



DISSEMINATION POLICY OF STATISTICS ESTONIA

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FOREWORD

The main task of Statistics Estonia (hereinafter SE) is to produce official statistics: to collect, process, analyse, publish and archive data. SE is a government institution that operates in the area of government of the Ministry of Finance. SE's role and main tasks are stipulated by the Official Statistics Act.

In Estonia there are two producers of official statistics: SE and Eesti Pank (the central bank of Estonia). Eesti Pank collects data for producing and publishing the necessary monetary, financial and balance of payments statistics in accordance with the provisions and procedure stipulated in the Eesti Pank (Bank of Estonia) Act and the Official Statistics Act.

Statistics Estonia's objectives proceed from the mission. According to the mission statement, the main task of Statistics Estonia is to provide reliable and objective information about Estonia.

Globalisation and the development of information technology have caused changes in the need for statistics: users need an increasing amount of relevant and reliable information more quickly. As the amount of information in the world is continuously growing, it is more and more important to present statistics in a compact and understandable way. The results of marketing surveys indicate that users do not only need numeric data but also interpretation of the numbers.

The providers of statistics have to be receptive to changes and ready to measure the complicated developments in the society and to communicate the results of these measurements. SE has to provide official statistics that are internationally comparable – that is, the statistics must reflect the place of Estonia among other countries and the position of Estonians among other nations; they should allow the comparison of quality of life, the state of the environment and other aspects in Estonia and in other countries. It is also important to provide the users with comparable statistics on different regions of Estonia.

SE is one of the providers on the information market and has a unique position as the main producer of official statistics. The user's decision whether official statistics are useful for him/her depends on the extent to which the available statistics meet his/her needs. As far as respondents are concerned, SE is one data collector among others. In the collection of data from private individuals, SE competes with research companies. As concerns legal persons, data collection is regulated by the law, but the respondents' cooperative attitude is also a prerequisite for successful cooperation.

It is the task of the Marketing and Dissemination Department to identify users' needs and to develop and disseminate the statistical output accordingly. This task is fulfilled in cooperation with other departments of SE. For this purpose, dissemination activities have been defined, comprising dissemination (incl. sales), marketing surveys, product design, price policy, selection of distribution channels, and support measures. All of these activities follow the principles of this dissemination policy.

The dissemination policy of SE is based on the [Official Statistics Act](#), [Regulation \(EC\) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European statistics](#) and the [European Statistics Code of Practice](#).

Statistical Council

The Statistical Council is an advisory body for Statistics Estonia in the production of official statistics. The Council was established in 2010 and consists of the representatives of Statistics Estonia, Eesti Pank and the Data Protection Inspectorate as well as the representatives of users and respondents. The objective of the Statistical Council is to ensure, by giving advice and delivering opinions, the functioning of the official statistical system. The membership and rules of procedure of the Council are published on SE's [website](#).

The Scientific Council of Social Statistics was established in 2007. The Council's input is used in the planning of statistical actions in social statistics and in the review of the concepts of analytical publications in this field.

The Council of Regional Statistics was established in 2009. The Council advises on the development of regional statistics and the analysis of regional development.

The Scientific Council of the Population and Housing Census operated in a specific period before and during the 2011 census. The Council's task was to ensure the fulfilment of the census objectives.

General principles of dissemination of official statistics

Dissemination of statistics means that the statistics are made available to the public. The release and dissemination of statistical information at SE is centralised and coordinated by the Marketing and Dissemination Department.

Pursuant to the Official Statistics Act, users have to be notified of the release dates of statistics three months in advance. Therefore, the release calendar for the following calendar year is published on the website not later than three months before the beginning of the following calendar year. On 1 October each year, the release dates of the Statistical Database, news releases, public use files and IMF main indicators in the following year are announced in the release calendar, plus the release months of publications. This ensures the equal treatment of users through simultaneous access to official statistics.

The following principles are observed in the dissemination and distribution of official statistics:

- All users must have equal access to official statistics: this means that the dissemination dates of official statistics have to be announced in advance and no user category (incl. Eurostat, state authorities and mass media) can have access to official statistics before other users.
- The dissemination of official statistics must be impartial and transparent: this means that neither political comments nor comments of governmental authorities are added to official statistics.
- Official statistics are first published in the Statistical Database. In case a news release is published based on the same data, the relevant news release is published simultaneously with the first release of the data in the Statistical Database.
- In news releases, statistical publications etc. the data from the Statistical Database are used. This guarantees that the user finds identical data in all channels.
- Official statistics are always distributed with metadata and unambiguous explanations in order to avoid misinterpretations and misuse.
- SE comments on the misinterpretation, misuse and criticism of official statistics.
- To ensure statistical confidentiality and prevent human errors, SE has established specific procedures (the employees sign a confidentiality agreement; the Statistical Database is updated automatically). IT-related requirements are described in the IT-system user guidelines.
- The production of statistics included in the official statistical programme is financed from the state budget and these statistics are available free of charge. Users have to pay for hard copies of statistical publications and for orders for information not included in the statistical programme.

- All materials published and information letters (mass mail) sent to clients are subject to editing and proofreading (excl. materials published on the Intranet).
- The design and lay-out of any materials published have to meet SE's guidelines.

The principles of dissemination and distribution of official statistics are based on:

- the [Official Statistics Act](#);
- the guidelines of the [IMF Special Data Dissemination Standard](#) (SDDS);
- the [European Statistics Code of Practice](#);
- [SE's mission statement](#).

The dissemination and distribution of official statistics as public information is indirectly governed by the [Public Information Act](#) of the Republic of Estonia.

Quality indicators of statistics

Official statistics have to comply with internationally approved quality requirements observed by every producer of official statistics in every country and international organisation. The following quality requirements apply to the dissemination of statistics:

Relevance

The production of statistics is related to clearly established requirements arising from the objectives – the statistics meet users' needs. Only so much data should be collected as is necessary to achieve the necessary results.

Accuracy

The quality indicators are published on the website, in quality reports and in methodological reports. All users are simultaneously notified of planned revisions and the publication of results.

Timeliness

The release calendar covers the entire output. If specific timeliness standards have not been defined, the statistics are published in accordance with best practice, that is, within the next period after the reporting deadline (annual statistics are published in the following year; quarterly statistics are published in the following quarter; monthly statistics are published in the following month).

Punctuality

All releases are announced in advance. The release calendar is based on the IMF Special Data Dissemination Standard. The release calendar for the following year is published on the website no later than on 1 October of the preceding year. Changes in release dates are announced at least 3 months in advance.

Accessibility

Statistics are disseminated using contemporary information and communication technology and traditional hard copy, if appropriate. The website and the Statistical Database are the main dissemination channels. The statistics can be disseminated further in different formats. Customer support is available for users.

Comparability

Statistics are comparable over a reasonable period of time. In case of changes in methodology, the time series are recalculated using the new methodology, if possible. The length of comparable time series is specified in the ESMS metadata of the relevant statistical action.

Coherence

Metadata, methodology reports, explanations and links to international guidelines are available on the website. Statistics are produced on the basis of common standards, regardless of the specific statistical action or data source.

Protection of statistical confidentiality and privacy policy

Data protection is guaranteed upon the dissemination of official statistics. Pursuant to the Official Statistics Act, Statistics Estonia shall disseminate data collected for the production of official statistics only in a form that precludes the possibility of direct or indirect identification of a statistical unit unless otherwise provided by the Act. Statistical unit is a natural or legal person whose data have been collected, processed and disseminated.

Pursuant to the principle of statistical confidentiality, the data on respondents can only be used for statistical purposes, meaning that the data cannot be used for administrative, legal, taxation or monitoring purposes. Thus, it is prohibited to disseminate statistics for use for these purposes. The data are not released to the court or the police.

The principle of statistical confidentiality also applies to aggregate data, i.e. results obtained before the release date specified in the release calendar, since SE is required to ensure equal access to official statistics for all users.

Upon the dissemination of the data of sample surveys, the reliability criteria is applied in addition to confidentiality requirements. Depending on the survey, data based on fewer than 20 or 30 respondents are not published, as the data are too uncertain for publication.

Data that allow the identification of a statistical unit may be made available without the consent of the person pursuant to the relevant provisions of the Official Statistics Act. The institution wishing to use the data for scientific purposes shall submit a written application to SE requesting access to data. The applicant is notified of the approval or rejection of the application within 15 working days from the receipt of the application requesting the specific information.

Personal data are obtained during the collection of data for the production of official statistics. In addition to that, SE may obtain personal data through requests or orders for information, during the conduct of customer surveys, during recruitment etc. Pursuant to the Public Information Act, the correspondence of SE has to be publicly available on the website, while the contact details and other information concerning private individuals are confidential (in accordance with the inviolability of the private life of persons) and access to such data is restricted by law. The [privacy policy](#) published on SE's website describes how the collected information is used and protected.

Dissemination and distribution of official statistics

Release dates

The release dates of statistics are published in the release calendar, which is available on the [website](#). On 1 October, the release dates of the Statistical Database, news releases, public use files, IMF main indicators and publications (release month is specified for publications) in the following year are announced in the release calendar. Blog posts are published irregularly and the publication dates of blog posts are not announced in the release calendar – blog posts are not first releases of statistics.

Official statistics are available on the website from 8:00 on the announced date. Data in most web-based products (pre-defined tables, e-publication "Piirkondlik portree Eestist" providing regional statistics) are updated automatically at 8:00 on the announced date, using data from the Statistical Database. Hard copies of publications are available at the information centre from 9:00.

The release dates of extraordinary news releases are not announced in advance in the release calendar if the news releases are not related to the dissemination of statistics, if they concern crisis communication (for example, in case of misuse of official statistics) or relate to special events (e.g. missions from other statistical organisations, etc.). Also, these news releases may not be published at the traditional time (8:00) – the most favourable release time is chosen depending on the contents of the news release.

Revisions

Revisions are adjustments of statistical data which are:

- a) planned
 - regular (i.e. routine revisions)
 - irregular (i.e. major revisions)
- b) unplanned (correction of errors).

Regular revisions are related to the statistics production process – already published data are revised upon the receipt of additional data (preliminary estimates are replaced with final values derived from the data submitted by respondents). This is customary in certain subject areas where preliminary data are published to ensure timeliness.

Irregular revisions are related to methodological improvements – definitions and classifications are changed, the base year is changed, new data sources are introduced etc. Irregular revisions have to be scheduled so that several changes are published at once, i.e. irregular revisions should be as rare as possible.

Announcement of revisions

Users have to be simultaneously notified of planned revisions and the publication of the results. According to the IMF Special Data Dissemination Standard, users have to be notified of the release date of revised data three months in advance. In case of major revisions, users also have to be notified of the extent of revisions – how much the revised values have changed.

In case of regular revisions (publication of preliminary and final data), both release dates are included in the release calendar. Information about the release of revised data is also included in relevant news releases. In case of irregular revisions, the release date of revised data is announced in the release calendar three months in advance. Also, information about the conduct of revisions and the release date of the results is provided at the end of relevant news releases at least three months before the publication of revised data. In case of major revisions (e.g. GDP), a written notice is sent to relevant users at least three months prior to the release of revised data. On the release date of revised data, a detailed overview is published on the website (incl. the reasons and impact of the revision) and user briefings are organised, if necessary.

Publication of preliminary and final data

Preliminary data are published only in certain subject areas in order to ensure the timeliness of statistics. Preliminary data are always followed by final data.

In the release calendar, separate dates are shown for the publication of preliminary data and final data in the Statistical Database. When the data are preliminary, the release is marked as “preliminary data” in the calendar. When the published data are final, there is no note in the calendar.

When preliminary data are published, a footnote is added to the table (e.g. “The data for 2012 are preliminary”). When the final data are published, the note about preliminary data is removed.

Notification of corrections

The discovered errors (excl. misprints) are classified as follows:

- minor errors – errors that will probably not mislead the general public in the interpretation of the statistical data, because the error is either logically identifiable or statistically not relevant (i.e. within the limits of statistical error);
- major errors – errors entailing a realistic possibility that the general public will interpret the statistical data incorrectly. The head of the relevant subject-matter department is immediately informed of such errors.

Minor errors are corrected only in the electronic output; in case of printed publications they are not corrected. If a minor error is discovered, the Marketing and Dissemination Department is informed and shall correct the error as soon as possible. In case of electronic publications, the correction is marked with a red asterisk and a note saying “Corrected on dd.mm.yyyy” is

added on the relevant page in the publication and also to the description of the product on SE's website. In case of the Statistical Database, a note saying "The data have been revised on dd.mm.yyyy" is published with the table. Misprints are corrected without adding any notes, if they do not affect the interpretation of statistical data.

Major errors are corrected as soon as possible. In case of electronic publications, the correction is marked with a red asterisk and a note saying "Corrected on dd.mm.yyyy" is added on the relevant page in the publication and also to the description of the product on SE's website. In case of the Statistical Database, a note saying "The data have been revised on dd.mm.yyyy" is published with the table.

In case of printed publications, a corrigendum notice is added to the publication and the Marketing and Dissemination Department notifies all subscribers (who can be identified retroactively) of the correction(s).

Correction of news releases

If errors are identified in a news release, the person who prepared the release shall notify the head of department and the Communications Manager. The Communications Manager will send out a corrigendum notice to the journalists who subscribed to the news release, drawing attention to the incorrect paragraph or table and asking them to consider the new data as correct. A notification about the date when the news release was corrected is published on the website (e.g. "The news release 'In April the decrease in retail sales continued' published on 29 May was corrected on 8 June."). The link opens the HTML version of the news release, where the same information is displayed and the correction is marked in the text in a different colour. The notification is displayed on the website for five working days. The notification of a correction is published on the website if the correction is made within two weeks from the publication of the respective news release. The notification of a correction to a news release published more than two weeks ago is displayed on the website if there was a major error that could cause incorrect interpretation by the general public.

Registration of errors

All discovered errors (excl. misprints) are registered. Records are kept of the errors occurring in news releases, publications and databases. The number of errors is registered by type of product.

Analysis of all the errors in a given year helps to identify the main reasons for errors and to plan improvement measures in order to prevent errors in the future and maintain or improve the quality of the statistics published.

Misinterpretation, misuse and criticism of official statistics

Misinterpretation of official statistics means that, due to the lack of better knowledge of the subject area, the correct statistical indicators have been put into a context where it would be better to use other statistical indicators or add something to the parameters used, in order to draw any conclusions.

Misuse of official statistics means drawing arbitrary conclusions on the basis of correct or incorrect data.

In case of the misinterpretation or misuse of official statistics, Statistics Estonia will always act pursuant to the following principles. If official statistics have been misinterpreted or misused, the Communications Manager (or subject to his/her approval, a representative of the relevant subject-matter department) will contact the user in question, draw attention to the misinterpretation or misuse of data and provide the correct information. In case of misinterpretation or misuse in the media, the Communications Manager will coordinate with the editor whether a notification of the error, an explanatory article written by SE or an interview with a representative of SE will be published by the media channel to explain the misinterpretation or misuse. If necessary, SE may publish the explanation in the form of a news release.

In case of the criticism of official statistics, SE will act in the same way as in case of the misinterpretation and misuse of statistics.

Copyright

The entire statistical output is an object of copyright and protected by the Copyright Act. Although copyright in a work arises upon the moment of creation of the work by the author and no separate notification thereof is required, all statistical publications include the note "Autoriõigus/Copyright: Statistikaamet / Statistics Estonia" and also the note "When using or quoting the data included in this issue, please indicate the source". The Copyright symbol is not legally valid in Estonia and is not used.

Users may make copies of statistical publications for their own use, but such copies may not be used for any commercial gain. A reference must be made to SE whenever SE's data are used publicly.

Referring to the data source

If SE uses the data collected and produced by other organisations, references to the data source are made in the output (publication, database, etc.) as follows.

- In the Statistical Database, references are given under "Definitions and Methodology". Footnotes under the table are not used to provide a reference to the data source.
- In publications, no reference to the data source is added to a table, figure or thematic map if the data used are part of official statistics (included in the official statistical programme). In this case, the reference has to be provided under Methodology or a list of references has to be provided in the publication. If the data come from a source not included in the official statistical programme (Eurostat; a research company etc.), the reference should be added right under the respective table/figure/map. If a figure contains both external data (e.g. Eurostat's data) and SE's data, a reference to SE has to be made as well.

Visual identity

The official name of the institution is Statistikaamet; Statistics Estonia in English. "Eesti Statistika" in Estonian (or "Statistics Estonia" in English) is used in the trademark and refers to the product, not the institution. The trademark consists of the symbol and the logotype. If necessary, the abbreviation of the institution's name is used (**SA** in Estonian and **SE** in English). There are certain principles which govern the combined use of SE's logo and a supporter's logo – these are available on the Intranet.

The visual identity used since February 2006 aims to give SE the image of a progressive and user-friendly institution that tries to take greater account of the needs of statistics users and respondents.

SE's visual identity is reflected in all documents, printed materials and gifts representing SE: both official documents and items for external use and less official documents and items for internal use. The visual identity symbolises SE's values, attitudes and work ethic. The principles of visual identity are also followed in the electronic output. Implementation of the principles of visual identity is the responsibility of the General Department.

Users of statistics

Segmentation of users

Users of official statistics include all legal and natural persons who use official statistics. Different users need different types of statistics. The following user groups can be identified based on the frequency of use of statistics and/or the user's importance (participation in the statistics production process; dissemination of statistics to the general public; use of statistics for important decisions concerning the society):

1. **Infrequent users** – use statistics infrequently or randomly, mostly interested in basic data;

2. **Main users** – use statistics regularly or (actively) in specific periods; mostly use the statistics for analysis, decision-making, further dissemination etc.;
3. **Key users** – mostly use very detailed statistics, incl. micro-data; use the data collected for official statistics to create new value for the society and/or participate in the preparation of the statistical programme and the development of statistics.

In addition to statistics users, Statistics Estonia has other important stakeholders and partners: respondents and data providers (incl. entities maintaining state registers), other producers of official statistics (Eesti Pank; in the future also the National Institute for Health Development), members of the European Statistical System and Eurostat, statistical councils, the Ministry of Finance, IT development companies, Riigi Kinnisvara AS, Eesti Post, the IT Centre of the Ministry of Finance, the State Shared Service Centre, printing companies, universities, state institutions. There is some overlap between different stakeholder groups – for example, some respondents are also users of statistics; several partners are also respondents and/or statistics users, etc.

Pyramid of user needs

Key users

Mostly use very detailed statistics, incl. micro-data; use the data collected for official statistics to create new value for the society and/or participate in the preparation of the statistical programme and the development of statistics.

MICRO-DATA

- ✓ Plan future developments
- ✓ Make models and projections
- ✓ Do research

Main users

Use statistics regularly or (actively) in specific periods – for analysis, decision-making, further dissemination etc.

DETAILED STATISTICS

- ✓ Analyse the current situation and make the necessary decisions
- ✓ Disseminate statistical data
- ✓ Use in studies (e.g. students)

Infrequent users

Use statistics infrequently or randomly, mostly interested in basic data.

BASIC DATA

- ✓ Study the general economic and social background
- ✓ Get information

Feedback and measurement of results

In the production of official statistics, it is important to identify users' needs, to foresee the information need of the society and to act accordingly. For this purpose, Statistics Estonia constantly monitors the use of statistics, users' satisfaction and the impact of marketing activities.

The information registered in the customer relationship management system Kunde helps to organise sales campaigns (e.g. define and analyse target groups), register the information received in the course of sales campaigns (e.g. update contact details, register non-response) and analyse data related to campaigns (sales results by target groups).

Information about customers' needs (incl. statistics users and respondents) is collected from different sources: marketing surveys, coordination of statistical actions with regular customers, the customer relationship management system Kunde, feedback from promotional campaigns and user training seminars.

Marketing surveys

Organisation of marketing surveys is a part of bilateral communication with users. Through these surveys, users give feedback about their needs and level of satisfaction. SE conducts marketing surveys since 1996. At least once a year, both existing and potential users are surveyed.

The following topics are studied regularly: users' satisfaction with SE and the information offered by SE, users' awareness of SE's output, the need for statistical information and users' preferences when using statistics. In order to limit the response burden for the target groups, SE usually combines different topics in a single survey, i.e. elements of reputation, satisfaction and user behaviour surveys. Product development surveys are conducted when necessary to collect information and suggestions for the development of the statistical output. Web-based surveys are preferred and, if necessary, combined with qualitative surveying (focus group, interviews etc.).

Coordination of statistical actions

When coordinating statistical actions with regular customers, SE collects feedback to update the statistical programme. There are approximately 100 entities on the list of regular customers, who are asked to submit proposals regarding the following year's programme – their input should be based on the descriptions of statistical actions available on SE's website. Proposals are asked from customers who are active users of statistics and/or whose activity has a substantial influence on the society and who therefore need to be provided with statistical information.

The regular customers are:

- government institutions (Chancellery of the Riigikogu, Supreme Court, Government Office, National Audit Office, Office of the President of the Republic, ministries, administrations and boards, inspectorates, county governments);
- trade and business associations (representing companies);
- educational and research institutions (Estonian Academy of Sciences, universities, institutes);
- associations of local municipalities (representing local governments).

Proposals are also asked from data providers (e.g. the Estonian Health Insurance Fund) who provide administrative data for statistical actions.

The list of regular customers is updated every year considering the use of statistics by enterprises/institutions/organisations (subscriptions to publications, orders for information, etc.).

The users' needs are first analysed by the subject-matter departments and then by the Planning Committee. The committee lists the actions in order of priority, taking into account various aspects (the existence of a relevant European regulation, availability of resources, impact on the society, relation to any planned strategies or policies, number of users etc.). The Planning Committee also considers which statistical actions received the biggest number of suggestions, which topics are the most important for users, which topics are proposed again year after year, and so on.

Also, the Statistical Council formulates its opinion before the Official Statistical Programme is sent to the Government of the Republic for final approval. Users receive feedback about the implementation of their proposals.

Statistical output

Official statistics are public information produced pursuant to the Official Statistics Act, and thus are a part of the infrastructure of a democratic society.

Official statistics:

- are produced in the interest of the society;
- are equally accessible to everyone;
- are produced with state budget funds;
- are produced within the framework of the statistical programme or as non-programme actions;
- comply with internationally approved quality indicators.

In addition to statistics produced as part of the statistical programme, SE may perform non-programme statistical actions funded by external clients. With this service, users can get statistics tailored to their needs. SE also offers various information services that help users or respondents to easily find the necessary information.

The statistics produced by SE are divided by subject area. There are four main subject areas (environment, economy, population, social life) and statistics on specific topics. There are also publications and materials where several subject areas are combined.

Development of the statistical output

SE monitors the users' needs on a regular basis. Most of the information is acquired through communication with regular customers (ministries, government institutions, inspectorates, educational and research institutions, and representatives of the business sector) and from marketing surveys. In addition to this, SE collects this information during promotional campaigns, from consultants and as feedback given in user training seminars.

The development of the statistical output is closely related to statistical actions (e.g. a statistical survey, census, statistical publication). In cooperation with the subject-matter departments, the Marketing and Dissemination Department decides what kind of statistical output should be produced using the data collected with statistical actions. To make this decision, SE considers users' needs, the importance of the output for target groups, and users' preferences (e.g. which statistics are needed and in which format), but also the best practice in other countries.

To ensure consistency in product development, SE has appointed product managers for the main items of statistical output. In the development of new statistical products and services, SE considers which statistics are needed not only by users in Estonia but also by Eurostat and other International organisations.

The production of statistical output will be terminated when there is no demand for the respective subject area or when the data are no longer available.

Planning of the analytical output

Users need analyses that explain the published figures and describe the processes in the society. Therefore, SE's goal is to increase its analytical capability. Analyses are published in the publications and on the statistics blog. The purpose of the blog is to provide statistical analysis on topical issues. This format is used when there is an urgent need to draw attention to some phenomenon, or to publish brief overviews of fields of statistics. Blog posts are published irregularly and their publishing dates are not announced in the release calendar.

An analytical publication contains statistics of one or several subject areas. The output is planned in advance for four years; the plan is revised at the beginning of each year.

In case of publications, the month of release (or specific date) is indicated in the release calendar for the year.

Publication of international statistics

SE also publishes international statistics on its website and in publications. The sub-section "Statistics / [International Statistics](#)" includes pre-defined tables. There are also links to the Eurostat, UN and OECD databases and to the websites of national statistical institutions and international organisations. Links to the Eurostat, UN and OECD databases are also provided on the start page of the Statistical Database.

For the transmission of data to Eurostat, the special transmission channel eDAMIS is used. Since Eurostat is regarded as a client of SE, the data which are delivered to Eurostat have to be published in the Statistical Database at the same time.

If necessary, links to other institutions and organisations may be published in the relevant sub-section on the website or in the Statistical Database (under Definitions and Methodology for the relevant tables).

The statistical publications of national statistical institutions and international organisations are available in the library at SE's information centre. The information centre also operates as a support centre of EU statistics in Estonia, where information about the availability of EU statistics is provided (for more, see the section "Services offered by Statistics Estonia").

Division of statistical output

The statistics published by SE are divided into three categories based on the level of detail.

Basic data

Pre-defined tables

The pre-defined tables contain basic data on subject areas. The tables are based on tables published in the Statistical Database and feature the unique code of the corresponding database table. The pre-defined tables are updated automatically whenever the data in the Statistical Database are updated.

News releases

A news release is a brief, news-like piece of information presenting a selection of recently produced official statistics. News releases notify the public of the completion and availability of fresh data in a certain subject area of statistics. Separate news releases are published to notify the public of conferences organised by SE or of other major events. News releases are published on the front page of SE's website and sent to journalists by e-mail. The rest of users can order the news release notification – subscribers will receive a notification by e-mail when a news release is published.

Statistics blog

The blog is tool for promoting official statistics, for improving statistical literacy and for establishing the contributors as opinion leaders. The blog is also a place for information that cannot be published in SE's traditional channels (news releases, publications). The blog can be used to draw wider attention to important issues in the European Statistical System or in the Estonian society, to highlight recent trends or to present new indicators that are already in use or planned to be implemented. The blog is managed by the Communications Manager who coordinates the blog posts and ensures that comments left under posts are answered. One or two blog posts are published per week.

"Estonian statistics" app for smart devices

The app offers convenient access to official statistics on smart devices. It includes the main indicators of most subject areas. Statistical information can be displayed as figures, thematic maps and tables. The latest news releases, blog posts and statistical publications can also be accessed through the app.

Calculators

The consumer price index calculator allows users to calculate the monthly, quarterly and annual change of the consumer price index (CPI).

The purchasing power calculator allows users to compare the purchasing power of a sum of money (income, wages, savings etc.) in different years.

Population pyramid

The interactive population pyramid shows the population change in Estonia since 1923 and population projections up to the year 2050. In case of projections, users can select one of two options, each based on a different assumption. By navigating on the pyramid, it is possible to view the population by age and year of birth or the population of selected age groups.

Thematic maps

Thematic maps are graphic presentations of statistics. Thematic maps show the value of a statistical indicator in different parts of the country, using various colours, patterns and raster graphics. On SE's website, there are thematic maps about different subject areas. The maps allow users to compare the indicators in different counties and rural municipalities.

International statistics

Users who need statistics about the European Union countries can contact SE's information centre which is the support centre of EU statistics in Estonia. Some indicators are published on the website in pre-defined tables (main indicators of European countries by subject area and Europe 2020 indicators).

Detailed statistics

Statistical Database

The aim of the Statistical Database is to present all the official statistics that are published. The database is available on the website www.stat.ee free of charge since 2001 and is constantly updated. In addition to the latest statistics, the database includes data for previous periods and all available time series. The database is published in Estonian and in English.

The Statistical Database allows users to choose the table elements and select the required indicators. The defined tables or data can be viewed on the screen (two layout options) or saved in different formats (PC-Axis, Excel, CSV, DBF etc.). PC-Axis software can be downloaded free of charge – users can generate their own database.

Statistics map application

The statistics map application is an interactive tool for presenting geo-referenced statistics on maps, downloading spatial data and performing spatial queries. The statistics map application mainly contains the data of the Population and Housing Census but it also includes statistics related to the environment, economy, social life and the Agricultural Census.

People can use the map application to create thematic maps, download the relevant data tables or map data, and view graphs of various regions.

Regional statistics portal

The regional statistics portal (Piirkondliku statistika portaal) is an Estonian-only environment on SE's website. All SE's products that are related to regional statistics are available from this portal. The main goal is to make it easier to find regional statistics.

Statistical publications

Every year during the compilation of the release calendar, the Marketing and Dissemination Department specifies the print runs of printed publications, taking into account the experience

of the previous year and planned promotional campaigns. The print runs serve as the basis for the calculation of the publications' costs and prices.

SE publishes four types of publications:

- an analytical publication include analyses of the environment, population, social life and/or economy based on the relevant statistical indicators, whereas connections between different fields are considered and different periods are compared;
- the yearbook provides a brief and simple overview of the current situation and changes in the environment, population, social life and economy based on the annual statistics for a given year, including comparisons with previous periods;
- a pocket-sized reference book provides the basic, most important statistics on one or several subject areas in a convenient format;
- the Quarterly Bulletin provides statistical information about important and topical social and economic issues.

The electronic versions of all publications are made available on the website free of charge at 8:00 on the release day, under the section "Statistics / Products / [Publications](#)". An e-mail notification about the release of a publication can be ordered on the website. The hard copies of publications can be ordered online, by e-mail or by phone or bought at SE's information centre.

Users can order single issues, take out a yearly subscription or place a standing order for a publication. Single subscriptions are available for yearly and other publications and for single issues of the publication "Eesti Statistika Kvartalikirj. Quarterly Bulletin of Estonian Statistics". Yearly subscriptions are available for the Quarterly Bulletin. Standing orders are available for all regular printed publications – the order is valid until terminated by the customer.

After receiving the order for a publication, SE will send an invoice to the customer. Once the payment has been transferred to the bank account specified on the invoice, the publication will be sent to the subscriber within two working days. If the publication has not yet been released at the time of placing the order, the publication will be sent to the subscriber on the day of publication. All prices are subject to delivery costs.

Requests and orders for statistical information

SE offers various services to statistics users. A standard of services has been defined for each service, specifying the time limit for response, the terms and conditions for access to statistical information etc. Users can view the [standards of services](#) on the website.

Micro-data

Micro-data are detailed data characterising a specific statistical unit. The use of micro-data is governed by the Official Statistics Act.

The data can be used

- **for scientific purposes** (section 38 of the Official Statistics Act) at a safe centre at SE or remotely via VPN;
- **as public use files** which are available on the website free of charge and contain completely anonymised micro-data. The files are intended for users (especially students) who need to make an analysis based on micro-data;
- **via remote execution**, which allows state and government institutions to access micro-data.

Services offered by Statistics Estonia

Request for information

A request for information is an application to receive published or documented information. The information is provided either in Estonian or English. With a request for information, users can ask for already published official statistics and information about SE and its activities. Brief statistical information is provided on the environment, population, social life and economy of Estonia. Users can also receive help with finding information published on the websites of SE and Eurostat. Requests for information can be submitted on SE's website in the section "Statistics > Services", or by e-mail or phone. Further information about [requests for information](#) is available on the website.

Requests for information are usually answered within five working days and the service is free of charge. Requests submitted by journalists are given first priority (answered within 24 hours, as a rule) due to the nature of their work.

Order for information

An order for information is an application to receive more detailed information than published in the Statistical Database. The provision of this information requires additional processing and analysis of data and is a fee-charging service. As a rule, the data are obtained by processing the information in source databases. The compilation of a dataset from publicly available statistics at the customer's request is also regarded as a request for information if it takes one hour or more. The price of an order for information depends on the time spent on the detailed processing of data. The cost of one working hour is specified in the standard of services.

There are several standardised orders for information: orders for financial key ratios, foreign trade statistics, the data of economic units and geo-referenced results of the 2000 Population and Housing Census. Standardised orders also require additional data processing and analysis, but the user knows the price in advance since the volume of additional processing and the expected result have been determined.

Also, thematic maps and digital maps of the 2000 and 2011 censuses can be ordered. Orders for maps are fulfilled within the period agreed in advance.

Requests and orders for information can be submitted on the website under the section "Statistics > Services", or by e-mail or phone. Further information about [orders for information](#) is available on the website.

Use of confidential data for scientific purposes at a safe centre at SE

Legal persons and organisations can use the confidential data at Statistics Estonia's disposal for scientific purposes. They can access these data at a dedicated safe centre at Statistics Estonia. A legal person or organisation wishing to use the service shall submit a written application to Statistics Estonia which will be reviewed by the Confidentiality Council. Further information about the [use of confidential data](#) at a safe centre is available on the website.

SE will notify the applicant of the approval of the application within 15 working days. If the application cannot be approved because of the insufficiency of the data submitted, SE will contact the applicant within two working days in order to specify the necessary details. In case the application is approved, SE will enter into a contract with the applicant on the use of data. The application process and the terms and conditions are described in detail in the [procedure for dissemination of confidential data for scientific purposes](#).

If the user requests access to a dataset produced as part of the statistical programme, the use of the data is free of charge (e.g. databases of social surveys). If SE compiles a dataset at the user's request, the user will have to pay a fee based on the prices specified in the standard of services.

Remote access

Legal persons and organisations can access the confidential data at SE's disposal remotely via VPN. This service is subject to the same terms and conditions as the use of confidential data at a safe centre.

Remote execution

With remote execution, Eesti Pank, research and development institutions and government agencies can use confidential data in order to make statistical analyses without the user's direct access to confidential data. The queries can be submitted via the job submission interface LISSY, once SE has provided the user with the necessary log-in information.

Granting data subjects access to data concerning themselves

Pursuant to the Official Statistics Act, data subjects have the right to access, free of charge, data concerning themselves which are collected by a producer of official statistics. To access these data, the legal or natural person shall submit a written application setting out which data the data subject is interested in. Within five working days at the latest, SE will inform the data subject where and when the requested data can be accessed. Further information about this [service](#) is available on the website.

Ordering of printed publications

Hard copies of statistical publications can be ordered on the website in the section "Statistics > Products > Publications", or by e-mail or phone. Standing orders can be placed for publications published once a year. Yearly subscriptions are available for the publication "Eesti Statistika Kvartalikirj. Quarterly Bulletin of Estonian Statistics". The order will be fulfilled once the customer has paid the invoice sent by SE. If the publication has not yet been released at the time of placing the order, the publication will be sent to the subscriber on the day of publication. Further information about [ordering of printed publications](#) is available on the website.

Consultation on availability of the statistics of EU countries

Customers can get consultation at the information centre, by e-mail or from the information hotline. Further information about the [consultation service](#) is available on the website. Questions asked over the phone or at SE's information centre will be answered immediately. Questions received by e-mail will be answered within 24 hours on working days. Questions requiring consultation with Eurostat (incl. questions about methodology) will be answered within five working days.

Contact Centre of respondents

The Contact Centre provides consultation and help for respondents. Respondents can contact the customer support by phone at +372 625 9100 or by e-mail at klienditugi@stat.ee. Calls made to the Contact Centre are subject to standard calling rates. Further information about the [Contact Centre of respondents](#) is available on the website.

Subscription to notifications of news releases and publications

A notification of a news release or publication can be ordered on the website under the section "Statistics > Services". Subscribers will receive a free notification by e-mail on the release date of the news release/publication. Further information about the notifications of [news releases](#) and [publications](#) is available on the website.

Price policy

Official statistics are public goods and therefore free of charge. A fee is charged for expenses related to data media and for additional data processing. The sale of products and services does not produce a profit: the price covers the expenses. SE's products and services are not subject to value added tax (subsection 10 (1) of the Value Added Tax Act).

Pricing principles

Core information is free for all users. This includes news releases, electronic versions of publications, the Statistical Database, web products and requests for information. The cost of these products and services is fully covered from the state budget, as these are statistics produced as part of the statistical programme.

Fee-charging products and services include orders for information (i.e. actions not included in the statistical programme) and hard copies of statistical publications (pricing is based only on printing costs; the costs related to translation, contributors' fees etc. are not taken into account).

The price of an order for information depends on the time spent on the detailed processing of data. The prices are specified in the standard of services. The price of a standardised order is known to the user in advance since the volume of additional processing and the expected result have been determined.

The following discounts apply to purchases of statistical publications:

- 10% discount for customers who purchase more than 50 copies of a pocket-sized reference book;
- 10% discount for customers who purchase more than 10 copies of a statistical publication;
- 50% discount on old products (after the release of similar products);
- 30% discount for schools who subscribe to the yearbook;
- discount prices are offered at conferences and fairs;
- discount prices are offered for publications released in previous years.

Free distribution

Since 2009, the electronic versions of all publications are available on SE's [website](#). National libraries receive a free copy of every publication pursuant to the Compulsory Copy Act (RT I 1997, 16, 259). Two free copies of each printed publication are provided for the National Library of Estonia and the Tartu University Library; one copy is provided for the Academic Library of Estonia, the Academic Library of Tallinn University and the library of the Tallinn University of Technology. A free copy is also delivered to the central libraries of counties.

It has become common practice to exchange publications free of charge with international organisations and national statistical institutes.

Distribution channels

In case of SE, distribution means the communication and delivery of statistics to users. The website www.stat.ee is the main distribution channel – the entire output of SE is made available on that website. The website is in Estonian and in English (excl. the information for respondents). In addition to Estonian statistics, the website includes international statistics and links to the websites of other countries and international organisations.

SE's aim is to ensure that the website meets the WCAG 2.0 Level A requirements as a minimum. Conformance to these requirements is checked annually using Total Validator software. Every three-four years the accessibility of the websites of Estonian government institutions is checked by the Estonian Information System Authority in cooperation with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications.

Information centre

SE's information centre is located at Tatari 51 in Tallinn. The information centre is open Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 16:00. Visitors can view all the publications issued since 1992 and also the most significant publications from previous years. The information centre is open to all visitors.

There are consultants at the information centre who:

- give information about the existence and availability of statistics on Estonia or EU countries;
- help visitors find the necessary materials from the shelves;
- sell SE's publications;
- help visitors use the website or the Statistical Database;
- receive orders for statistical information and requests for information.

There is a library at the information centre. It has the widest selection of statistical publications issued in Estonia and by other national statistical institutes and international organisations. The publications can be viewed at the library and are not lent out.

Information telephone

SE's information hotline (+372 625 9300) allows users to get statistical information and information about SE. The Senior Consultant will immediately answer any brief questions within his/her competence. If the employee needs more time to find the answer or the user needs more detailed information, the Senior Consultant will call the customer back at the agreed time or will forward the call to a subject-matter specialist.

The information hotline offers:

- statistics on the environment, population, social life and economy of Estonia;
- consultation about the websites of SE and Eurostat (the statistical office of the European Union);
- help with finding public information;
- consultation about the availability of EU statistics;
- consultation from a specialist in a specific subject matter;
- information about Statistics Estonia;
- the possibility to order SE's publications.

Resellers

The main reselling channel for SE's products are major bookstore chains. Cooperation with resellers is governed by a cooperation agreement which stipulates, among other things, the procedure for payments to SE (lump sum payment or payments based on sales) and the pricing policy. The publications to be sold and the number of copies are agreed on separately.

There are various portals (e.g. www.rup.ee, www.eesti.ee, www.raamatupidaja.ee, www.eas.ee) that publish statistics online or include links to SE's website.

Advertising

In case of SE, the purpose of advertising is to inform the target groups, shape their attitudes and behaviour, or all that combined. An advertising campaign is usually preceded by extensive communication through free information channels. Depending on the pre-defined

objectives, SE defines the target group at whom the advertising is aimed and the nature of the message to be conveyed.

The criteria for choosing an advertising channel are: the size of the audience and overlap with the target group, the technical suitability of the channel for promoting the idea, and the cost of advertising.

The general principle is that, above all, SE uses free channels for communication. Paid advertising is used if the communication objectives cannot be achieved otherwise. For example, censuses are advertised in paid channels (TV, radio, web, print media) in order to reach as many residents as possible.

SE uses banners on its website to advertise the release of publications or other products or to advertise events relevant for SE. In exceptional cases, banners are run on other websites in order to reach potential target groups. Other Internet marketing methods (social media, dedicated websites, mass mail) are also used. Advertising brochures and flyers are printed if necessary. As a rule, SE does not buy advertising or publish contact details in paid phone or trade directories.

Public relations

Public relations cover SE's relations with the public and with its stakeholders. The aim of public relations is to build SE's reputation and increase public awareness of SE, its activities and the statistics published.

Media relations

SE's media relations are coordinated by the Communications Manager. These relations are important as media channels and journalists report statistical information to the general public. The following methods are used to maintain and improve media relations.

Publication of news releases

News releases are sent to all important news channels, so that journalists could communicate their contents to the public. A news release gives journalists an idea about how to present the given topic. It is in the best interests of SE to present the information in such a way that it would reach the public in an undistorted form – for that reason, news releases are brief and clear.

Organisation of press conferences

A press conference is an event aimed at journalists with the purpose of introducing an important event (that is about to begin or end), highlighting the specific nature of some process or explaining a message.

The published statistics and statements made at press conferences are objective and impartial.

An article in the press

Articles are published to transmit a certain message to the wider public. Their purpose is to react to topical issues in the society. SE also responds to any misinterpretation and misuse of official statistics in the media, although, according to the PR principle, SE tries to prevent such situations with proactive communication.

Requests for information by journalists

PR also includes answering the queries submitted by journalists regarding the official statistics, the principles of dissemination of statistics or information about SE. The queries are mainly answered by the Communications Manager.

Social media

The purpose of using social media is to promote official statistics and improve statistical literacy. Social media is also a channel for communicating statistical information to new target groups.

Articles on topical issues and longer news pieces are published on the [statistics blog](#). Since 2010 SE has its own [Facebook page](#). SE has used Facebook to advertise blog posts and SE's publications. The Facebook page has brought visitors to the statistics blog and some users have ordered publications via Facebook. The blog and Facebook page are in Estonian.

During the PHC 2011 media campaign, SE used a separate census website and had temporary accounts on [Twitter](#) and Facebook.

All SE's publications and the slides of presentations given at press conferences are made available on [Slideshare](#).

Event marketing

SE gives presentations or sets up an information stand at various conferences, seminars, fairs and other events, in order to promote its activities and output to existing and potential users and respondents. By attending such events, SE can provide information, build the reputation of SE and official statistics, and receive feedback directly from users and respondents.

To present statistics to the representatives of specific target groups, SE organises events as well (presentations, conferences). Each year, there is a press launch for the publication "Eesti statistika aastaraamat. Statistical Yearbook of Estonia". In case of other publications, SE analyses the need for a public presentation – whether the topics of the specific release are newsworthy and whether there is a target group who would be interested in the event.

At press launches, SE distributes materials and answers the questions of the press. The aim is to increase the journalists' awareness of statistical publications and promote the media discussion of issues related to statistics.

In addition to journalists, these events may be attended by representatives of other target groups, such as ministries, local governments, research and education institutions, enterprises, etc.

Improvement of statistical literacy

The aim of user training is to teach the users of statistics how to find the necessary statistical information on the website, in the Statistical Database, in statistical publications and news releases. Another purpose of user training is to inform users about the production principles of official statistics and of essential changes related to the use of statistics or methodology. During user training courses, SE collects feedback which enables us to develop the statistical output so that it would take greater account of users' needs.

User training courses are targeted at current and potential users and respondents: private individuals as well as representatives of government institutions, enterprises and organisations.

The descriptions of the available [training modules](#) are published on the website.

Respondent training

The purpose of respondent training is to improve the respondents' knowledge about the importance of submitting good-quality data and to teach the respondents how to correctly fill in questionnaires. Awareness of available statistics is also enhanced.

Training courses are organised in case of need. As a rule, respondent training is carried out when there have been major changes with regard to data submission or when SE has been informed about the respondents' need for such training.

The training courses cover the completion of complicated questionnaires as well as use of eSTAT (the electronic data submission channel). A big part in respondent training is played by the instruction materials that accompany questionnaires and are provided in eSTAT.

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