



Luxembourg,  
ESTAT-DG/MK/PB

**NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF  
DIRECTORS-GENERAL AND PRESIDENTS OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL INSTITUTES OF  
THE EUROPEAN STATISTICAL SYSTEM**

**Subject: European Statistical System's response to COVID-19**

Dear colleagues,

I am addressing you at a remarkably difficult and extraordinary time. The outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19) has thoroughly disrupted our personal lives and changed the way we go about our daily work.

For this reason, I am extremely grateful to those of you who have shared their personal concerns with me in the past few days. We all share the conviction that ensuring full safety and well-being of our staff and their families is the primary goal of the hour.

At the same time, in line with our mission, we also need to ensure the continuity of the production of high-quality statistics on Europe. European citizens and policymakers rely on our data and need them to take important decisions to address the implications of COVID-19, be it on a personal or a professional level.

However, the current situation, which includes the imposition of a state of emergency and full or partial lock-downs in some countries, has posed enormous difficulties to statistical production. Many of you have been forced to stop conducting face-to-face interviews or are currently facing disruptions related to the flow of administrative data.

Despite the efforts and contingency measures you have undertaken to ensure the smooth running of statistical operations, in particular with respect to national and EU obligations, risks related to meeting deadlines and guaranteeing the quality of statistics still exist.

For this reason, effectively addressing and dealing with the common current challenges is crucial for all of us. Dominik Rozkrut, the Chair of the Partnership Group (PG), and I have agreed that the next meeting of the PG, to be held via video-conference this coming Friday, 20 March, will focus on defining the most urgent challenges and formulating joint responses and actions.

I am confident that the forthcoming discussions will allow us all to set the right course of action for the European Statistical System in the weeks and months to come.

On a personal and a more positive note, I believe that the current crisis will not only clearly underline the importance of the work done by the ESS, but also fully demonstrate the value of official statistics for our societies.

Yours sincerely,

(eSigned)  
Mariana Kotzeva