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Annual Report

2024

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Innovation and data reuse help to reduce the administrative burden

Statistics Estonia's main goal is to produce high-quality statistics and provide reliable and meaningful information to enable data-based decision-making across the Estonian society. This way, we help people understand the world better through data. Our activities are guided by our core values: reliability, cooperation, and innovation. We aim to collect the data that we need with the minimum administrative burden for data providers.

In 2024, Statistics Estonia focused on reducing the administrative burden to save time for enterprises. We are proud of our achievements: Estonian enterprises are the first ones in the European Union (EU) who no longer have to submit arrivals data for foreign trade statistics. This reduces the administrative burden by a third, on average, for many enterprises who trade in goods with EU Member States.

Over 99% of statistics were published on time

A key performance indicator for us is adherence to the release dates. In 2024, we published 99.4% of the statistics on time. Our reliability among journalists and, we hope, the general public is indicated by the media coverage of Statistics Estonia's news releases. Last year, there were 8,255 mentions of our statistics in the Estonian media; there were only a few days without any media reference to our statistics. In this respect it is crucial that we produce useful and meaningful statistics that offer additional value to users and help people understand social and economic trends.

More and more people find their way to Statistics Estonia's website – in 2024, our web pages were visited more than 2 million times. Population, work life and economy remain the most popular topics for website visitors.

Estonia continues to lead in the field of data governance

The responsibilities of statistical institutes are changing in the current data-rich environment. We are the producer of official statistics, but we have also taken responsibility for ensuring the availability and quality of statistics in Estonia. Our efforts in this field have been noticed internationally. In 2024, Estonia was the head of the international UNECE Task Force on the changing role of national statistical offices in data ecosystems. We also completed 144 data description projects to enhance data quality and availability as well as foster data reuse in the Estonian public sector.

New and flexible data services require the addition of new data sources, including privately held data. We value the once-only principle – data should be collected once and used efficiently multiple times. Better reuse of data saves time and money while also raising the quality of statistics.

To ensure more efficient use of data, we encourage open and public discussion about the secure use and linking of private and public sector data without compromising privacy. In 2024, Statistics Estonia started a project for testing new privacy enhancing technologies, with the aim of using private data for improvements in road maintenance and public transport. We are actively involved in the data-based reporting project which aims to harmonise and automatise data exchange between enterprises and government institutions.

Independent statistics are part of democratic governance

Statistics Estonia's data are a vital asset for Estonian people. Statistics help to understand important social phenomena and economic trends. Statistics support public debate and national development. We are and will be an independent and reliable partner for all Estonian residents, as we produce statistics that accurately reflect life in Estonia.

Urmet Lee

Director General of Statistics Estonia

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Main achievements in 2024

Fulfilment of Statistics Estonia's strategic objectives

Statistics Estonia has defined its strategic objectives in four priority areas. Each section of the annual report covers one priority area, describing the activities undertaken in 2024 to fulfil our strategic objectives. Often, activities described under one area also contribute to developments in other areas (for example, work done to reduce the administrative burden; the development of cooperation and partnerships).

Figure 1. Statistics Estonia's objectives for 2023-2030



2024 was the first full year in the application of Statistics Estonia's strategy for 2023–2030. Implementation of the strategy is monitored using 11 indicators, which are listed in Table 1.

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| No | Priority area | Key indicator by | 2023 | 2024 | 2024 | 2025 |
|----|---------------|--|---|--|-------------------------------|--|
| | | service/objective | (result) | (target) | (result) | (target) |
| 1 | Data services | Satisfaction score for statistics users* | 81.6 | 77 | 84 | 79 |
| 2 | Data services | Satisfaction score for data providers (enterprises)* | 3.7 | >3.5 | 3.3 | >3.6 |
| 3 | Data services | Satisfaction score for data providers (individuals) | 3.0 | >4.3 | 3.9 | >4.4 |
| 4 | Data services | Decrease in the administrative burden (hours) of data providers, %* | 6% increase compared with number of hours in 2022 | 5% decrease compared with number of hours in 2023 (280 566 brs) | 23% decrease (226,987 hrs) | 4% decrease compared with number of hours in 2024 (217 908 brs) |
| 5 | Data services | Reliability ranking of Statistics Estonia* | 15th | Top 12 | 16th | Top 12 |
| 6 | Data services | Assessments of international audits | All positive | All positive | One negative** | All positive |
| 7 | Data services | Deviations from release calendar, % | 0.44 | <3 | 0.57 | <3 |
| 8 | Data literacy | Number of website visits, millions* | 2.0 | 1.6 | 2.1 | 1.7 |
| 9 | Data literacy | Number of media mentions* | 8,446 | >8,000 | 8,255 | >8,000 |
| 10 | Organisation | Voluntary labour turnover, % | 4.21 | <9.0 | 7.02 | <9.0 |
| 11 | Organisation | Share of temporary funding in the budget, % | 29 | 25 | 27 | 25 |

Table 1. Strategic indicators: targets and results, 2023-2025

* Indicators included in the administrative policy programme for 2025

** E-ITS preliminary audit

Reducing the administrative burden

A decrease in administrative burden has always been a strategic objective for Statistics Estonia, but in 2024 we stepped up our efforts towards this in all areas. Last year, the introduction of new data sources made the biggest contribution to a decreased response burden. The most significant project, which we completed by the end of 2024, was the switch to using detailed trade data from other EU Member States and releasing Estonian enterprises from the duty to report on intra-EU arrivals of goods. By partially using the exports data of other EU countries for compiling data on imports to Estonia, we were able to reduce the administrative burden by 26,000 hours in total. Statistics fully based on data received from other countries were first released in March 2025. We also decreased the sample size of the dispatches questionnaire collected for the production of mandatory EU statistics, saving 4,500 hours for data providers. For more information about the administrative burden, see subsection 1.3.

An important part of reducing the administrative burden is the adoption of the new data collection environment that offers a better user experience for enterprises. After several years of development, we were able to successfully launch the new data collection environment at the end of 2024 and collect the first questionnaires. Data providers' feedback has been positive. Over the next few years, the goal is to gradually move all business questionnaires to the new environment, which should make data submission smoother.

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Better data availability

User-friendly services are a priority. In 2024, we continued the development of a secure environment for data reuse. At the moment, it primarily serves researchers and policymakers, enabling users to link data from different domains and securely process and use data for research. In the future, there will be further options for searching for and sharing data, giving Statistics Estonia and other public-sector institutions an opportunity to develop new data services.

In cooperation with the Land and Spatial Development Board, we developed and launched a new map application for more convenient exploration of spatial data.

2024 was a difficult year due to budget cuts. Over this and the two following years, Statistics Estonia will receive 10% less funding from the state budget. We cut our costs already in 2024 – the focus is on the continued optimisation of our activities and on delivering flexible data services to customers as contract work (gender pay gap application, business viability statistics, paid surveys etc.). In 2024 we completed the project wherein we studied possibilities for revising the production of national accounts and government finance statistics by updating the related production processes and tools. The objective in 2025 and 2026 is to secure funding for the information system that supports the changes.

In 2024, we continued to develop and apply new taxonomies for data-based reporting. The economic transactions taxonomy is partially ready (work will continue this year); the accommodation taxonomy was finalised. The automatic submission of data based on the wages and salaries taxonomy is available using two developers' software. Taxonomies are necessary for once-only data collection (to reduce the administrative burden resulting from public sector needs) and for machine-to-machine data exchange between businesses and the state. The project is financed by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications.

As the coordinator of data governance in Estonia, we advised 39 institutions. National data governance activities in 2024 are described in section 2.

Transition to service-oriented management

To fulfil optimisation targets and for an increased customer focus, we began the transition to service-oriented management in 2024. This involves identifying our services, defining their scope and levels, and determining the key roles within each service. The project continues in 2025 and our aim is to start to implement customer- and service-oriented management led by service owners and portfolio managers.

Provision of high-quality and timely official statistics

As we develop our customer-centric services and activities, it remains our priority to fulfil our core responsibilities. In 2024, we published 99.4% of official statistics on time. We published over 3,000 indicators in the statistical database and submitted datasets to Eurostat for the compilation of European statistics. We passed the audits of our GDP and government finance statistics production, which provides vital data about the Estonian economy.

In 2024, we began the process of reviewing and updating the statistical programme in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance and other policymakers. The main objective is to determine the optimal set of data items required for policymaking, with some additional funding provided by ministries. The review will continue in 2025 and in the following years. The official statistics activities, including changes in the programme, and other data services are described in subsections 1.1 and 1.2.

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1. Data services

1.1. Official statistics

Fulfilment of the 2024 statistical programme

Each year, the Government of the Republic approves a list of demographic, social, economic and environmental statistics activities for the following five years. The statistical programme for 2024 included 62 statistical activities with a total cost of nearly 13 million euros. Statistics Estonia is in the process of optimising resource-intensive data collection and assessing, in cooperation with policymakers, the necessity of any indicators not required by European Union (EU) statistics regulations. In the future, Statistics Estonia would produce such indicators as contract work.

In 2024, the biggest share of statistical activities – both in terms of number and cost – were carried out in the domain of economy, followed by the social life domain. Table 2 gives an overview of the distribution of statistical activities by domain.

| Domain | Nun | nber | Co | ost |
|-------------------------|--------|------|----------------|-----|
| | number | % | thousand euros | % |
| Environment | 7 | 11 | 729 | 6 |
| Economy | 37 | 60 | 8,518 | 66 |
| Population | 4 | 7 | 455 | 3 |
| Social life | 12 | 19 | 2,937 | 23 |
| Multi-domain statistics | 2 | 3 | 276 | 2 |
| Main statistics, total | 62 | 100 | 12,915 | 100 |

Table 2. Statistical activities by domain, 2024

Statistical activities are carried out on the basis of EU legislation or commissioned nationally (primarily for strategic planning, international statistical requirements). Table 3 shows that, in 2024, the estimated cost of statistical activities arising from EU legislation represented 93% of the total cost of statistical activities.

Table 3. Statistical activities by type of demand, 2024

| | Estimated | cost | Nun | nber |
|---|----------------|------|--------|------|
| | thousand euros | % | number | % |
| Statistics required for assessing the policies of the European Union (incl. Estonia)* | 12,039 | 93 | 48 | 77 |
| Statistics only required nationally (in addition to European statistics) | 876 | 7 | 14 | 23 |
| Total | 12,915 | 100 | 62 | 100 |

* The European statistics must refer to Estonia as a whole (NUTS 1 level); where possible, Statistics Estonia produces mandatory statistics also in more detail by county/region, to meet national needs and to better describe social phenomena.

The statistical programme for 2024 was successfully fulfilled: all the planned activities were performed. There were a total of 880 planned releases in the release calendar: 760 statistical database items and 120 news releases. The produced statistics are made available to users first in the statistical database and then through other channels, such as on the stat.ee website, on the dashboards, in the earnings application, and so on. Users are informed about planned statistics releases via the <u>release calendar</u> on our website, which serves as our commitment to publish the data on the date specified in the calendar. The target for share of deviations from

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the release calendar is <3%. In 2024, there were five deviations from the release calendar, which represents 0.57% of the total number of releases (see Table 4). The main reason for the deviations was the publication of data earlier than the planned release date.

| Year | Statistical database | News releases | Total | Share in total number of releases, % |
|------|-------------------------|---------------|-------|--|
| 2020 | 21 | 0 | 21 | 2.41 |
| 2021 | 9 | 0 | 9 | 1.03 |
| 2022 | 15 | 2 | 17 | 1.80 |
| 2023 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 0.44 |
| 2024 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 0.57 |

Table 4. Deviations from release calendar, 2020-2024

Changes in statistical activities in 2024–2028

In 2024, no new statistical activities were added to the list of official statistics. But there were changes in methodologies and in the categorisation of activities, which were related to the review of production processes and to data needs agreed in the European Union.

In the period 2024–2027, there will be major methodological changes in the domain of environmental statistics. Pursuant to Regulation (EU) No 691/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Member States are required to compile new modules for European environmental economic accounts (four statistical activities in total). Data on forest accounts, climate-related investments, and environmental subsidies and similar transfers must first be published in 2025, and ecosystem accounts in 2026. The staff positions required for developing the methodology of the new modules and the related processes and data flows were so far (up to and including 2024) financed by a Eurostat grant. Previous modules have also been initially developed with grant funding and later continued with state budget funding. The development project for implementing the new modules began already in 2021 and will continue in 2025 with grant funding. The prerequisite for foreign funding is that the costs of these statistics will be covered nationally once the grant ends. To do this, Statistics Estonia needs further state funding in the amount of 251,000 euros annually.



Figure 2. Environmental economic accounts (Regulation (EU) No 691/2011)

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The number of statistical activities in the economy domain has decreased as a result of the statistics on wages and salaries and job vacancies being moved under social life statistics.

At the end of 2024, the proposed regulation on labour market statistics was approved. There were continued discussions concerning the proposed regulation on European statistics on population and housing (for more, see subsection 4.3).

The main development project in official statistics in 2024 was the continued reorganisation of government finance statistics and national accounts statistics, which entails methodological revisions (incl. addition of data sources) as well as technological redesign. Within the state budget strategy for 2023–2026, Statistics Estonia was allocated 4.1 million euros for development.

In 2024, we prepared for the methodological change in foreign trade statistics, which significantly reduces the administrative burden for respondents. Starting with the reference period January 2025, Statistics Estonia no longer collects data on arrivals from EU countries with a separate questionnaire – instead, we use detailed data received from other EU statistical offices for our data on imports. This reduced reporting obligations, saving around 4 million euros annually for Estonian enterprises.

Under cyclical statistical activities, there were data releases in several important areas in 2024. The population projection, which is prepared every five years, was published. We released the data of the latest Farm Structure Survey, conducted every four years for comprehensive data on agricultural holdings (including land ownership, management of holdings, crop and livestock farming, labour force, other gainful activities of holdings, etc.). In 2024, we also published the results of the Cultural Participation Survey. It is conducted every three years and is the source of information for assessing developments in the cultural domain. The fourth relevant cyclical activity in 2024 was the release of the results of the Structure of Earnings Survey. The purpose of this survey, which is conducted every four years, is to provide information about employees' hourly earnings by occupation, economic activity, educational attainment, age group, length of service, and type of contract; additionally, the deciles and medians of gross monthly and gross hourly earnings are published by major group of occupation and by economic activity.

1.2. Statistical activities outside the programme

In addition to the statistical activities in the statistical programme, Statistics Estonia performs activities that are not included in the programme but are ordered by customers. If the required statistics are not available in the public database, customers can place an order for a specific dataset. Orders can be placed for statistics in any statistical domain.

These activities may be funded from the state budget (e.g. the data-based reporting project managed by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications), by the customer (e.g. the follow-up activities of the international Survey of Adults Skills), or by a grant (e.g. the Survey of Adults Skills).

In 2024, Statistics Estonia earned 1.5 million euros of revenue for data mining, surveys, and individual indicators provided outside the programme (see Table 5). The largest projects outside the statistical programme were the real-time economy project and the Estonian Household Finance and Consumption Survey. Most of the non-programme activities were smaller orders requesting more detailed statistical information than publicly available.

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Table 5. Non-programme statistical activities and revenue earned, 2024

| Non-programme activity | Revenue, thousand euros |
|--|-------------------------|
| Real-time economy project | 537 |
| Estonian Household Finance and Consumption Survey | 240 |
| Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) | 99 |
| Follow-up activities for Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) | 91 |
| Contract work with hourly pricing | 83 |
| Gender pay gap application | 76 |
| Data collection for the European Social Fund | 58 |
| Collection of fleet-based economic and social indicators | 55 |
| Use of confidential data | 43 |
| Survey on Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) | 38 |
| Youth work measures supporting young people's entry into the labour market | 26 |
| Other contract work | 116 |
| Total | 1,462 |

1.3. Administrative burden and satisfaction

Administrative burden of data providers

Statistics Estonia uses two indicators to assess the reporting burden: the number of questionnaires per enterprise and the time spent on completing and submitting questionnaires. These indicators are calculated for enterprises.

In the production of statistics, we mostly use data available in registers and databases and reuse data we have already collected. Data are collected from enterprises only if they cannot be obtained from other sources. If possible, we use sample surveys for small enterprises and do not collect data from the whole target group.

Two thirds of statistical activities in 2024 were either entirely or partially based on the data of state databases. In order to reduce the administrative burden of enterprises, Statistics Estonia actively looks for alternative data sources and possibilities for reducing sample sizes.

Statistical activities affecting the administrative burden of enterprises in 2024

In 2024, Statistics Estonia used 102 questionnaires to collect data from enterprises.

Each year, there are some statistical activities for which we can stop using questionnaires and switch to register data. In 2024, we stopped using the following questionnaires: "Fur animals", "Zoo" and "Road transport". The later was replaced with the new questionnaire "Bus transport and taxi operation".

We started to collect data on science centres and expositions. The periodicity of the air traffic survey was changed from quarterly to monthly collection. Last year, we added the "Non-profit institutions" questionnaire which is used for data collection every four years.







In the last five years, the number of entities surveyed by Statistics Estonia has fallen. This has been managed despite the fact that the number of entities registered in the Business Register has risen by about 20%. One in eight registered enterprises had reporting obligations in 2020, compared to just one in twelve in 2024.

Number of questionnaires per enterprise

In 2024, the average reporting burden of surveyed enterprises was 8.4 questionnaires per year. It was 7.7 in 2023. Last year, the number of enterprises in questionnaire samples decreased by 22% and the number of questionnaires decreased by 14%. Therefore, the average number of questionnaires per enterprise was up, since 72% of sampled enterprises are in the lowest size class (1–9 employees) and their average also increased a little. The main factors influencing the change were the higher threshold for foreign trade reporting, and non-regular statistical activities carried out in 2023 but not in 2024.



Figure 4. Number of mandatory questionnaires per enterprise by number of employees, 2020-2024

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Time spent on questionnaire completion and submission

The time spent on questionnaire completion and submission is assessed based on the information collected from enterprises. Each questionnaire ends with the section "Time spent on filling out the questionnaire" with a table where the respondent can indicate the time (hours and minutes) spent on the questionnaire. This information is asked once a year.

In the case of the Intrastat arrivals questionnaire, Statistics Estonia partially introduced exports data from other EU countries to compile data on imports to Estonia, which reduced the questionnaire sample and saved 26,000 hours of work for reporting enterprises.

Pursuant to the EU regulation, the Intrastat dispatches questionnaire must provide data covering 95% of all dispatches. The sample size is adjusted depending on the economic situation and enterprises' performance. The sample was reduced in 2024, with the administrative burden reduced by 4,500 hours.

The total administrative burden for enterprises was 227,000 hours in 2024, which is 23% smaller than in 2023. The higher burden in 2023 was due to non-regular surveys carried out that year (Community Innovation Survey, Structure of Earnings Survey). The burden in 2024 also decreased as a result of the higher threshold for Intrastat reporting, resulting in a smaller sample.

Reducing the administrative burden of enterprises

To reduce the administrative burden, we continue to do the following:

- Develop the possibilities for automatic reporting using machine-to-machine communication (the databased reporting project, which is part of the Real-time Economy initiative of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communication). Automatic reporting of wages and salaries and labour force data was available in 2024. The goal is to offer machine-to-machine data exchange for most business questionnaires over the next few years.
- Upgrade our data collection service, incl. the electronic data submission environment.
- Look for information in databases, in public and private sector information systems, and on websites, with the aim of reusing existing data and reducing data collection with questionnaires.
- Apply the once-only principle in data collection.
- Make maximum use of data collected from enterprises with questionnaires when performing other statistical activities.
- Use model-based estimation to obtain missing information and thereby decrease sample sizes and/or frequency of data collection.
- Make questionnaires easier to understand and to complete for data providers.

Customer feedback has included recommendations that often relate to reducing the administrative burden in one way or another and, where possible, we have implemented these.

We have made the following changes in enterprise surveys based on customer feedback.

- We specified the units of measurement. We indicated where a sum should include or exclude VAT.
- We made proposals for introducing administrative data.
- We reworded various questions, help texts, error messages etc. We made sure that information about the purpose and instructions is clear and easy to notice at the beginning of the questionnaire.

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- We began the thorough review of questionnaires, in order to identify any questions that do not offer additional value and could be omitted.
- We began preparations for launching the new data collection application: we conducted user tests which confirmed that the features of the new environment serve data providers better and ensure a smoother and faster user experience.

Satisfaction

Two customer segments – data providers and users of statistics – are asked for feedback to assess satisfaction. The group of data providers comprises enterprises, public sector institutions and private individuals who submit data to Statistics Estonia by answering questionnaires. Users of statistics refer to all enterprises, institutions and individuals who have submitted a request for information to Statistics Estonia or have requested a dataset as contract work.

To determine the level of satisfaction, we use the Net Promoter Score (NPS) metric and the Likert scale. We also saw the need to update the way we request feedback from data providers – we now ask them to rate the questionnaire on a five-point scale at the end of the questionnaire. After testing the new methodology, it was decided to implement the new system fully in 2023. Respondents are more motivated to give feedback immediately after submitting data, as evidenced by the better feedback response rate with this approach. We combined the two methodologies, making sure that a respondent is only asked for feedback on one occasion.

Satisfaction with interviewers

Feedback was requested from individuals who participated in a survey conducted by Statistics Estonia. Respondents' satisfaction was measured using the Net Promoter Score (NPS) metric. The feedback covered seven different surveys. The feedback questionnaire was sent to nearly 25,800 respondents; we received 3,500 responses. This means that feedback was provided by about 14% of the respondents we contacted.

Individuals' satisfaction with interviewers was measured based on their answer to the question "How would you rate your satisfaction with the interviewer's work, including communication skills, behaviour and quality of explanations?". The overall satisfaction score was 78, which is a very good result. Interviewers were praised for their professionalism, ability to explain and convince and to maintain their composure. The satisfaction score was the highest among the respondents of the Estonian Social Survey, and the lowest among the respondents of the Tourism Survey. Satisfaction varied significantly depending on the language used: the satisfaction index was 75 for respondents surveyed in Estonian and 87 for respondents surveyed in Russian.

Satisfaction with questionnaires

The feedback questions for data providers include a request to assess how easy it was to fill in the questionnaire. Respondents are asked for an overall assessment as well as feedback on individual questionnaire components. In 2024, assessment of the individual components was only asked from the respondents of social surveys. We collected feedback about 5 social surveys and 91 enterprise surveys. On a five-point scale (1– very difficult ... 5 – very easy), the overall rating in 2024 given to the easiness of filling in the questionnaire was 3.3 for enterprise surveys (i.e. average difficulty) and 3.9 for social surveys (i.e. easy).

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| Type of survey | Completed questionnaires | Feedback providers | Share of feedback providers, % | General assessment (5-point scale) | Number of surveys assessed |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Social surveys | 19,317 | 6,543 | 34 | 3.94 | 5 |
| Enterprise surveys | 40,376 | 14,699 | 36 | 3.33 | 91 |
| Total | 59,693 | 21,242 | 35 | 3.64 | 96 |

Table 6. General assessment of questionnaires in 2024 on a 5-point Likert scale

Table 7. Feedback on social surveys: rating of individual components in 2024 on a 5-point Likert scale

| Wording of questions | Wording of answer options | Help texts | Error messages and warnings | Website usability |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| 4.53 | 4.61 | 4.61 | 4.69 | 4.44 |

A key outcome is the continued willingness of data providers to share their opinions with us, since the feedback response rate was relatively high – 35%. We are also satisfied with the amount of free text comments, as this is very useful information that has allowed us to make necessary modifications. In 2024, we collected feedback about 91 questionnaires in total (social and enterprise surveys combined). There were 59,693 confirmed questionnaires last year, and we received feedback on 21,242 occasions. There were ten surveys about which no feedback was received.

Statistics Estonia is gradually moving data collection to its new self-service environment – therefore, we asked for feedback about the first two questionnaires collected in the new environment.



Figure 5. Assessment of user experience in the new self-service environment and in eSTAT on a scale of 1 to 5





Figure 6. Initial feedback on the components of the new self-service environment on a scale of 1 to 3 (based on two questionnaires)

The feedback about the new self-service environment indicates some difficulties with adjusting to the new application, but the results are positive overall. The average score for the two questionnaires is slightly better than the score for questionnaires that respondents completed in the old environment (eSTAT).

Satisfaction with Statistics Estonia's customer support

Satisfaction with customer support among statistics users

In 2024, Statistics Estonia asked 1,037 users of statistics for feedback and suggestions concerning requests for information, completed contract work and customer service. To determine the level of satisfaction, we use the Net Promoter Score (NPS)¹ metric, where customers are asked to rate their satisfaction with Statistics Estonia's customer service and the response received on an 11-point scale. We received 273 responses (response rate 26%). The satisfaction with Statistics Estonia's customer support and the response received was 84, which means 'very good' in the NPS methodology. Statistics users were happy with the fast and professional customer service, and they appreciated the consideration and care shown for their needs. Users were satisfied with the thoroughness of the response. They like that the customer support recommends other sources where the required data could be found in cases where Statistics Estonia is not the holder of the relevant data.

Satisfaction with customer support among data providers

In 2024, Statistics Estonia asked 6,113 data providers for feedback about customer support. Customers who had contacted our customer support by email were asked to rate their satisfaction ("How satisfied are you with the response and with our customer support?").

¹ Assessments on a scale from 1 to 10 are given to three questions. The Net Promoter Score may range from -100 to 100. "Excellent" ranges from 100 to 60, "very good" from 59 to 20, "good" from 19 to 0, "satisfactory" from -1 to -40, "poor" from -41 to -70 and "very poor" from -71 to -100.

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We received 1,147 answers (response rate 19%). Satisfaction with customer support is measured with the Net Promoter Score (NPS) methodology. The satisfaction score for Statistics Estonia's customer support and response received was 77.

Data providers found our customer support to be fast, professional and friendly. The personal approach and customer focus were highly appreciated. Lower scores were given for reasons such as dissatisfaction with the response received or with the proposed solution (e.g. when customer support was unable to extend a deadline or release a respondent from reporting duties). Lower ratings were also explained by the questionnaires being too difficult and the submission environment being inconvenient to use.

Public trust

Statistics Estonia participates in the survey on the reliability of public institutions conducted by the market research enterprise Turu-uuringute AS. Once a quarter, about 1,000 randomly sampled Estonian residents aged 18 and over are asked the question "In your opinion, how reliable are the following institutions?". Respondents are surveyed by phone or through the web panel. In 2024, Statistics Estonia's highest ranking among 28 institutions was 16th. Over the years, respondents have considered the Rescue Board and the Emergency Response Centre to be the most reliable institutions, usually followed by the Police and Border Guard Board and the Estonian Tax and Customs Board.

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2. Data governance

2.1. Coordination of data governance at the state level

Statistics Estonia coordinates state data governance in cooperation with partners, notably the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, and the Information System Authority.

Ministries and state institutions see data governance as a key element of the digital society reform as it ensures better public digital services. Institutions are increasingly realising that the data in their possession are a tremendous asset enabling them to make changes, but only if the data domain is also reformed. Data play a vital role in the national long-term development strategy "Estonia 2035" in terms of better state governance – through increased data exchange, i.e. data reuse, and through the use of survey and statistical data in policymaking. Data governance holds an important position in the "Estonian Digital Society Development Plan 2030". Statistics Estonia plays a central role in the achievement of two goals defined in the plan, concerning data-based governance and data reuse:

- Decision-making based on first-rate data, which relies on data discoverability, data quality and speed of access, to offer analytical support to decision-makers and to strengthen processes
- An up-to-date and comprehensive overview of data on the level of registers and available datasets. Data can also be semantically linked; the once-only principle is applied in data collection, and the collected data are reused.

In 2024, there was a revision of the Estonian Digital Agenda. The renewed version again prioritises the availability of high-quality data and the much wider re-use of data, which combined will help to boost the share of data economy and reduce the administrative burden.

The importance of data became particularly evident during the Covid-19 pandemic. The European Union set up the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) to mitigate the negative impact of the coronavirus crisis and to prepare for future challenges. At the end of 2021, the European Commission approved the decisions of the Estonian government for use of the Recovery and Resilience Facility funding. The digital society component involves the establishment and development of a centre of excellence for data governance and open data, to achieve the following targets:

- Raising the quality of the data managed and collected by the state
- Improving the availability of data for decision-making
- Improving the quality and availability of open data, and supporting data reuse

The biggest challenges:

- The state has no comprehensive overview of the data actually available in databases.
- The organisations also do not have a full grasp of the parts that make the whole, or of the necessary steps to organise the data they have.
- Institutions require guidance as well as tools.

At the same time, the institutions, including the top management in many cases, are aware of the importance of this domain and are looking for solutions. Basically, they expect coordination. In the area of data governance, the public sector faces several challenges and goals, defined in the RRF plan as follows:

• Use (reuse) of the data stored and collected within the public sector, in order to make better decisions in policy formation and to offer better services, incl. the provision of integrated and predictable services.

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For the introduction of applications based on artificial intelligence and for other similar applications, the underlying data must be of a high quality.

- However, the data quality is often inadequate, due to the poor and inconsistent standard of the organisation, competence and practices of data governance across institutions. Also, often, there is not a good enough overview for data (re-)use.
- There is a great amount of inefficiency in data governance. The public sector includes over 1,200 databases and there is often data duplication and duplicate submission of the same data (from the perspective of data providers).
- Another challenge is the availability of open data which should be a functional, permanent part of good data governance but is currently limited and unsystematic. The situation has improved but there is a long way to go to making the most of open data as a digital economy/society. Here, again, the main reason is lack of competence. With already existing open data, the challenge is expanding their (re-)use for new services and measures.

The data governance reform is carried out over four years. So far, all the initiatives and activities in this domain (including Statistics Estonia's) have only been financed from the Recovery and Resilience Facility, which will terminate in the middle of 2026. In 2022, a centre for excellence for data governance was launched at Statistics Estonia. The centre is tasked with the following: developing the requirements of data governance and the system of classifications; providing guidance and counselling about data governance (incl. implementation of data governance principles in other institutions; training); maintaining an overview of data collected by the state; initiating and supporting the improvement of data quality and open data (incl. helping other institutions to carry out auditing and training in the area of data quality); establishing data repositories. For now, the main focus has been on data description and data quality.

Another priority in the coordination of data governance is the provision of the necessary ICT tools in cooperation with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications (since January 2025, the coordination of data policy, including data governance, is the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs) and the Information System Authority. The current state data directory (RIHA², the administration system for the state information system) has not offered much additional value to institutions. The RIHAKE application was developed to provide organisations with a data governance tool interfaced with RIHA. RIHAKE is a tool where an institution can describe its databases in the data dictionary, improve data clarity by creating a business glossary of relevant terms, keep the data overview and descriptions up to date, and submit descriptions to RIHAKE. This will lead to an up-to-date and clear overview of the data available in state registers and databases. The first version of the application was made available in April 2022 and has been developed further based on feedback from institutions.

In summer 2022, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications presented its vision for developing a single data portal based on RIHA and the Estonian open data portal. The key to this development is overall agreement to apply a common standard. This standard³ was prepared in cooperation with the ministry. Applications and interfaces (incl. the official portal for European data) follow a standard that makes data easier to be found. The new data portal is planned to be launched in April 2025.

In 2024, we prepared data quality guidelines and also an overview of the data quality roles and responsibilities within an organisation. We started the process of updating the data governance framework.

² RIHA, administration system of the state information system; https://www.riha.ee/

³ Data description standard (in Estonian), May 2022; https://www.stat.ee/sites/default/files/2022-06/AH_juhis_andmekirjeldus_standard_2.0.pdf

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2.2. Cooperation with other institutions to improve their data governance

In 2024, the priority was to provide support to other institutions as they describe their databases, with an increased focus on ensuring high data quality. A total of 144 data description and data quality projects were carried out. In data description projects, each dataset was described by creating its data dictionary and business glossary. In projects targeting data quality, we identified the key data items and defined the business rules as preparation for setting up a quality monitoring system. Statistics Estonia cooperated with 39 organisations (24 organisations in 2023). We also continued with the description of Statistics Estonia's own datasets. As a significant milestone, all of the statistics published in the statistical database are now also available in the Estonian open data portal.

Compilation of data dictionaries and business glossaries

Data governance comprises multiple aspects and functions which are closely connected in the institutional context: data description is related to data quality, data quality to business rules, business rules to services. A comprehensive overview of all of these is essential for any institution.

Here, the focus of cooperation was on detailed data description. Estonia is otherwise a strong digital society, but data description has been inconsistent and has often been a supplementary task in IT development projects. While semantic web technologies are well-developed, their use has been limited in business and IT applications. In our search for an effective solution, we prioritised getting a semantic overview of data. This is achieved by creating data dictionaries and business glossaries and by helping other institutions do the same. As of 2024, we have reached the stage where we can begin the harmonisation of the glossaries created and focus on improving quality in general. The availability of glossaries and recognition of the importance of the work done by terminology working groups provide a solid foundation for institutions and for Statistics Estonia as well. RIHAKE includes the functionality for creating and managing dictionaries, with standardised descriptions. In the soon-to-be-launched data portal, users can browse data using the new data descriptions and view the terminology of registers and databases; this should improve data clarity and (re)usability.

Improvement of data quality

In 2024, Statistics Estonia provided assistance and advice to 16 institutions regarding the implementation of quality methodologies. Institutions still have the greatest need for practical guidelines and examples, to help them solve quality problems and ensure compliance with data quality requirements. RIHAKE is the tool used by institutions to add data descriptions and to manage their data. The new data portal, which will be available soon, will allow institutions to submit good data descriptions via a machine-to-machine interface. Other applications (e.g. Accurity and SelectZero) have been implemented to monitor data quality; these offer both data description and quality management functionalities. The new tools are mostly adopted by institutions who have high volumes of data and who are under pressure to manage the data better.

An institution's basic data – the unique data collected in a register – still need attention. Guidelines for determining basic data were released in 2024 ("Põhiandmete olulisuse hindamise juhend asutustele", Ernst & Young), outlining basic data by type. The actual determination of basic data requires a substantial contribution from the data holders. In this context, Statistics Estonia also plays an important role as it helps institutions to describe their data. An important step in the implementation of a quality monitoring system in institutions is the definition of business rules. These are requirements for data that are needed for an overview of data and for implementing a consistent quality monitoring system. In 2025, Statistics Estonia will continue cooperation with institutions for the application of data quality methodologies.

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3. Data literacy

Our goal is to promote the ability to use data, while being the main reliable source for data about Estonia.

3.1. Development of digital services

In 2024, we continued to upgrade our applications and focused on improvements in usability. We continued to develop Statistics Estonia's main website and applied our visual identity across all applications.

In the first half of 2024, we launched the updated earnings application. It allows Statistics Estonia to continue to provide information about average and median earnings and about differences in the earnings of women and men in Estonia.

Cooperation between Statistics Estonia and the Land and Spatial Development Board began in early 2024 to provide users of spatial data with new ways to explore the data published in the statistical database. The proposed solution was analysed, and the required functions were defined. The new map application was developed in the second half of 2024 and finished by the end of the year. It was made public at the end of the first quarter of 2025.

The dashboards application, created in 2020, is an excellent tool for informed, more data-driven decisionmaking. The application uses data from the statistical database. Other institutions and associations can order a dashboard based on their data needs. There was again strong interest in this possibility in the second half of 2024, with Statistics Estonia asked to produce five different dashboards. Last year, we also added a dashboard about the Cohesive Estonia Strategy 2030. In the first half of 2025, we will complete dashboards about migration, equal treatment, statistics about Tallinn, and the building materials industry.

3.2. Environment for re-use of data for research

In 2022, Statistics Estonia began to develop a new information system in order to offer data sharing services, as it is required to do by law.

The new information system is an environment for the re-use of datasets for research. It will integrate data sharing for analysis and services for researchers.

In August 2022, we put the project out to tender, and analysis with the developer began in November. Stage 1 developments were finished in early 2024, and they included:

- user interface with data directory. The search module is based on Statistics Estonia's data directory which consists of metadata mirrored from the meta-information system (Colectica) through automatic data exchange. This data directory is indexed and allows full text search, it can be browsed and filtered by agreed criteria.
- access module which distinguishes authorised users and public view, based on user role. The search view is public. Users must log in and sign a contract to order datasets or use micro-data for analysis.
- process for ordering datasets and for delivering requested data (excl. preparation of datasets)
- process for managing institutions and users connected with an order or a contract
- description of dataset preparation, research execution, and the secure environment for accessing and analysing microdata and the research outcomes



• storage of input data and results: where and how are the data stored, who has access to the data after the end of the project, what is the data destruction and preservation policy.

At the moment, the focus is on preparing the data directory, which will continue to be updated in the future. The information system will be completed by the end of the first half of 2025.

3.3. Development of data competence

Statistics Estonia's main responsibility is to release official statistics, but in addition to that we also promote data literacy. We want to improve people's ability to find and process relevant data, which includes providing different ways for exploring data. Our goal is to offer even better data assistance to users and guide them to the data they need. This way, we help people to understand the data better and use our products for maximum value. Statistics help to make good, informed decisions.

From the perspective of data literacy, in 2024, we published 267 data stories, including 125 news releases, 93 news articles and 49 blog posts. We also gave 112 interviews. The growing public need for data is evidenced by the number of media inquiries that we answered – 458 in 2024 (295 in 2021, 448 in 2022, 497 in 2023). By the end of the year, our social media channels had about 64,000 followers.

Based on users' requests, we organise training and briefing sessions to show which statistics and which applications are available. In 2024, we conducted 11 user seminars for schools, universities and public institutions. There was also a training seminar for accountants who report data to Statistics Estonia.

At the end of March 2024, we again celebrated the data literacy week, which this time focused on policymakers. Representatives from ministries and other government institutions gathered for a workshop where Statistics Estonia gave an overview of all the data we provide. The greatest amount of data about Estonia can be found on Statistics Estonia's website, and the aim of the workshop was to show how and where users can find the specific data that they need. It was reaffirmed that, pursuant to the Official Statistics Act, personal data are confidential and Statistics Estonia does not release information about any specific individuals or enterprises; confidential microdata are not shared with other government institutions for monitoring or other purposes. During the workshop, we also described our services, both free and paid services. To ensure maximum gains from the workshop, participants were encouraged to submit questions (anonymously) in advance about finding the required statistics or about methodology, for example. On the day of the workshop, Statistics Estonia's analysts and data scientists helped to find all the answers.

In October, we celebrated the European Statistics Day. The 9th European Statistics Day had the motto 'Official statistics, a window for understanding society'. Everyone was welcome to celebrate the Statistics Day with us on 18 October at the Delta Centre in Tartu, where we had planned a day of exciting presentations and discussions to promote data literacy. The event was organised together with the Institute of Mathematics and Statistics of the University of Tartu. There were presentations by Kadri Rootalu from Statistics Estonia ("Why do we need official statistics in the era of big data?"), by Margus Niitsoo from the foundation SA Liberaalne Kodanik ("The importance of public data in election forecasting"), and by Natalja Pervjakova from the Estonian Genome Centre ("From genes to society: studying population trends with the help of the MinuGeenivaramu portal").

The Andmepärl competition has been introduced to promote data literacy and use of statistics, and to recognise outstanding presentations of data. The competition has two categories: best data story and best infographic. The best data story in 2024 was the series of Digilab data stories published by the National Library of Estonia – with this series, Krister Kruusmaa, Peeter Tinitsi and Laura Nemvalts offer an excellent opportunity to explore our cultural heritage through data. The best infographic in 2024 was the packaging waste statistics visualised by Liis Rohemets for the Environment Agency to show the amount and types of packaging waste generated in Estonia in the last 20 years and the amount of waste recycled.

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Each year, Statistics Estonia awards the young statistician's prize named after Albert Pullerits. The aim of the Albert Pullerits prize is to recognise young people who help to promote statistics as an important branch of science; motivate young people interested in statistics to apply and develop statistical methods; and strengthen Estonia's collaboration with research Statistics institutions. The prize is given to a student whose Bachelor's or Master's thesis in the area of demography, social life, economy or the environment applies or develops a statistical method. In 2024, the young statistician's prize was awarded to Alice Mikk for her Master's thesis "Firm-level Predictors of Labour Tax Evasion" defended at the Tallinn University of Technology. Mikk analysed how financial and nonfinancial indicators of enterprises correlate with the probability of an enterprise engaging in labour tax evasion. The award was presented to Alice Mikk at the European Statistics Day event held in Tartu in October.



Alice Mikk Photo: Statistics Estonia

3.4. Cooperation in Estonia

Customer focus is a top priority for Statistics Estonia. For us, it means openness, recognising the needs of partners and data providers, and developing the organisation to provide greater value in the data ecosystem. As we build partnerships, we do not assume that policymakers or partners in the private sector have complete knowledge of the statistics we produce. Our goal is to understand their needs and propose the best data-driven solutions. Since 2021, we have held regular meetings with experts from ministries and the Government Office to consult them as we prepare the official statistical programme, to introduce other data services available on request, to give an overview of ongoing data services projects, and to discuss any other matters concerning cooperation. Our partnerships have become stronger each year, as our statistics teams meet regularly with ministries to review and update the contents of official statistics or to find solutions for our partners' data needs. In addition to that, we build relationships with private-sector data holders for mutual gain from new technological solutions, for example, related to privacy enhancing technologies and data protection. In 2024, we started a project for analysing the possible introduction of mobile positioning data using privacy enhancing technologies. The aim is to create value from data for many users, create a favourable regulatory environment, and also reduce the administrative burden for respondents. We have been able to test our new data services in cooperation with various partners from both the private and public sector, including the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Estonian Association of Small and Medium Enterprises, the Estonian Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce, the KARDIS association of accountants working in Russian, and several other business associations, but also many enterprises, including Kaubamaja Grupp AS, Delfi Meedia, ICA Group, Telia Eesti AS, etc.

One of the priorities in our national and international cooperation is to be involved in any matters concerning data and statistics as early as possible in the policy shaping stages (including the drafting of legislation). In 2024, we took an active part in the implementation of the European Data Governance Act and proactively suggested solutions based on our data governance expertise.

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4. Organisational development

In terms of organisational development, Statistics Estonia has a customer-centric future perspective wherein we ensure high data quality and continue to offer relevant, reliable and meaningful information. In 2024, we continued to develop a service-oriented management model to achieve an increased focus on customers and better role clarity. We mapped our services and competency models and began preparations for planning an internal feedback system. We finalised the model of service-oriented management. As preparation for its implementation, we conducted training in change management for team leads and other management. In 2024, we also finalised the preparations required for the gradual application of the roles and principles of service-oriented management. In 2025, customer- and service-oriented management will be the main focus of organisational development at Statistics Estonia.

4.1. Employee retention and training

In the next few years, employee retention and training at Statistics Estonia will be affected by the overall measures agreed in the public sector for balancing the state budget, which involves cutting the budgetary costs of government institutions in the years 2025–2028. Statistics Estonia prepared an action plan to achieve the reduced spending targets which already had an impact on the 2024 budget for employee retention. In the coming years, we will be forced to curb expenditure on equipment, training and travel, to review our service standards, and to optimise our workforce (in positions where the work can be reorganised). The budget cuts affected the HR indicators for 2024.

The majority of Statistics Estonia's budget is used for personnel costs, which means that people are, quite literally, our core asset and what our success relies on. In 2024, we had an average of 352 employees, with the average age of 49 years. 81% of the staff were women. Most of our employees are based in the Tallinn office, but we also have smaller offices in Tartu and Viljandi.

84% of Statistics Estonia's employees have higher education. Compared with 2023, this share was up by one percentage point last year. There has been an increase in the share of staff with a Bachelor's degree and staff with a doctorate degree, while the share of employees with professional higher education has decreased.

| 53% | 15% | 4% | 12% |
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| Employees with a | Employees with a | Employees with a doctorate degree | Employees with professional |
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The 2024 report on human resources and wages and salaries in state institutions and related agencies indicates that Statistics Estonia's salary position was 0.3%, which means that our employees receive fair remuneration compared to similar job families and positions in other institutions and agencies. However, the wages at Statistics Estonia are 4.3% lower than in other institutions and agencies. Voluntary labour turnover, which had fallen significantly in 2023 (from 11% to 4%), rose to 7.02% in 2024. It still remained below 9% which is the maximum set within the organisation. The overall labour turnover was up by 1.8 percentage points last year and reached 11.8%.

90.4% of Statistics Estonia's employees participated in training courses last year. The main focus was on inhouse training and briefings organised by Statistics Estonia's employees. Training related to Statistics Estonia's main activities accounted for 16% of all training activities. The share of management training was 23%, and the share of training related to digital competencies, computer skills and IT was 13%. In 2024, we paid considerable

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attention to mental health topics – training sessions focusing on these issues represented 22.4% of all training activities. In addition to local training options, employees also attended training provided through the European Statistical Training Program (ESTP). Due to budget constraints, participation decreased by about half compared with 2023, as Statistics Estonia's employees participated in 12 ESTP training courses last year. The average volume of training per employee was 35 class hours in 2024. Training costs represented 0.6% of total labour costs.

4.2. Technological challenges

Today, national statistical institutes are, in essence, like information technology companies, since virtually all of their work processes are based on information technology in one way or another. The management of information technology at Statistics Estonia is complicated by the fact that our IT developments are managed in cooperation with the Information Technology Centre (RMIT) of the Ministry of Finance. Computer workstation services are provided to us by the Estonian Information and Communication Technology Centre (RIT) who will, in the future, also provide platform services (for hosting applications) and other infrastructure support services. Statistics Estonia oversees the IT budget for its activities, but day-to-day operation is also the responsibility of RMIT. Our annual IT budget is about 2 million euros. Statistics Estonia's work processes are supported by 60 different applications. As of early 2024, 13 of these were outdated software applications (legacy software) that use obsolete technologies (see Figure 7). By the end of 2024, we had carried out developments to replace two of these (or to offer these functionalities elsewhere).

Figure 7. Overview of Statistics Estonia's applications



At the end of 2024, we launched the new data collection application. At first, it could be used for two questionnaires, but it will gradually fully replace the old data collection environment eSTAT (all questionnaires) and will over time also replace VVIS (social surveys). We also finished the Datagate environment which ensures more efficient and uniform transfer of data files. We stopped using two legacy applications: the analysis tool SAS and the outdated internal register system SRS. The remaining legacy applications are spread across the production system at Statistics Estonia, with some outdated technology used in every part of the process. In the annual IT budget, we plan funds for ensuring security patching and maintenance of the legacy software, until the applications can be replaced.

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4.3. International cooperation

Statistics Estonia has defined the following aims for international cooperation: develop comparable statistics based on a range of sources; develop data governance and data science; explore and adopt innovative methods. A separate strategic area of international cooperation involves sharing Estonia's experience with data governance and register-based statistics production with the international community – we participate actively in the development and legal regulation of both fields. As an example, supported by the Technical Support Instrument of the European Commission, we initiated a cooperation project with the national statistical institutes of Germany, the Netherlands and Croatia for developing an internal structure that supports increased data sharing in the public sector. The project continues until the end of 2026.

In 2024, we represented Estonia's interests within the European Statistical System by attending over 60 meetings of different European Commission (Eurostat) working groups for heads of statistical domains, various experts, or technical developers. These working groups develop statistics and prepare proposals for EU legislation; they are hubs of domain-specific knowledge. The Director General of Statistics Estonia represents Estonia in the European Statistical System Committee (ESSC) which met in Luxembourg in February and May 2024 and in Tallinn in October.

In October 2024, Tallinn was the statistics capital of Europe. We hosted the DGINS conference (the annual conference of the Directors General of NSIs) where participants discussed why and how national statistical institutes (NSIs) could go beyond the traditional function of producing official statistics by providing additional data services and serving as data stewards in the national data ecosystem. The conference was attended by 120 top executives of European NSIs from 40 different countries.

The main focus of the Working Party on Statistics of the Council of the European Union was on negotiations over the proposed regulation on labour market statistics on businesses – agreement on its adoption was reached in December 2024. The regulation on labour market statistics on businesses consolidates several existing regulations, providing a more comprehensive framework and prioritising register-based production of statistics (over survey-based statistics that are much more time-consuming and labour-intensive). The regulation also introduces new, innovative statistics that better reflect social changes (e.g. gender pay gap etc.). In addition to that, negotiations concerning the proposed regulation on European statistics on population and housing continued last year involving the three EU institutions (trilogue).

We attended high-level statistics meetings during Belgium's and Hungary's presidency of the Council of the EU. During Belgium's presidency, we discussed possibilities for the strategic development of data literacy. The meeting during Hungary's presidency was dedicated to discussions about the new vision of the European Statistical System. These discussions continued in Tallinn, and it is planned to finalise the vision in 2025.

The 55th session of the UN Statistical Commission in New York approved the reports completed by various statistics working groups over the year. In June, the plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) organised by the UN Economic Committee for Europe (UNECE) was held in Geneva. In 2024, we continued to lead the UNECE Task Force on the changing role of national statistical offices, which was set up a year earlier and is dedicated to defining the roles for data stewardship at national statistical institutes.

In the same month, we also attended the meeting of the OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy (CSSP) to discuss the OECD's AI principles, difficulties with getting respondents to answer in surveys, and use of models and estimates in official statistics. In 2024, the Director General of Statistics Estonia Mr Urmet Lee was elected a member of the Bureau of the OECD Committee on Statistics. The OECD working groups are an important source of information for us, regarding the changes in the statistical system amid the fast-developing data economy. Statistics Estonia's employees participated in the OECD working groups for national accounts, financial statistics, foreign trade in goods and services statistics, research and technology, and household wealth.

Cooperation between Baltic NSIs is overseen by the steering group consisting of the Directors General of the three national statistical authorities and their deputies. In 2024, the steering group met in Latvia and approved the plan of activities for 2024–2025 by domain. There are frequent meetings with colleagues from the Baltic countries and from Finland, both between experts and at management level.

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In 2024, we again had visitors who came to learn from our experience and share their own. We provided training about statistics production, register-based statistics and data governance to statisticians and digital government officials from European Union candidate countries (Ukraine, Moldova) as well as Mongolia, Malaysia and Gabon.