

19 October 2010

World Statistics Day



Service - Professionalism - Integrity

**Joint press release of the European Statistical System
World Statistics Day (20-10-2010)**

European Statistics: an information source for everyone

On 20 October, the first World Statistics Day¹ will be held. This event highlights the importance of official statistics in our society. On an EU level, over the last 50 years, the National Statistics Offices of the Member States and Eurostat have joined forces to produce reliable and comparable data. At present, European statistics are used in very different ways by a growing number of persons.

In order to mark this Day, **Eurostat (the Statistical Office of the European Communities)** and the **National Statistics Offices of the 27 Member States** of which the European Statistical System² (ESS) comprises, publish this Press Release highlighting the role of official European statistics.

Why are Official European Statistics so important?

European Statistics exhibit two features main that make them irreplaceable. They provide an average for the EU as a whole. They also offer comparable data for each Member State, helping to highlight the similarities and differences within the EU. There is a broad range of fields within European statistics: public finances, prices, foreign trade, labour market, health, education, etc.

For example, from a light-hearted viewpoint, European statistics³ may contribute to describing the “average European citizen”.

In the case of the average woman, she is likely to be around 42 years of age, and may live for another 41 years. She is likely to have been 28 years old when she had her first child, and likely to have fewer than two children³. She works in public or social services approximately 33 hours per week³ and has completed at least post-secondary education.

The average man is likely to be 39 years old, and have a life expectancy of another 39 years. He works in the market services sector for approximately 40 hours per week³ and has completed at least post-secondary education.

Naturally, these figures only provide a point of reference whereby citizens can draw comparisons between themselves and their neighbours.

Users range from European Commissioners and governments to students and companies ...

European Statistics currently play a fundamental role in government policy, forming the basis for decisions made by companies and enabling citizens to assess progress made and comparisons to be drawn with their neighbours.

For example, European regional statistics are used to guide the European Commission in allocating regional funds, whereas in the economic area, harmonised price statistics play a key role in the monetary policy of Central Banks.

Businesspersons use foreign trade statistics in order to examine new opportunities in the domestic market, whereas European citizens may compare taxes or unemployment in their country with those of other Member States.

2011 will see the implementation of a new population census in all Member States. The results will be of vital importance, for example, on a national level for decisions regarding the location of public infrastructures (schools, hospitals, energy supply, transport, etc.), and in the European scope for establishing the weighting of votes in the European Council.

1. <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/wsd/Default.aspx>
2. The ESS works as a network in which the role of Eurostat is to lead the harmonisation of statistics in close cooperation with the national statistics authorities. The ESS also coordinates its work with EEA/EFTA countries, candidate countries, and on a European level, with other services of the Commission, organisms and the ECB, as well as international organisations such as the OECD, the UN, the IMF and the World Bank.
3. These averages were calculated as follows:
 - Average age by sex in 2008
 - Life expectancy in 2007
 - Average age at maternity in 2008
 - Gross fertility rate (average number of children per woman) in 2007. The average rate for the EU was 1.56.
 - Employment by age sector (group aged 25-49) in 2009
 - Total number of hours usually worked by the employee in 2009. The main reason for the difference between women and men in the number of hours worked per week is due to a larger proportion of women working part-time
 - Level of education attained by age (group aged 25-49) in 2009

For further information see [INEbase-\[www.ine.es/en/welcome_en.htm\]\(http://www.ine.es/en/welcome_en.htm\)](http://www.ine.es/en/welcome_en.htm) All press releases at: www.ine.es/en/prensa/prensa_en.htm

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