gained exposure to new tools, including AI applications such as ChatGPT, and advanced their understanding of administrative data use, communication strategies, and the upcoming SNA 2025 framework.

- **Other Thematic Gains:**

Training in education, health, and demographic statistics improved expertise in data collection, CAPI applications, and cause-of-death analysis.



Future Priorities

- Evaluating StatBus Integration into the SBR;
- Continued training on National Accounts and Tourism Satellite Accounts;

- Development of environmental and informal economy accounts;
- Expansion of regional cooperation and AI-driven innovation.

Côte d'Ivoire: Building Regional Leadership and Fostering Innovation

Key Achievements

- **Regional Economic Accounts:**

With support from Afristat and Insee, ANStat developed its first set of regional accounts (base year 2018) and built an autonomous team. Côte d'Ivoire is now well-positioned to share its expertise regionally through South–South cooperation.

- **Tourism Satellite Accounts:**

Following participation in an online workshop and preparatory missions, ANStat initiated, with Insee's support, the construction of its first TSA.

- **Hackathon on Climate and Agriculture in Africa:**

ANStat's multidisciplinary team ranked among the top two participants and developed a prototype still in use. The event fostered a culture of innovation, inspired national initiatives, and led to collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture on data-driven projects.

- **Labour Statistics:**

The redesign of the quarterly employment survey benefited from methodological exchanges with Insee and is improving national labour statistics quality.

- **Digital Innovation:**

The introduction of big data platforms like *Onyxia* is helping optimize data processing and analysis capabilities.

Future Priorities

- Continued cooperation with Insee on hackathon methodologies and digital tools;
- Training in AI for statistics, administrative data integration, and migration statistics;
- Development of environmental and social satellite accounts and regional development indicators;
- Strengthened communication and dissemination strategies to reach government, media, and civil society audiences;
- Institutionalized South–South cooperation frameworks to share expertise in regional accounts and employment statistics.

Conclusions



The experiences of Mauritius and Côte d'Ivoire illustrate how the PASII-ECOBUSAF and SOCSTAF programmes have gone well beyond technical achievements. They have catalyzed innovation, strengthened institutional capacities, and forged lasting partnerships that are reshaping the landscape of statistical cooperation in Africa.

By investing in peer-to-peer learning, digital innovation, and shared ownership, these initiatives have laid the foundations of a more connected, resilient, and forward-looking African statistical community. More broadly, they demonstrate that when designed with flexibility and mutual benefit, peer-to-peer collaboration can be a powerful engine for institutional strengthening and regional integration in statistics—setting a strong precedent for future EU-Africa cooperation.

Ultimately, these programmes remind us that statistical cooperation is not only about data—it is about people, partnerships, and a shared purpose shaping Africa's future together.

"What I've really learned from PAS II is that building trust and relationships takes time, and flexibility is key. Capacity building works best when it's a journey — blending online and in-person activities to build both reach and depth. I've also seen how powerful South-South cooperation can be, and how much we as a consortium gain by working together and drawing on each other's strengths." **Statistics Denmark**

"This project, innovative in its implementation approach, pushed the European partners out of their comfort zone. We collectively had to demonstrate flexibility and creativity to engage African NSO partners. By drawing on collective intelligence, we supported countries in both statistical production and internal organization.

Insee had long cooperated with several African Union countries. This project broadened our horizons and inspired us to rethink our ways of collaborating — adapting to new cultural contexts and deepening collaboration with our European partners.

I warmly thank all members of the ECOBUSAF and SOCSTAF consortia for their constructive and friendly spirit throughout the projects. We have built strong professional ties that will undoubtedly serve as a foundation for future international cooperation initiatives". **INSEE**

A training programme for a wider audience: capacity building with a regional scope

Year 2025 has been a significant period for INE Spain in the field of international cooperation. In this final stage of the PAS II project, being the last year in the implementation of these two grants, our efforts have focused on taking the most out of the last set of courses to be developed, based on the experience previously gained and with special focus on the beneficiaries' needs.

Four online training have been organized by INE Spain during the first half of 2025:

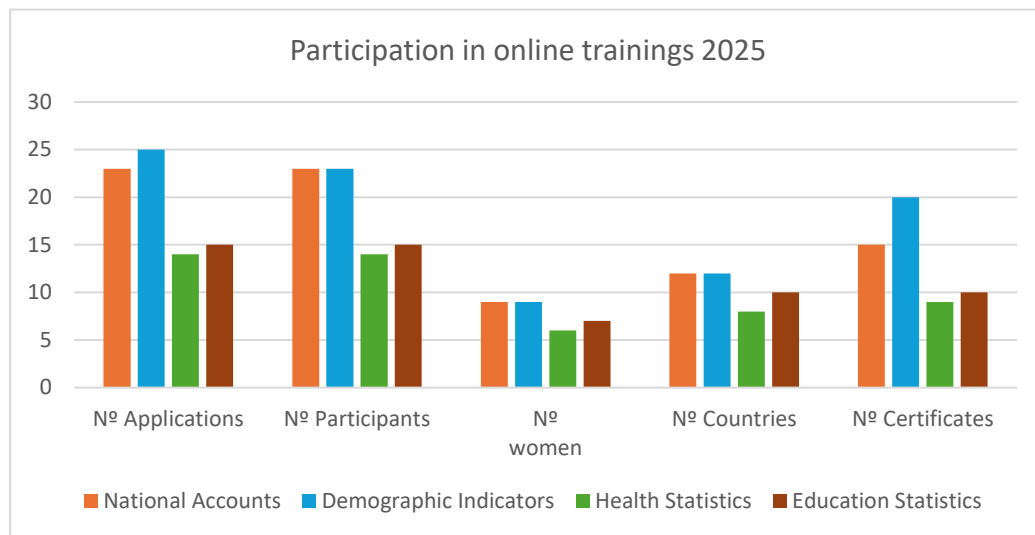
- **Online course on National Accounts (February 10 – March 9, 2025)**
- **Online course on Demographic Indicators (March 10 – 30, 2025)**
- **Online technical training (webinars) on Health Statistics (May 20 – 21, 2025)**
- **Online technical training (webinars) on Education Statistics (June 10 – 11, 2025)**

These activities were widely disseminated among African Union countries. In the online courses, participants were provided with extensive theoretical teaching materials, supplemented by practical exercises with solutions in English, French and Spanish. Contact with trainers and between participants was continuous through an online forum and a weekly live videoconference in English with simultaneous translation into French.



On the other hand, the webinar format is designed to be more participatory and consists of two live online sessions of three hours each, where trainers explain the content and generate debate on practices in different countries, accompanied by translators who facilitate the participation of all experts in the different languages.

The graphics below show some of the main indicators for the 2025 online trainings. A total of **75 professionals in public statistics from 24 African countries** were given the opportunity to participate in the four training activities.



"I would like to thank the organizers for a wonderful training. It really improved my knowledge on the indicators. I am a statistician working under the division of Census Demographic Survey and I am glad that I was part of this insightful training. However, I feel the training was too short and the content much to be cover in such a short period of time. Hope to see you again maybe at the next level of the training and hopefully this time it will be in Spain." (Online course on Demographic Indicators (March 10 – 30, 2025))

All activities were developed successfully and met the participants' expectations. Compared to previous editions of the Demographic Indicators and National Accounts courses, these new editions showed increased interest from participants and had higher geographical reach, with an increased number of certificates. In addition, health and education training webinars have also achieved very positive results. These webinars had a very high assistance rate, and most participants shared opinions about their country's situation. In fact, this year's participation has been especially enriching.

Evaluation results were highly positive: **97% of participants** considered the training relevant and useful for their current or future work, while **97.5% expressed overall satisfaction** with the courses. Below, examples of the feedback received by participants through the satisfaction surveys.

An experience as challenging as enriching

Since the launch of the project in 2022, INE Spain has worked closely with its counterparts in the PAS II ECOBUSAF and SOCSTAF consortium countries, making this programme a highly positive and constructive experience.

With a clear regional scope, the design of the online programme had the aim of reaching a wider audience and to give more experts and more countries the opportunity to participate in training activities.

"The course training was good, and I learned a lot of news ideas to use in my job. For future courses, I think it would be better to have more online sessions" (Online course on National Accounts (February 10 – March 9, 2025))

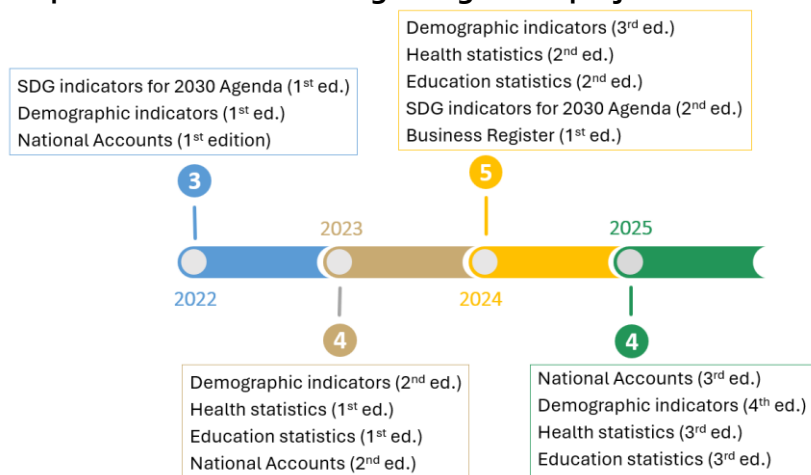
Through the **16 activities organized between 2022 and 2025**, we have been able to reach almost the entire African continent, with **51 African countries** having participated at least in one activity. These activities have also helped to create a channel of communication between the donors and beneficiary countries, and also between African Union countries themselves, which have been able to access a network of experts from different fields by participating in these activities.

Besides, it serves as a complement to the face-to-face actions carried out by other members of the consortium. The project has concluded with very good outcomes, consolidating INE Spain's role as a reference institution in fostering international cooperation in statistics.

"The material you delivered helped us a lot to start conducting stand-alone projects on Disability rather than integrating in other surveys" (Online technical training on Health Statistics (June 10 – 11, 2025))

"This was a great and rare privilege for me to deepen my knowledge in respect to educational statistics, especially around educational expenditure of household surveys. I am glad to participate. The facilitators did a great job. The course was relevant to my organization and will help me in my current and/or future work" (Course on Education statistics (June 10 – 11, 2025))

Training courses implemented since the beginning of the projects ECOBUSAF and SOCSTAF



Counting What Matters: Sharing Best Practices in Census Organization

Within the project PAS II - Statistics Poland organized and implemented three 3-days workshops focusing on the best practices for planning and conducting population and housing censuses. The key goal was to show countries how important censuses are amongst statistical surveys and how widely the collected data is used.

The workshops received highly positive feedback from participants, who particularly appreciated the clarity of presentations, the comprehensiveness of training materials, and the relevance of discussed topics. There were, among others, the following comments:

"A great motivation since we, as an institution, are preparing to carry out the census and the topics to be addressed meet our needs."

"I salute all the trainers for the quality of the presentations."

"To open up to the experiences of other countries."

The knowledge gained during the workshop is useful to them and may be applied in their future work. Some countries also expressed interest in support from Statistics Poland („technical assistance”) in the preparation of conducting population and housing censuses in their countries.

ERETES: Building Stronger National Accounts Systems Through Sustained Collaboration

ERETES is a powerful software designed to support the compilation of national accounts. It has been co-developed, maintained, and continuously enhanced for over 25 years by Insee and Eurostat.

The implementation takes the form of training programmes that enable motivated national accounts teams to understand how the software works, how to load “source” data into the database, and how to use its analytical and synthesis tools effectively. Such training usually extends over a few years, depending on the scope of the national accounts produced, the current work organization, and the availability of the teams—who often carry out other international technical assistance activities in parallel.

Within the PAS II programme (ECOBUSAF component), the implementation of ERETES in new users countries has made significant progress.

Turning Training into Action: The Cases of Liberia and Tunisia

- In Liberia, after defining the country’s economic classifications and uploading them into the software to tailor the database structure to the national context, the team is now working on identifying and coding the “source” data that will feed the system. The most recent implementation mission, held from 18 to 22 August 2025, enabled the team to nearly finalize all preparatory work required for GDP calculation using the production approach.
- In **Tunisia**, the process has reached a major milestone: the first operational use of ERETES for compiling national accounts. This first production run will be conducted in early 2026 in parallel with the traditional Excel worksheets used up to now. The goal is to ensure a smooth transition—allowing the team to compare the results of both systems, to validate the results obtained with ERETES and thereby gain confidence in the new tool. This phase will also help design new consistency-check routines based on ERETES built-in tools, to be combined with external analytical processes.



Paving the Way for Sustainable National Accounts

Both Tunisia and Liberia are trailblazers, being the first countries to adopt ERETES outside of a new benchmark-year preparation. This context makes implementations more challenging, as the work and team organization are less flexible and less adaptable to the specific requirements of the software. Nevertheless, Tunisia and Liberia’s significant progress mark an important step toward greater statistical autonomy and long-term capacity building.

A New Version of ERETES: A Smarter Tool for Stronger National Accounts

ERETES is a software solution used by around thirty countries and sites — including more than 20 African Union member states — to compile their national accounts, a cornerstone of economic monitoring.

As part of the ECOBUSAF component of the Pan-African Statistics Programme II (PAS II), funded by the European Union, Insee has developed a new version of ERETES to better address the needs expressed by its user countries.

Smarter, Faster, Multilingual

This upgraded version is now available in all official languages of the African Union — Portuguese and Arabic, in addition to French, English and Spanish — and comes with several major enhancements. Among them: integration of existing modules, management of multi-year and multi-version databases, generation of Social Accounting Matrices (SAMs), and new functionalities in three key areas:

- Semi-automatic balancing of supply and use balances for faster estimation of GDP using the expenditure approach;
- Balance sheets, allowing countries to reach the highest international standards in national accounts compilation;
- Backasting, enabling faster recalculation and dissemination of long time series of annual accounts aligned with updated methodologies after a change of the benchmark-year.

A Collaborative Approach to Innovation

The validation and testing of the new version followed a collaborative and participatory approach. On one hand, experienced users from several countries were brought together twice to assess the relevance of proposed upgrades and how best to implement them. On the other, new functionalities were tested in real operational conditions using actual national data with countries at the forefront of ERETES use.



Hands-On Testing Across Three Countries

Experimental missions were conducted in Cabo Verde, Cameroon, and Senegal, led by an Insee expert in national accounts and ERETES:

- In Cabo Verde, the focus was on testing the semi-automatic balancing of supply and use balances.

- In Cameroon, the mission aimed to test the production of both financial and non-financial assets within the balance sheets, as well as all new features required for annual national accounts compilation.
- In Senegal, the experiments focused on the new backcasting module.



These field tests allowed teams to gain hands-on experience with the upgraded ERETES, assess its functionalities, and identify final adjustments needed before its full rollout.

Building Local Expertise Through Training and Knowledge Sharing

To ensure a smooth and effective deployment, Insee — in collaboration with the African Union Institute of Statistics (STATAFRIC) — organized a training-of-trainers workshop in Tunis in May. The event brought together experts from nine African countries (Benin, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal, and Togo), along with specialists from STATAFRIC, AFRISTAT, and the African Development Bank.

These newly trained experts will in turn train their national accounts teams and later extend this knowledge to other ERETES user countries. During the workshop, participants explored in detail the software's new features, discussed implementation scenarios, reviewed technical documentation, and identified country-specific adaptations.

The workshop concluded with a certificate ceremony led by Mr. Adoum Gagoloum, Head of the Economic Statistics Division at STATAFRIC.



Broad Communication and Community Engagement

In addition, an online workshop held in February by the ERETES technical team at Insee gathered nearly 130 national accountants from 26 national statistics offices across the African Union, along with experts from the World Bank, IMF, AfDB, and WAEMU Commission. These rich exchanges strengthened the collective understanding of the new functionalities and encouraged peer learning among user countries.

What's Next

Development and testing of this new version will continue through 2025, with full deployment planned for early 2026.

Meanwhile, new improvements are already under consideration — such as integrating functionalities for quarterly accounts and producing symmetric input-output tables (IOTs), in response to growing international project demands like the OECD's TiVA (Trade in Value-Added) and the IMF's MARIO (Multi-Analytical Regional Input-Output Model) initiatives.

With this enhanced version, ERETES remains a key instrument for producing reliable, modern, and country-tailored national accounts, empowering statistical systems across Africa and beyond.

Strengthening Statistical Business Registers and Data Science Capacity in Nigeria Bilateral Workshops Held in Abuja: 7–11 April & 13–17 October 2025

In 2025, experts from Statistics Finland conducted two bilateral training workshops in collaboration with Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). The workshops focused on two key areas: the development of a Statistical Business Register (SBR) and the application of machine learning (ML) in statistical production. The workshop series concluded with a certificate ceremony.

Workshop Highlights

April 2025 Training (7–11 April)

The April sessions introduced the installation and testing of StatBus, an open-source platform designed to support scalable national SBR development. Participants engaged in interactive sessions covering:

- National configuration of StatBus
- Importing test data for formal and informal establishments
- Business logic for integrating administrative data
- Validation best practices for administrative data source files
- Demonstrations of R code for data processing

In the data science module, NBS experts explored ML techniques using R, including:

- Data cleaning, validation, and merging
- Classification tasks and regression models
- Applications of ML in imputation and nowcasting

October 2025 Training (13–17 October)

The October workshop focused on the production installation of StatBus and further refinement of administrative data integration. Key topics included:

- Harmonization of statistical units
- Review of Nigeria's current data structures
- Business Logic for importing into StatBus
- Validation of import files and programmatically preparing import files - SBR data insertion



The October training also provided a hands-on module in machine learning and data science, tailored to the needs of national statistical offices (NSOs). Key components included:



- Refresher on R and RStudio for statistical programming
- Advanced data operations, including cleaning, transformation, and merging
- Model building techniques using the CARET and Tidy models packages
- NSO-specific challenges, such as data editing and imputation using the VIM package

- Exploration of data sources, with practical sessions on:
 - o Dashboard creation
 - o Data visualizations
 - o Development of quality indicators

Participant Feedback and Outcomes

Key insights and participant reflections collected from NBS participants were positive, with high ratings for the relevance and impact of the training.

Benefit to Individual Work

Workshop Date	Participants (N)	Average Rating (1–5)
April 2025	25	4.84
October 2025	17	4.76

The workshops were perceived as highly valuable, particularly in relation to the development of Statistical Business Register (SBR). More generally, in terms of organizational outcomes, participants noted meaningful improvements in access to new tools and methods, piloted solutions, adoption of new practices and policies, and enhanced visibility of statistical work.

While the workshops were appreciated for their depth and practical relevance, some of the participants expressed interest in longer training durations and more frequent sessions, including options for remote learning to support continuous capacity-building.

Boosting Data Automation Capacity in Rwanda: Successful Technical Mission with NISR

In June 2025 experts from Statistics Denmark conducted a technical mission to Kigali to support the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) in automating its statistical dissemination workflows.

The mission focused on enhancing NISR's capacity to produce PX files - the core format for the PX-Web-based StatBank Rwanda - using R and the PX-make package. This shift from manual file creation (using PX-Edit and PX-Win) to automated workflows represents a major step forward in improving the efficiency, accuracy, and scalability of data updates.



During the mission, NISR staff received hands-on training covering the entire automation process -from importing datasets into R, transforming them, managing metadata, and exporting structured PX files ready for dissemination. A prototype workflow was developed to demonstrate how microdata can be transformed into dissemination-ready PX files using scripts, significantly reducing manual work and the risk of error.

By the end of the week, all participants were able to independently create PX files using R, and a comprehensive guidebook was shared to support future implementation.

The mission also laid the foundation for a roadmap toward full automation, with key recommendations including:

- Standardising R-based workflows,
- Strengthening metadata practices,
- Automating routine updates (e.g., annual survey tables),
- Piloting the new workflow on selected datasets before wider roll-out.

Looking ahead, further capacity building is planned, where advanced topics such as API integration and website automation will be explored.

This mission reflects the collaborative and forward-looking spirit of the PASII programme, reinforcing Rwanda's efforts to modernize its statistical dissemination and positioning NISR as a regional leader in digital transformation.

From Demonstration to Strategy: A collaborative effort strengthening the SBR development in Namibia Statistics Agency

In April 2025, Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) welcomed a mission of two SBR experts from Statistics Norway (SSB). The main objective of the technical mission was to provide the SSB representatives with a demonstration of the SBR system ahead of its planned launch in June. The SBR team in Namibia had prepared a comprehensive program focusing on content, functionality and quality of the business register. The visit also included an exchange of experience between the two countries, covering topics such as training programs for new SBR staff, frameworks for assessing the status of an SBR system, and input for an SBR strategy.



The demonstration of the SBR system enabled the SSB experts to provide feedback on the system. The discussions and experience-sharing between the two NSO's aimed to contribute valuable input to further development of the SBR system at NSA. Following the visit, a document was prepared outlining the purpose, contents and updates of the SBR. This document now serves as a solid foundation for further work on the SBR strategy.

This was the last bilateral activity between SSB and NSA within the PAS II program.

The collaboration between SSB and NSA has proven to be highly fruitful with exchange of ideas and discussions between expertise in the two NSO's.

Fostering exchanges of experiences through joint online sessions on SBR

Throughout 2025, Statistics Norway organized a series of joint online sessions on SBR between the NSOs of Namibia, Mauritius and Senegal. These sessions started with an introduction to Splink, a tool used for probabilistic data linking. This method is particularly useful when linking multiple datasets without a unique identifier, which is often the case when integrating various data sources into a business register. The session was led by one of the developers behind Splink.

Following this, a session was held focusing on sampling methods and exchange of experience between the countries. Statistics Finland gave a presentation on creating sample frames and drawing samples, while Statistics Mauritius delivered a highly engaging presentation on their transition to a new SBR

system, including successes, challenges and lessons learned. The NSA shared valuable highlights from their document «Purpose, contents and updates of the SBR, which serves as a solid foundation for further development of their SBR strategy.

The collaboration between the NSOs under the SBR component in PAS II culminated in a final joint online session in September, focusing on work with the SBR strategy. Key elements from the drafted strategies were shared offering insights into overall goals for the SBRs, tentative plans for achieving them and both short-term and long-term deliverables.

Driving Innovation in African Statistical Systems: A Game-Changing Visit to Insee!



From February 17-20, a talented group of statisticians came together at Insee to celebrate the success of the 2024 PASII-SOCSTAF hackathon. This initiative brought together winning teams from Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire's Agence Nationale de la Statistique - ANStat, as well as representatives from Benin's Direction de la Statistique Agricole, and National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda.

During the visit, these teams had the unique opportunity to explore Insee's and ministries statistical services of the ministry of Labor, ministry of sustainable development and ministry of agriculture cutting-edge works on alternative data processing. Key discussions revolved around

leveraging scanner data, web scraping, and data extraction from public admin documents—innovations that could reshape how we understand and use statistics across the globe.

At PARIS21, hackathon participants showcased the groundbreaking solutions they developed, while Paris 21 shared insights into their own exciting innovations in the field of statistical transformation.

The visit culminated in a collaborative workshop, where we brainstormed the creation of a methodological guide for organizing future hackathons. This initiative is part of a broader effort to bring together the best practices from across the African continent, building on recommendations from the UNECA at the UN Statistical Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa 2024.



What's clear from this experience? African national statistical institutes are on the brink of something big—unlocking the full potential of alternative data sources, both administrative and private, to drive informed decisions and sustainable development. But the journey doesn't stop here! To fully harness this power, we need a strong coordinated structure to support and amplify these efforts. **The work continues... and the future looks incredibly promising!**

Progress Update: Furthering Business Statistics in Mauritius

The fourth and final onsite mission under Work Package Business Registers took place in Port Louis from 18th to 21st August 2025 with two Statistics Finland experts and for strengthening business statistics in Mauritius. In this expert-level wrap-up mission, the progress made across ten activities (including joint online sessions) carried out with Statistics Mauritius (SM) since 2023 was reviewed, with a focus on how SM could move forward in publishing Short-Term Business Statistics (STS).

The EU set of Short-Term Statistics (STS) indicators was reviewed and an inventory based on data availability was drafted. Potential data sources—both survey-based and administrative—were identified and discussed.

SM experts presented their plan for publishing monthly business demography data. This plan was further refined in collaboration with the mission team to prepare it for publication. A clear roadmap was drafted for integrating SM's statistical publication process into the new MauStats system, with future potential to expand this to PX-Web-based statistical tables.



The new MauStat Statistical Business Register (SBR) system is now actively used by the SBR team. The system was demonstrated during the mission and received positive feedback from both BC and MS experts, who expressed satisfaction with its new functionalities.

Obstacles to producing and publishing business statistics have been addressed. A development path has been agreed to implement the full production process. Four categories of recommendations were provided, covering:

- Use of administrative data
- Statistical publications
- Short-term business statistics
- Cross-cutting issues such as response burden



Throughout the activity, a spirit of open and constructive cooperation prevailed. All items on the mission agenda were successfully addressed, and a way forward was agreed upon for each category.

From Administrative Records to Trusted Statistics: A Shared Journey Across Continents



From **July 9 to 11 2025**, Casablanca hosted a high-level forum on the use of administrative data for official statistics, organized by the European programme PASII, African Union Institute for Statistics - STATAFRIC and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

The event brought together a rich diversity of participants: representatives from African Union member states (both data providers and national statistics offices), experts from European countries and delegates from major international statistical institutions. Teams from PASII-ECOBUSAF and SOCSTAF (Statistics Denmark, Statistics Finland, Statistics Norway, INE-Spain, Insee-France) actively contributed by showcasing practical use cases and highlighting the critical role of institutional partnerships to ensure both data access and data quality.



Forum objectives:



- Raise awareness among data holders on the value of administrative data
- Share African and European experiences — from challenges to achievements
- Strengthen dialogue and trust between data providers and statistical producers

One strong takeaway:

The success of administrative data projects depends on 3 essential Cs:

 Cooperation, Collaboration, Communication

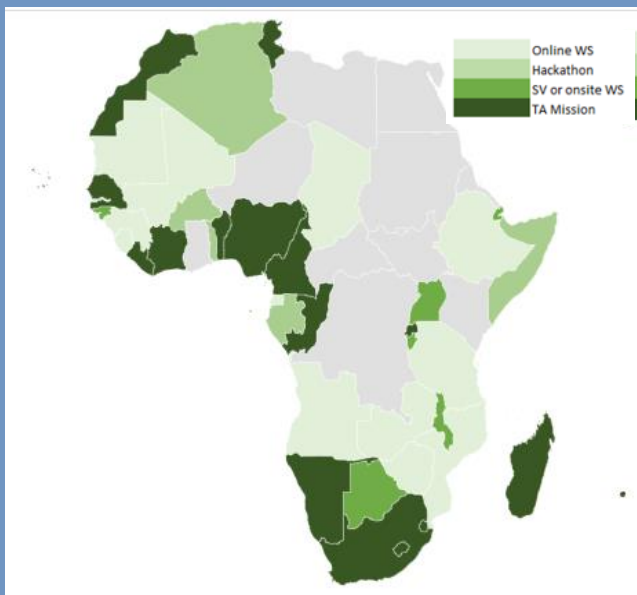
While the forum celebrated impressive efforts in African countries, it also drew inspiration from European examples — particularly the Nordic model, where up to 90% of official statistics are based on administrative data.

These models are not meant to be copied and pasted, but rather adapted to national contexts — legal, institutional, and cultural.

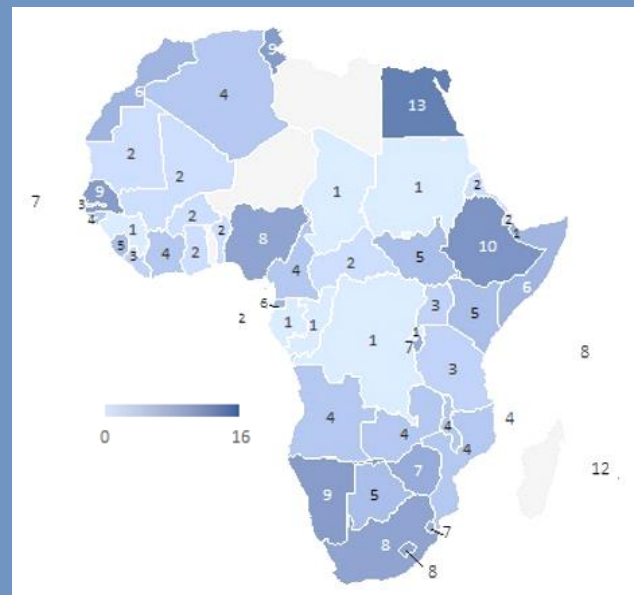
✦ This event could be a stepping stone toward wider use of administrative data in Africa, backed by peer learning, knowledge sharing, and mutual trust.



Countries that have participated to our activities since the start of the project

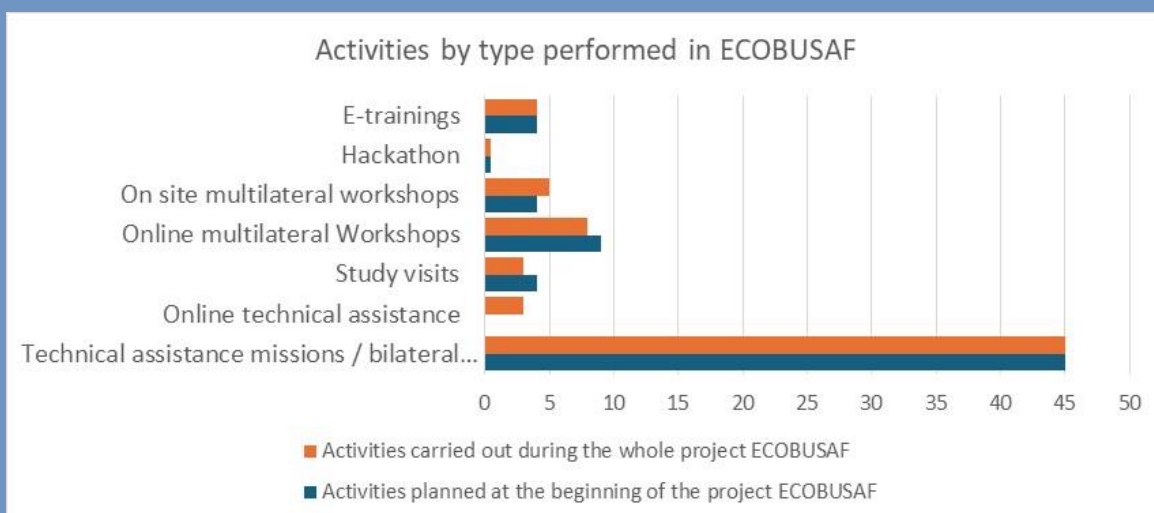


Type of followed activities

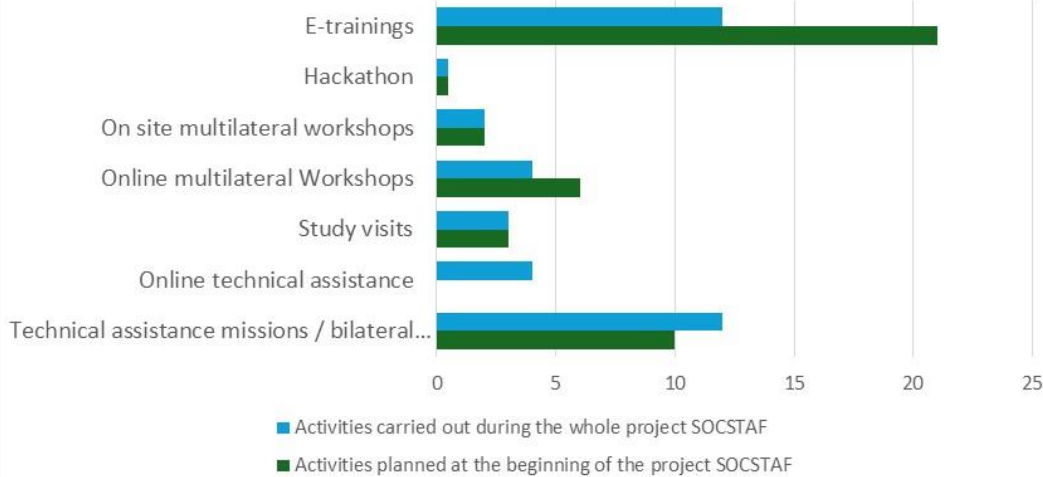


Number of online attended trainings

Number of activities carried out all along the ECOBUSAF and SOCSTAF projects



Activities by type performed in SOCSTAF



List of activities carried out in 2025 by component

Implementing member	Grant	Component	Countries	Type of activity	Content	Date (month)
 Insee Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF	I-A-3	Madagascar	TA mission	ERETES implementation	January
 Insee Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF	I-A-1	Madagascar	TA mission	Supporting 2008-SNA implementation	January
 Insee Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF	I-A-3	Tunisia	TA mission	ERETES implementation	January
 Insee Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF	I-A-3	Liberia	TA mission	ERETES implementation	February
 Insee Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF SOCSTAF	I-B-3/D2	Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Rwanda	Study visit	Post hackathon study visit	February
 Insee Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF	I-B1	Multi-country	Online WS	Training WS on the presentation of the new ERETES version	February
 Statistisk sentralbyrå Statistics Norway	ECOBUSAF	II-A	Namibia	TA mission	Content, functionality and quality of the SBR	March
 Insee Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF	I-A-2E	Cape Verde	TA mission	Semi-automatic balancing of supply and use balance	April
 Insee Mesurer pour comprendre	SOCSTAF	H	Eswatini	TA mission	Informal employment survey	April
 Statistics Finland	ECOBUSAF SOCSTAF	II-A D2	Nigeria	Bilateral workshop	Statistical Business Register (SBR) and New Data Sources, Part II	April

 Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF	I-A-3	Madagascar	TA mission	Capacity building on Business censuses for national accounts purposes	May
 Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF	I-A4	Multi-country	Onsite WS	ERETES training for trainer	May
 Statistisk sentralbyrå Statistics Norway	ECOBUSAF	II-A	Namibia, Senegal, Mauritius	Online session	Linking of administrative data	May
 Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF	I-A-3	Madagascar	TA mission	ERETES implementation	June
 Mesurer pour comprendre  STATISTICS DENMARK	ECOBUSAF SOCSTAF	Coord.	Mauritius	TA mission	Evaluation of the ECOBUSAF and SOCSTAF programmes	June
			Côte d'Ivoire			June
 Statistisk sentralbyrå Statistics Norway  Statistics Finland  STATISTICS DENMARK	ECOBUSAF	II-A	Namibia, Mauritius	Online session	Creating sample frames/draw samples from SBR, experience from SBR system transition and SBR strategy	June
 STATISTICS DENMARK	SOCSTAF	E	Rwanda	TA mission	PX Web and R	June
 Mesurer pour comprendre  STATISTICS DENMARK  Statistics Finland  Instituto Nacional de Estadística  Statistisk sentralbyrå Statistics Norway	ECOBUSAF SOCSTAF		Multi-country	Conference	Contribution to the forum on administrative data	July
 Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF	I-C	Multi-country	Onsite WS	Communicating the results of the ECOBUSAF activities	July
 Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF	I-A-2A	Senegal	TA mission	Backasting	July
 Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF	I-A-3	Liberia	TA mission	ERETES implementation	August
 Statistics Finland	ECOBUSAF SOCSTAF	II-A	Mauritius	TA mission	The development of SBR and production of Business Statistics	August
 Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF	I-A-2B	Cameroon	TA mission	Balance sheets and financial accounts	September

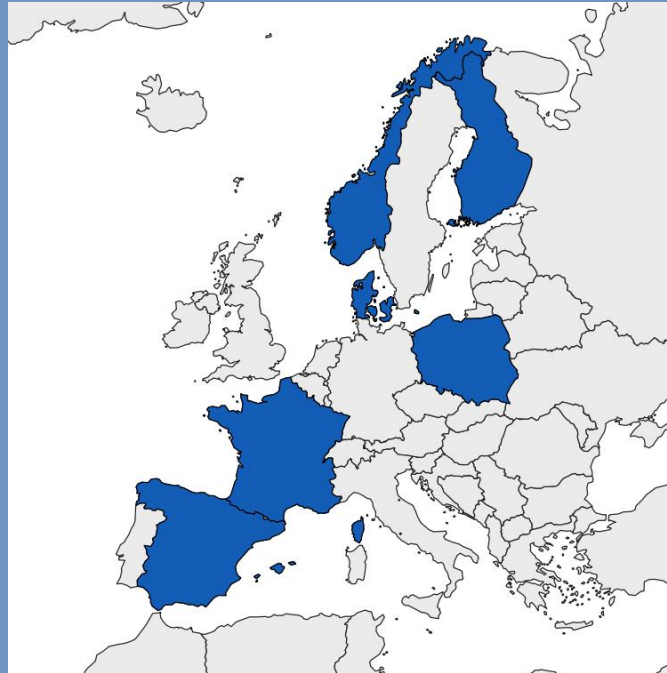
 Statistisk sentralbyrå Statistics Norway  	ECOBUSAF	II-A	Namibia, Mauritius	Online session	SBR strategy	September
 Insee Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF	I-A-3	Tunisia	TA mission	ERETES implementation	September
 Insee Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF	I-A-2A	Senegal	TA mission	Backasting	September
 Insee Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF	I-A-2C	Côte d'Ivoire	TA mission	Tourism satellite accounts	October
 Insee Mesurer pour comprendre	ECOBUSAF	I-B-2	Morocco	TA mission	Households distributed accounts	October
	SOCSTAF	H1	Lesotho	TA mission	Administrative data for labour market statistics	October
 Statistics Finland	ECOBUSAF SOCSTAF	II-A D2	Nigeria	Bilateral workshop	Statistical Business Register (SBR) and New Data Sources, Part III	October
	SOCSTAF	E	Rwanda	Study visit	Administrative data, quality insurance and data governance	October



Online trainings carried out in 2025

PASII component	Subject
SOCSTAF	Online course on Demographic Indicators (4 th edition) - March 2025 Online training on Health Statistics (3 rd edition) – May 2025 Online training on Education Statistics (3 rd edition) – June 2025
ECOBUSAF	Online course on National Accounts (3 rd edition)

European countries involved in the PASII-ECOBUSAF and SOCSTAF projects



The SOCSTAF and ECOBUSAF European team during the Copenhagen coordination meeting (September 2025)

From left to right: Kari-Dorte Krogsrud (Statistics Norway), Anna Slawinska (Statistics Poland), Dorota Paraluk (Statistics Poland), Malgorzata Pietrzyk (Statistics Poland) Mari Rantanen (Statistics Finland), Marika Pohjola (Statistics Finland), Ana Canovas Zapata (INE-Spain), Teresa Paradinas Zorrilla (INE-Spain) Dominique Francoz (Insee-France), Klaus Munch Haagensen (Statistics Denmark), Janne Utkilen (Statistics Norway)