

## 5.18 Chapter 18: Statistics

*EU rules require that Member States are able to produce statistics based on professional independence, impartiality, reliability, transparency, and confidentiality. Common rules are provided for the methodology, production and dissemination of statistical information.*

Montenegro is **moderately prepared** in the area of statistics. **Some progress** was made on harmonising the statistical methodology with EU standards and on an increased transmission of data, notably in macroeconomic, business, social, and agricultural statistics. However, significant efforts are still needed to address the 2018 recommendations. In the coming year, Montenegro should in particular:

→ considerably strengthen the human and financial resources of the Statistical Office of Montenegro (Monstat) so that it can fulfil its responsibilities, and ensure staff retention;

→ make significant progress in aligning its statistics with ESA 2010, including government finance statistics.

On **statistical infrastructure**, Monstat is compliant with the European statistics Code of Practice. It is the main producer and overall coordinator of statistics. The law proclaims the professional independence of Monstat's director and provides good confidentiality protection and an effective mandate for data collection. The government of Montenegro signed a Commitment on Confidence in Statistics in February 2018, setting out its commitment to respecting European statistical standards, including professional independence, access to administrative and register data, and confidentiality protection. The government also committed to providing human and financial resources to improve the quality of Montenegrin statistics. However, Monstat's financial and administrative capacities remain limited due to inadequate resources and premises: only 103 of 200 available posts are filled, while more staff left than were recruited in the reporting period. The strategy for official statistics for 2019-2023 was adopted.

Monstat established a good basis for effective coordination of the other national authorities producing official statistics and improved its cooperation with administrative data providers thanks to the signature of an additional memorandum of understanding with the Mediterranean University. The main classifications (NACE Rev. 2, ISCO-08, NUTS, CPA, GEONOM and ISCED 2011) are compliant with the EU *acquis*.

Data transmission to Eurostat continued to increase. Progress was achieved on **macroeconomic statistics** and alignment with ESA 2010. Monstat transmits annual (2006-2017) and quarterly (Q1 2010 to Q2 2018) GDP figures using the output and expenditure approach in current and previous year's prices to Eurostat, and has started sending partial data for the annual GDP using the income approach. However, considerable efforts are needed to improve compliance with the ESA 2010 methodology. Monstat does not yet transmit annual or quarterly sector accounts to Eurostat.

Considerable efforts are also needed to develop government finance statistics (GFS) and financial accounts; in the reporting period, three new staff were allocated to the Ministry of Finance to work on GFS. Excessive deficit procedure (EDP) tables are sent to Eurostat since October 2014, but important tables are lacking. The central bank compiles statistics on the balance of payments, foreign direct investment, and statistics on trade in services, which are partially aligned with the EU *acquis*. The harmonised index of consumer prices (HICP) and the purchasing power parities (PPP) framework are both largely aligned.

In **business statistics**, Monstat continued sending a number of structural business statistics (SBS) variables to Eurostat. Short-term statistics improved over the reporting period, but foreign affiliates' statistics have not been sent to Eurostat. The Business Register is largely compliant and the PRODCOM list is fully compliant with EU standards. In 2018, Monstat sent, for the first time, data on international trade in goods by invoicing currency (TIC) to Eurostat. The sending of transport statistics to Eurostat increased with the transition to detailed reporting of railway and maritime transport statistics and road freight - rail and air transport statistics are fully aligned. Research and development data is partially in line with the EU *acquis*. Monstat started compiling innovation statistics on enterprises and sent its first data sets for the period 2014-2016 to Eurostat. Tourism statistics are largely compliant with EU standards.

In **social statistics**, preparations continued on applying a register-based census methodology for the 2021 population and housing census making maximum use of registers kept by other public bodies. To apply this method, Monstat needs to obtain access to all identifiers of the population register and an address register has to be established. The survey of income and living conditions (EU-SILC), - the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and crime statistics are largely compliant, while social protection data (ESSPROS) transmitted to Eurostat are under validation. Eurostat received data on migration and demographic statistics from the demographic balance and the unified demographic data collections, but data availability should be further improved with data on migrant populations, acquisition of citizenship, and on emigration of non-nationals. Furthermore, Monstat has transmitted monthly and quarterly asylum data to Eurostat since January 2018 and is encouraged to start transmitting the EIL (enforcement of immigration legislation) statistics and residence permit data.

Progress continued in agricultural statistics, with the transmission of organic production data and the data collection on pesticides sales being sent to Eurostat for the first time. Annual crop statistics (ACS) and animal production statistics (APS) are highly compliant with EU standards, and Eurostat received the 2016 Farm Structure Survey (FSS) data and methodological report. Monstat provided some evidence of good work on agricultural accounts and prices, and is encouraged to send comprehensive data sets to Eurostat. In December 2018, it started to send aquaculture data.

Energy statistics are highly compliant with EU standards. In environmental statistics, waste statistics are compliant with Eurostat requirements, but statistics on environmental accounts have not yet been transmitted to Eurostat.