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Directorate A: Cooperation in the European Statistical System; international cooperation;
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Task Force Peer Reviews

REPORT ON THE EUROSTAT 2015 USER SATISFACTION SURVEY

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1. Background – about the survey

Eurostat's mission is to be the leading provider of high quality statistics on Europe. In order to measure the degree to which it meets its obligations towards its users, Eurostat carried out a general User Satisfaction Survey (USS) over the period of July – September 2015. It was based on the agreed model questionnaire for the European Statistical System and was designed to obtain a better knowledge about users, their needs and satisfaction with the services provided by Eurostat. The first survey of this kind was held in 2007 and then repeated in 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. The USS 2015 is, therefore, the seventh of a general nature.

The present survey covered four main aspects:

- information on types of users and uses of European statistics,
- quality aspects,
- trust in European statistics,
- dissemination of statistics.

The survey was carried out online, with a link on Eurostat website. It was launched on 9 July and was open until 25 September. Email invitations were sent out to about 160 000 registered Eurostat users.

A total of 4447 replies were received, less than the maximum number of 4839 received in 2014, even if the number of email invitations sent this year was the largest ever. The reasons for a slightly decreased number of responses could be due partly to the high frequency of the survey, which is a yearly survey since 2011; it might also be due to the fatigue effect on users who were invited in the same period to participate to other public consultations (on the extension of the European statistical programme, on the Integrated European Social Statistics, on the Framework regulation integrating business statistics (FRIBS) and on the Strategy for Agricultural Statistics 2020 and beyond) following the new Commission policy to consult the general public for all revisions of legislation.

The questionnaire was similar to the one used in 2014, allowing for a comparative analysis over time. It was also possible to compare the results of the survey with those of the previous years for almost all questions. Only a couple of new questions were introduced in the dissemination section to learn more about the users' opinion on the new Eurostat website.

To obtain a better overview of types of users, different user groups were distinguished in the survey: 1) students, academic and private users, 2) EU, international and political organisations, 3) business, 4) government and 5) other users.

A separate specific survey was carried out for press and media users. However, some media users have nonetheless responded to the general user satisfaction survey. Their replies were classified under the category “other users”.

The results presented in this report constitute a summary of the most interesting and compelling findings, supported by graphs. For the first time this year, together with the main

differences compared to the previous survey, we present an evolution of the users' opinion since 2011, date of the first yearly and fully comparable survey.

2. Main outcomes

General aspects

- In 2015 the survey was open on line for two months and a half getting 4447 replies, 8.1% less than the maximum in 2014 (4839).
- Looking at the distribution of respondents by user groups, students, academic and private users accounted for the largest proportion (43.5%), followed by business (25.2%) and government (19.3%). Replies from international organisations, including EU institutions, and from other users both accounted for more than 5%. The distribution remains very similar to the previous year.
- Like in 2014, all respondents indicated that “Economy and finance” and “Population and social conditions” were the two areas they used most frequently. The former received from 16.9% to 19.8% of responses whereas the latter ranged from 14.2% to 20.2% across all user groups.
- As in 2014, “research” (23.8%) and “general background information” (18.5%) were the most common purposes for all users combined. However, the purposes of statistical data use varied by groups of respondents reflecting different needs and nature of work of each group.
- Almost two thirds of participants (66.5%) indicated European statistics to be either “essential” or “important” for their work. Accounting for a breakdown by purposes, statistical data were again most significant for “monitoring and policy formulation”, and “preparing legislation” (“essential” for 41.0% and 40.1% of respondents, respectively).
- Almost one quarter of users (24.3%) stated they used European statistics in their daily or weekly activities, 29.6% did so on a monthly basis and the remaining 46.0% at other intervals.
- Similarly to the previous year, Eurostat database stood out as the most popular source of information with 75.2% of all respondents accessing it for their purposes. Nearly half of the users (48.9%) utilised Eurostat’s main tables. Database and main tables were followed by Statistics in Focus, Eurostat’s press release and Statistics Explained, which accounted for respective shares of 24.7%, 24.4% and 23.9% of all users.
- User assessment of the data sources (i.e. Eurostat's database and different types of publications) was generally positive, passing the 60% of "very good/good" judgements for Statistics in Focus (62.4%), Statistics Explained (60.3%) and Regional Yearbook (60.2%). Only for the mobile applications, which were used by a mere 3.4% of the respondents in any case, the rate of "very good/good" replies was just below 50% (48.0%).

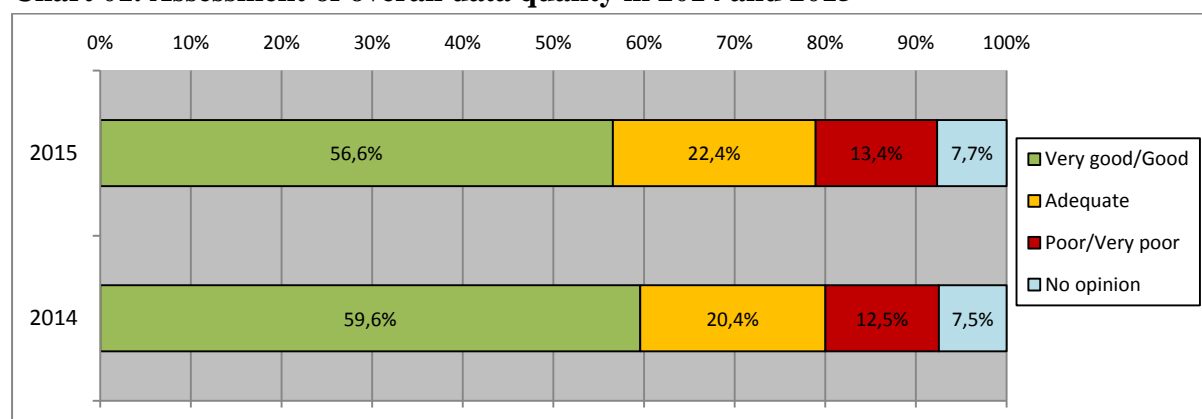
- Eurostat was interested to check if users continue to trust European statistics in a period when European citizens sometimes seem sceptic about the role and functioning of the EU institutions. As in previous years, responses were overwhelmingly positive, with 94.2% of users stating they trusted European statistics greatly or tended to trust them. Only 3.2% said they did not trust statistics and 2.6% had no opinion.

Quality aspects

Overall quality

- The level of satisfaction with the overall quality of European data remained high, with 56.6% of all users considering the quality to be “very good” or “good” (slightly less than in 2014) and 22.4% considering it as “adequate” (slightly more than in 2014).
- At a more disaggregated level, “Economy and finance” received the highest positive evaluation (60.9% of “very good/good” answers). It was followed by “International trade” and “Population and social conditions”, with shares of 58.3% and 57.7%, respectively. These are the same three areas which constantly outperform the average every year.
- On the other side of the spectrum, “Regional statistics” “Environment statistics” and “Energy and transport” were among the ones with lowest share of positive views on overall quality, with 49.8%, 50.5% and 52.2%, respectively. Nevertheless, all statistical domains (excluding “other statistics”) received at least around half of “very good/good” evaluations.
- The quality of Eurostat’s data fares very well compared with other statistical data producers. The majority of participants saw the quality as better or same, resulting in a combined share of 64.2%. Among other positive sides of Eurostat, users highlighted better quality and reliability of the data provided, more complete, more detailed and harmonised data, better coverage and comparability, more metadata, better interface and search engine, and the possibility to download data for free.

Chart 01. Assessment of overall data quality in 2014 and 2015

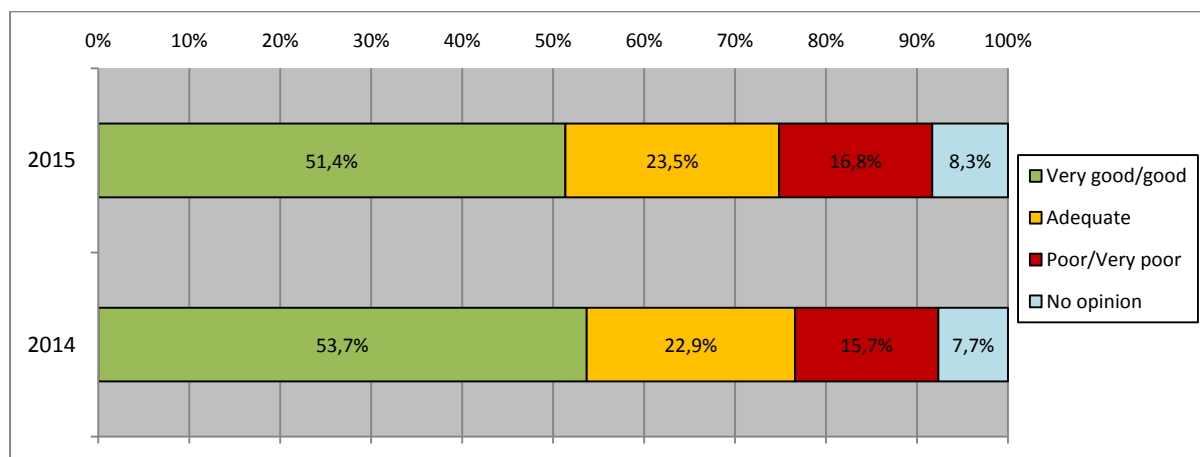


Source: Eurostat 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

Timeliness

- On average 51.4% of users saw timeliness of European data as “very good” or “good”, 23.5% as “adequate” and 16.8% as “poor” or “very poor”. Compared to 2014, this constitutes a slightly smaller share of the “very good/good” evaluations, a slightly larger share of “adequate” evaluations, and a slightly larger share of “poor/very poor” ones.

Chart 02. Assessment of overall timeliness in 2014 and 2015



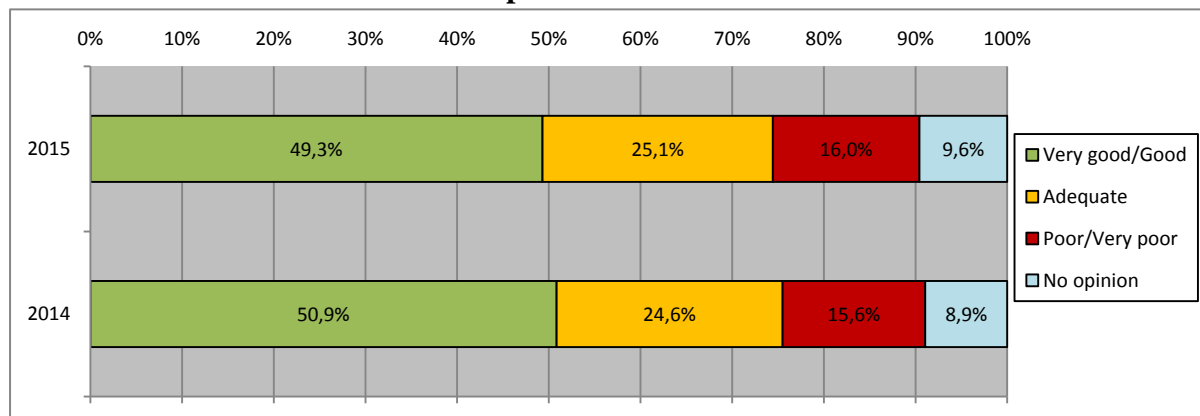
Source: Eurostat 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

- From a statistical domain perspective, “Economy and finance” was again rated as having the best timeliness across all areas, followed this time by “International trade” and “Population and social conditions”, accounting for 55.6%, 53.3% and 52.6% of “very good/good” responses, respectively.
- Looking at the user groups, 54.0% of government officials rated the timeliness as “very good/good” and were closely followed by students and private users (53.6%). Businesses were the least enthusiastic (45.0%).

Completeness

- On average for all areas, 49.3% of users saw data completeness as “very good” or “good”, 25.1% thought it was “adequate” and 16.0% perceived it as “poor” or “very poor”.

Chart 03. Assessment of overall completeness in 2014 and 2015



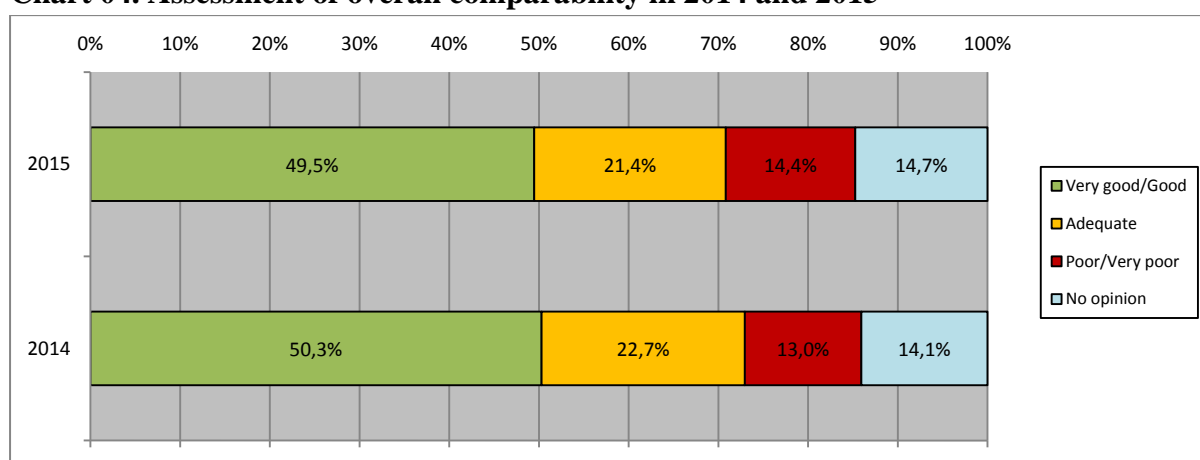
Source: Eurostat 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

- “Economy and finance” once again stood out as the best rated domain, followed by “International trade” (54.2% and 53.3% of “very good/good” replies, respectively). The least performing area remained “Regional statistics” with over a fifth (23.8%) of respondents stating completeness of this domain was either “poor” or “very poor”.
- From the user group perspective, EU, international and political organisations were most positive about the completeness of European data (53.1% of “very good/good” ratings).

Comparability

- The average of “very good/good” responses across all areas was 49.5% this year, 21.4% saw comparability as “adequate” and 14.4% did not feel positive about it.

Chart 04. Assessment of overall comparability in 2014 and 2015



Source: Eurostat 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

- Once again, “Economy and finance” as well as “International trade” were among the highest rated domains with 54.5% and 50.8% of “very good” and “good” shares respectively. Similarly to data timeliness and completeness, “Regional statistics” received the lowest share of positive responses; however, more than 2 in 5 respondents (43.8%) saw the comparability of this domain as either “very good” or “good”.
- This year it was the EU, international and political organisations that were most satisfied with the comparability of the data. 56.9% of them saw this quality aspect as “very good” or “good”, an increase of 6.9% points compared to 2014.

Dissemination aspects

- One of the key new questions of the user satisfaction survey 2015 was an enquiry about the satisfaction with the new version of Eurostat's website. The results have revealed overwhelming support to the updated version, with nearly three in four users, not counting those who did not express an opinion, claiming to be “satisfied” (74.2%). Further 19.6% stated that they were “partly satisfied”. In other words, the vast majority of the surveyed website users were at least partly satisfied with the current

version. The new website is probably the reason why the satisfaction with other dissemination aspects has improved in 2015.

- This year, there has been an increase in the share of the respondents finding the access to European statistics easy, with 50.7% of the respondents describing the access as “easy”, in comparison to 45.3% in 2014.
- With regard to the presentation of European data, 65.4% of respondents found European statistics easy to understand, an increase of 8.2% points compared to 2014, and a further 21.6% “partly easy”.
- As in previous years, respondents were very positive about the content of Eurostat’s website. On average 17.8% of all users were “very satisfied” with it and another 47.5% thought it was “good”. This gives a combined 65.3% of positive feedback which is highly valuable for Eurostat and which rose by 2.3% points from 2014.
- Respondents were less positive on the website’s technical characteristics, even if some limited improvements could be registered. Just as in 2014, overall performance and speed as well as database extraction tools received relatively high evaluations with respective shares of “very good/good” responses reaching 53.7% and 50.8%.
- Search facilities along with navigation to required information were once again the ones with highest percentage of “poor/very poor” responses. As the results were similar, although slightly better, to last years, it can be concluded that these attributes still require further attention and improvements.
- User assessment of Eurostat’s mobile applications were quite similar to that of the visualisation tools, with 61.6% of the users rating EU economy application either as very good or good, and respectively 59.4% and 57.8% rating Country profiles application and Quiz as “very good/good”.
- Users’ awareness of Eurostat’s release calendar, which provides information on the dates and times of Euro indicators’ publications, remained relatively low. Less than a third of users seemed to be aware of it (28.3%), a slightly smaller share than in 2014 (29.2%). Among user groups, government as well as EU, international and political organisations were most informed, with the shares of aware users being 41.2% and 39.5%, respectively. However, a large part of the users who are aware of the release calendar, are satisfied with its content (67.6% in 2015 vs. 64.2% in 2014).
- Metadata was utilised by almost a half of European data users (47.4%), and the share of metadata users who find it easily accessible has grown to more than a half (52.8%) this year. Users were also generally satisfied with metadata sufficiency. On average 55.3% - virtually the same as last year - found metadata sufficient for their purposes and another 38.6% partly sufficient. 6.1% stated metadata was not sufficient.
- Out of all respondents who expressed their opinion, 59.1% saw the interest of the Eurostat’s Twitter feed as good or very good.

- Leaving out those with no opinion or not aware of the user support function, nearly three in four of the respondents (74.4%) said they were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the support service provided by Eurostat – the figure raised by 2.5% points from 2014. The share of unsatisfied users was 8.1% this year.
- The level of overall satisfaction with Eurostat’s *data and services* was quite high with 67.0% of all respondents evaluating data and services as “very good” or “good”, 22.2% as “adequate” and only 3.3% as “poor” or “very poor”.

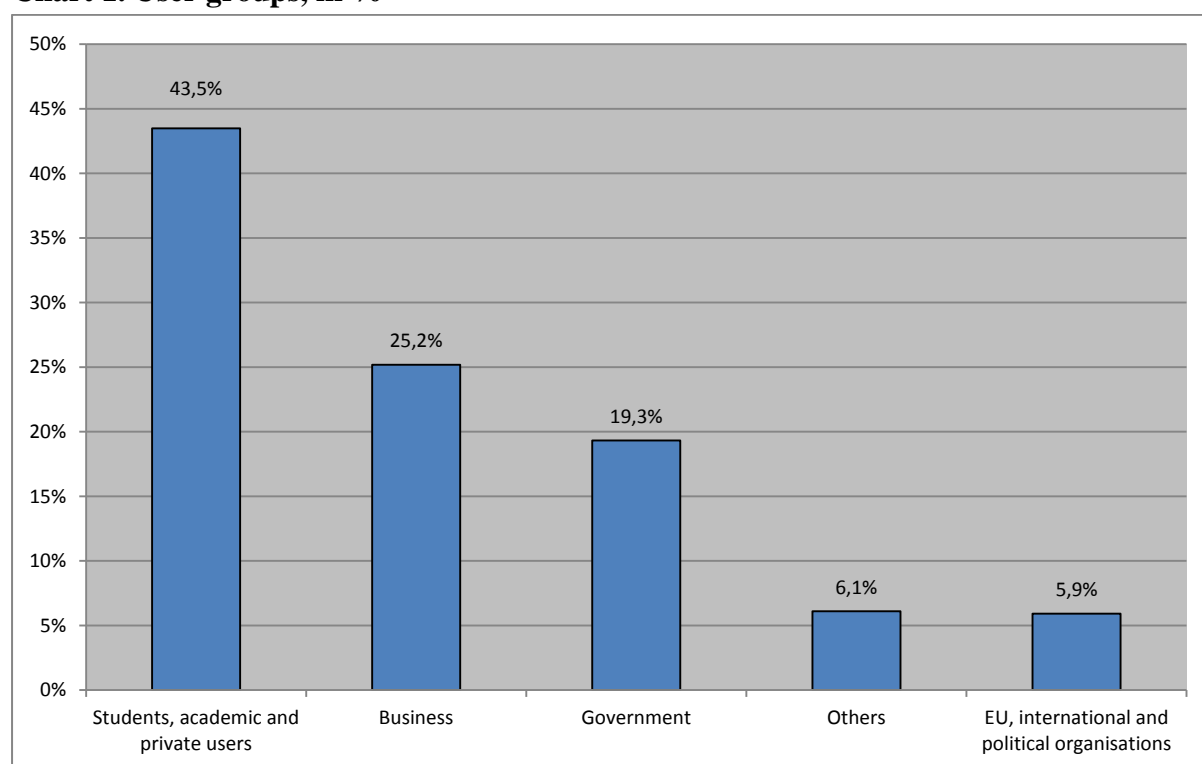
3. Results of the USS 2015

3.1 General information

3.1.1 Who uses Eurostat's European statistics?

Looking at the distribution of responses by user groups (Chart 1), students, academic and private users accounted for the largest proportion (43.5%), followed by business (25.2%), and government (19.3%). Replies from international organisations, including EU institutions, and from other users both accounted for more than 5% of the total responses. The results remain very similar to the previous year.

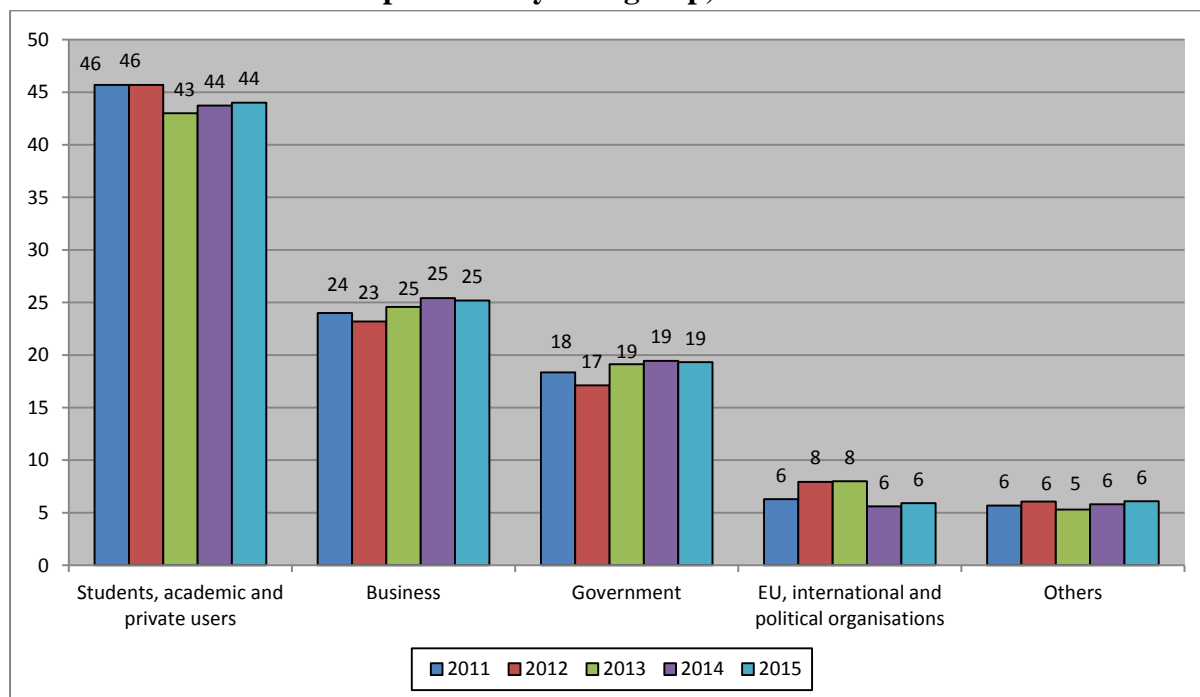
Chart 1. User groups, in %



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

Throughout the last five years of the User Satisfaction Survey execution the distribution of the different user groups remained largely similar (Chart 2). This guarantees that the results can be compared through the years.

Chart 2. Distribution of respondents by user group, in %



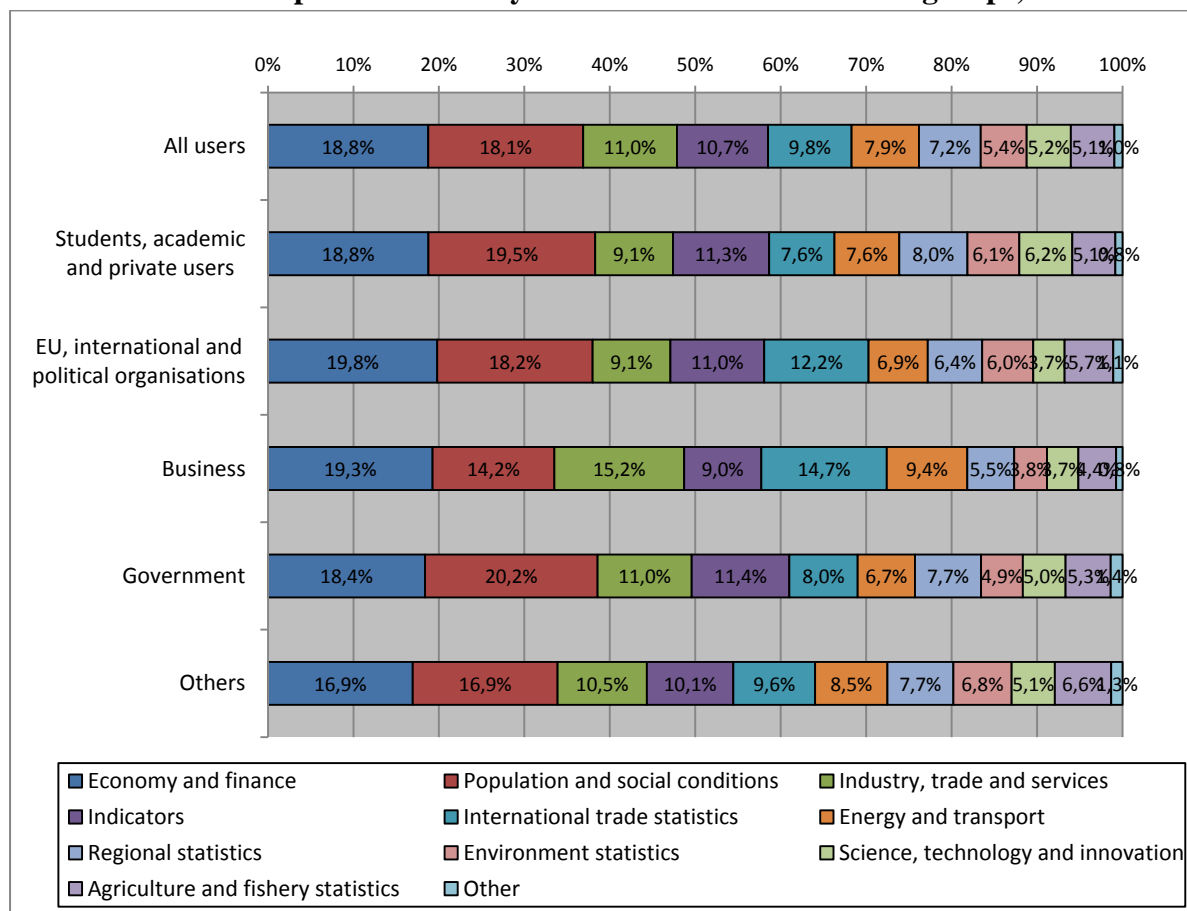
Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

As in previous years, geographical distribution of European statistics' users remained strongly tilted towards the EU countries with 84.2% of respondents coming from the 28 Member States and remaining 15.8% from non-EU countries. On a country level, the biggest proportion again came from Germany (11.8%), which was followed by Italy (7.3%), France (7.3%) and Spain (7.1%). It is worth noting that relatively high percentage of users coming from Belgium (6.9%) can be explained by their relationship to the European institutions based in Brussels.

Participants were also asked to specify which statistics they used most frequently and given an option to pick more than one answer. As seen from Chart 3, "Economy and finance" and "Population and social conditions" remained the two dominating areas across all user groups, except for business users. The former domain received from 16.9% to 19.8% of responses whereas the latter ranged from 14.2% to 20.2% across user groups. For business representatives, "Economy and finance" was found to be the most widely used domain (19.3%), followed by "Industry, trade and services" (15.2%), "International trade" (14.7%) and then "Population and social conditions" statistics (14.2%).

The least utilised statistics were "Environment", "Science, technology and innovation" and "Agriculture and fishery", with approximate average shares of around 5%. When compared to the results of last year, proportions remained roughly the same.

Chart 3. Use of European statistics by statistical domains and user groups, in %



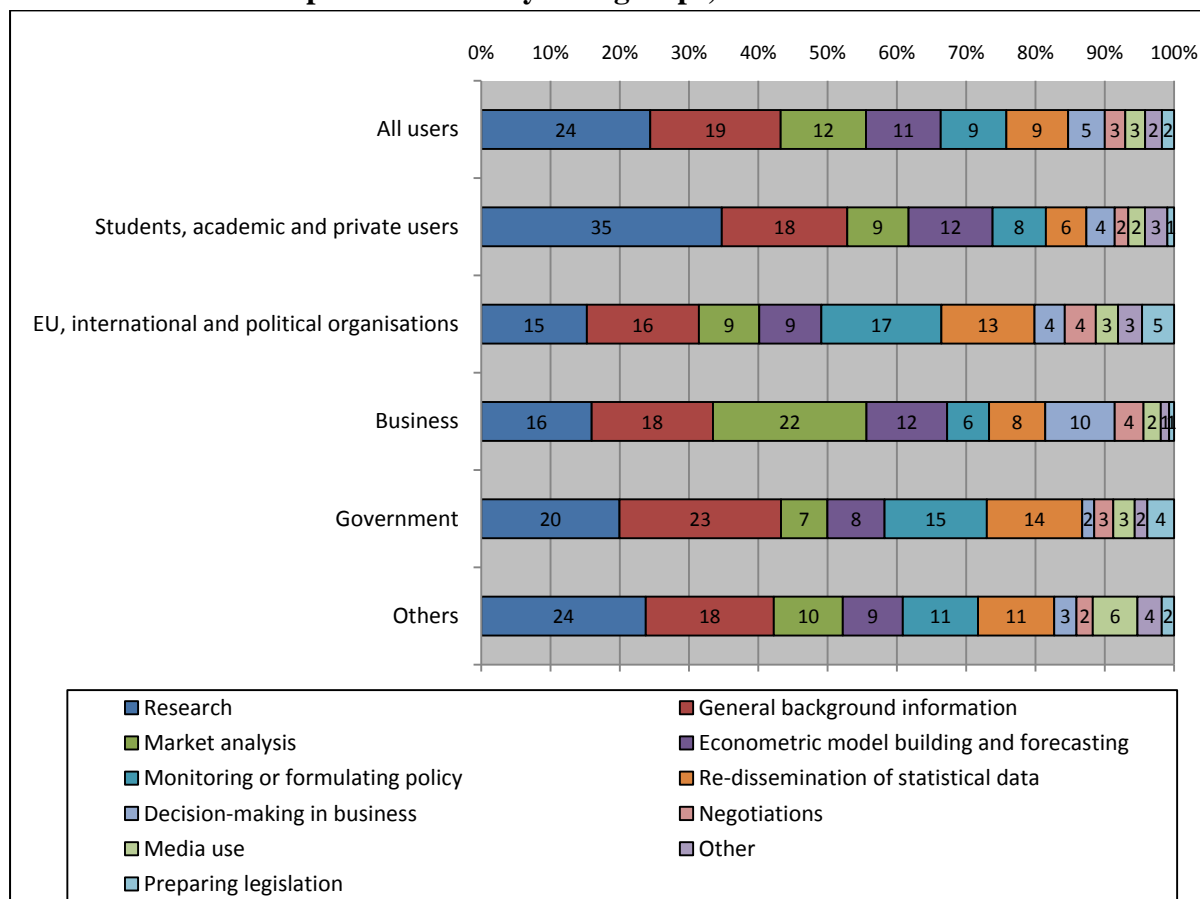
Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

3.1.2 To do what?

The users of European statistics were also asked to indicate the purpose of their interest in it. Multiple responses were available. As shown in Chart 4, “research” (23.8%) and “general background information” (18.5%) were the most common purposes for all users combined. However, a closer look at the purposes reveals a different nature of statistical data use by groups of respondents.

As in previous years, “research” remained the main purpose for students and academia. Combined with the fact that this user group represents 43.5% of the overall pool of respondents, it explains a large total share of “research” and its dominance compared to other domains, despite the fact that it is not the primary purpose for other user groups.

Chart 4. Uses of European statistics by user groups, in %



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

EU, international and political organisations mostly used statistics for “monitoring and formulating policy” (17.3%) and then as “background information” (16.2%). For businesses, “market analysis” remains the most popular purpose (22.1%) while “background information” gets the highest rate from government representatives (23.3%). These results are mostly in line with the analysis of User Satisfaction Survey 2014.

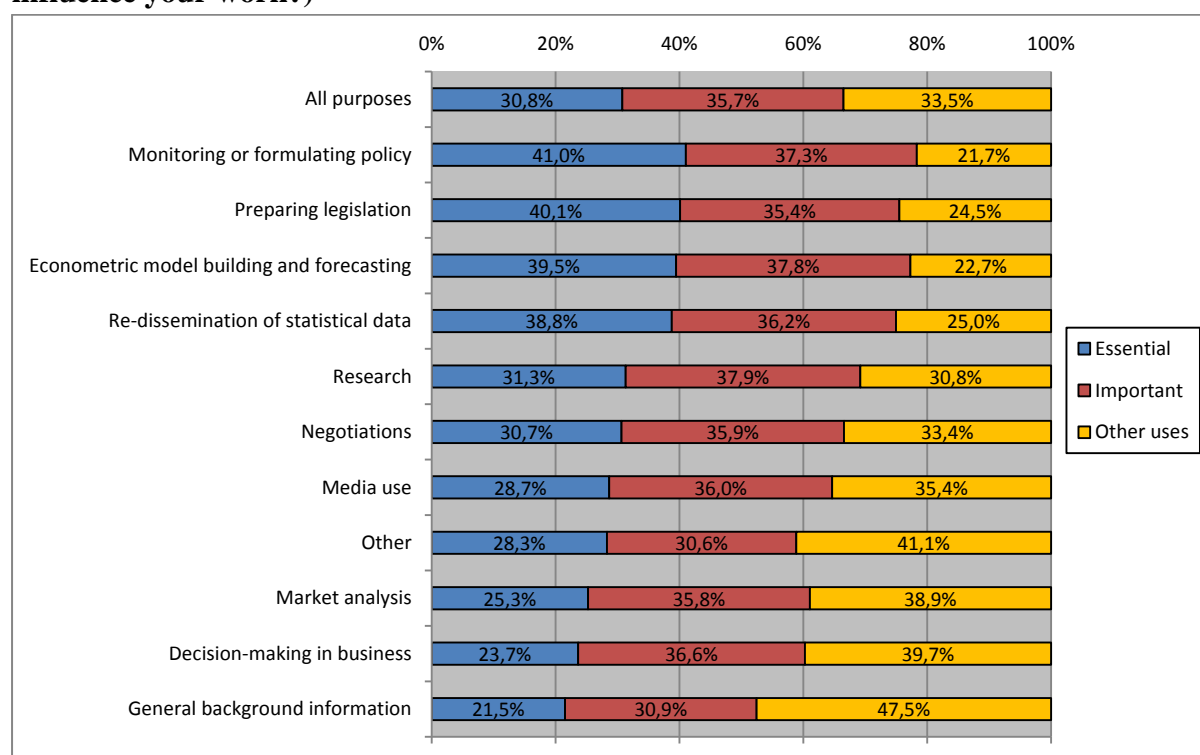
3.1.2.1 How important are the statistics?

Looking at the importance of European statistics, almost two thirds of participants (66.5%) indicated them to be either “essential” or “important” for their work (Chart 5).

Accounting for a breakdown by purposes, statistical data were most significant for “monitoring and policy formulation”, where it was indicated to be “essential” by 41.0% of respondents and “important” by 37.3%. “Monitoring and policy formulation” was followed by “preparing legislation”, with shares of 40.1% in the category “essential” and 35.4% in “important”.

As in the previous year, European statistics were considered least essential for “market analysis”, “decision-making in business”, and “general background information” (25.3%, 23.7% and 21.5% share of responses, respectively).

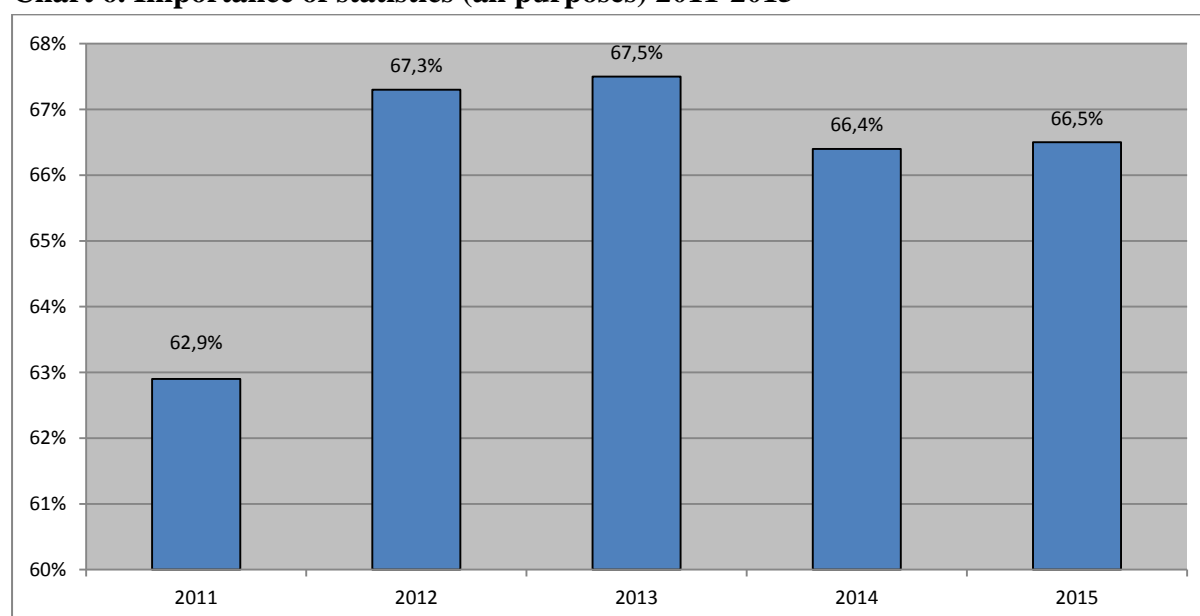
Chart 5. Importance of statistics for different uses, in % (How do European statistics influence your work?)



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

Chart 6 below shows the importance of statistics over time, throughout the period between 2011 and 2015. The importance of statistics remained high during this period, with around two thirds of participants (62.9% to 67.5%) reporting them to be either “essential” or “important” for their work. The figure was especially high in the four recent years (ranging between 66.4% and 67.5%).

Chart 6. Importance of statistics (all purposes) 2011-2015



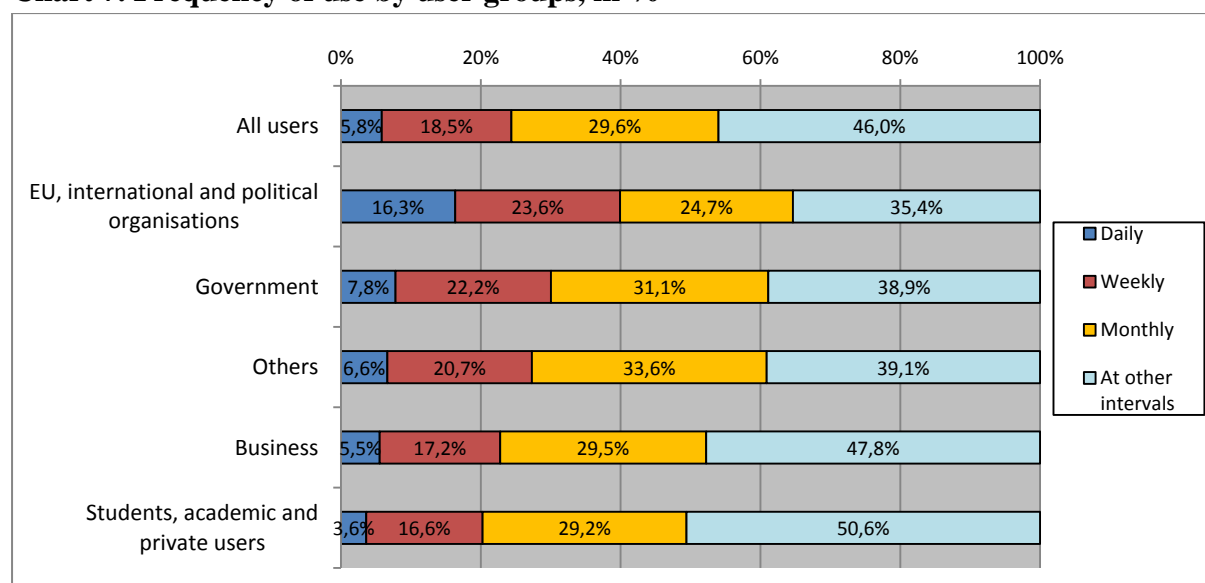
Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

3.1.2.2 How often are European statistics used?

Knowing the purpose of use and importance of statistical information, it is interesting to see how frequently statistics were used. As Chart 7 shows, almost one quarter of users (24.3%) stated they used European statistics in their daily or weekly activities, 29.6% did so on a monthly basis and the remaining 46.0% at other intervals. When compared to the results of the survey carried out for media users, statistical information was used more frequently by press and media representatives, with a percentage of daily and weekly usage exceeding 75%.

Users from EU, international and political organisations remain, as in previous years, the most frequent users of European data with 39.9% using them daily or weekly.

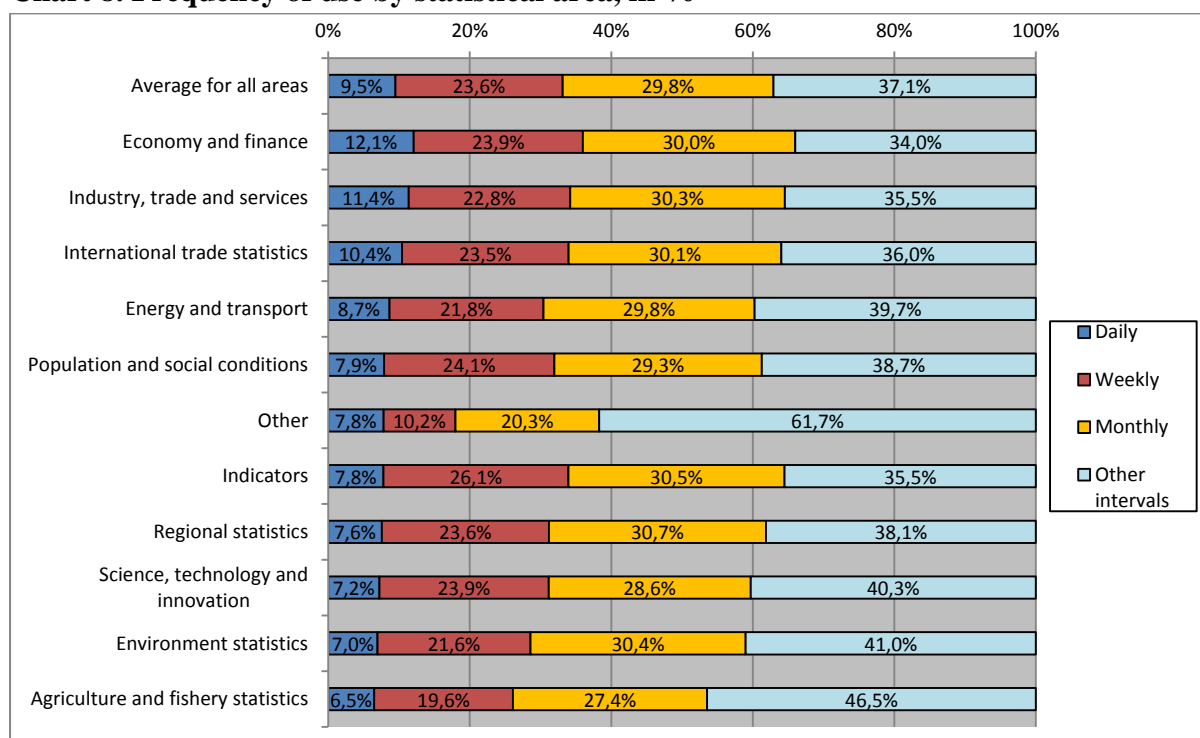
Chart 7. Frequency of use by user groups, in %



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

The frequency also differed by statistical domains (Chart 8). Highest daily use was found in the areas of “Economy and finance” (12.1%), “Industry, trade and services” (11.4%) and “International Trade Statistics” (10.4%). On the opposite, least frequently utilised domains contained “Agriculture and fishery”, “Environment” and “Science, Technology and Innovation”. The differences, however, were rather small.

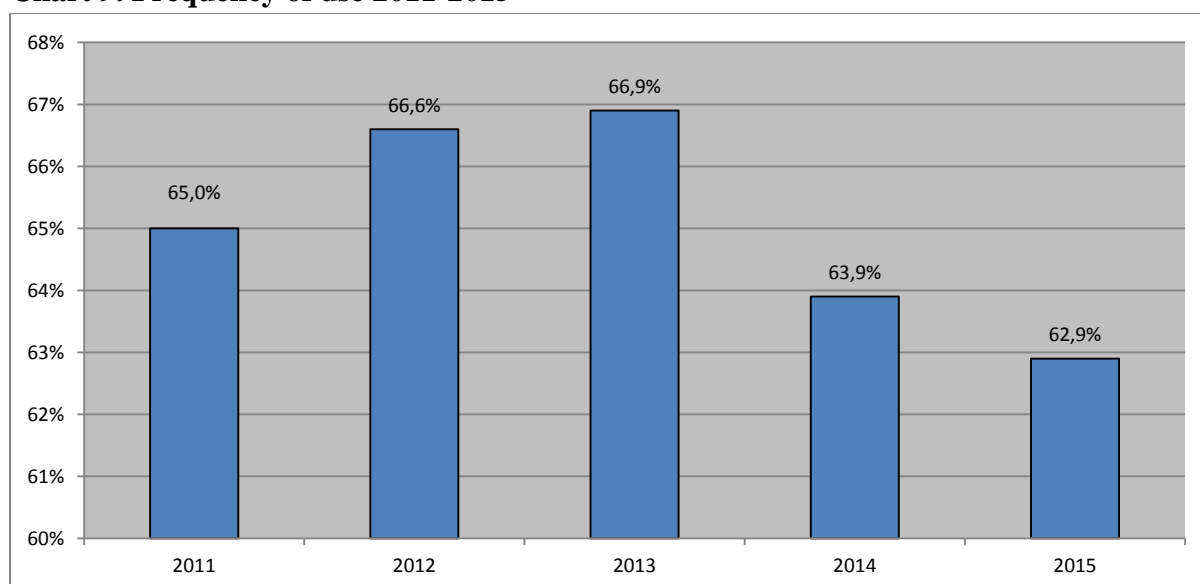
Chart 8. Frequency of use by statistical area, in %



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

Chart 9 illustrates the trend of the frequency of use between 2011 and 2015. More specifically, it shows the percentage of respondents who use Eurostat's statistics on daily, weekly or monthly basis. Overall, the use of the statistics has slightly declined, the peak being at 2012 and 2013 when two thirds of respondents (66.6% - 66.9%) used statistics at least on a monthly basis.

Chart 9. Frequency of use 2011-2015



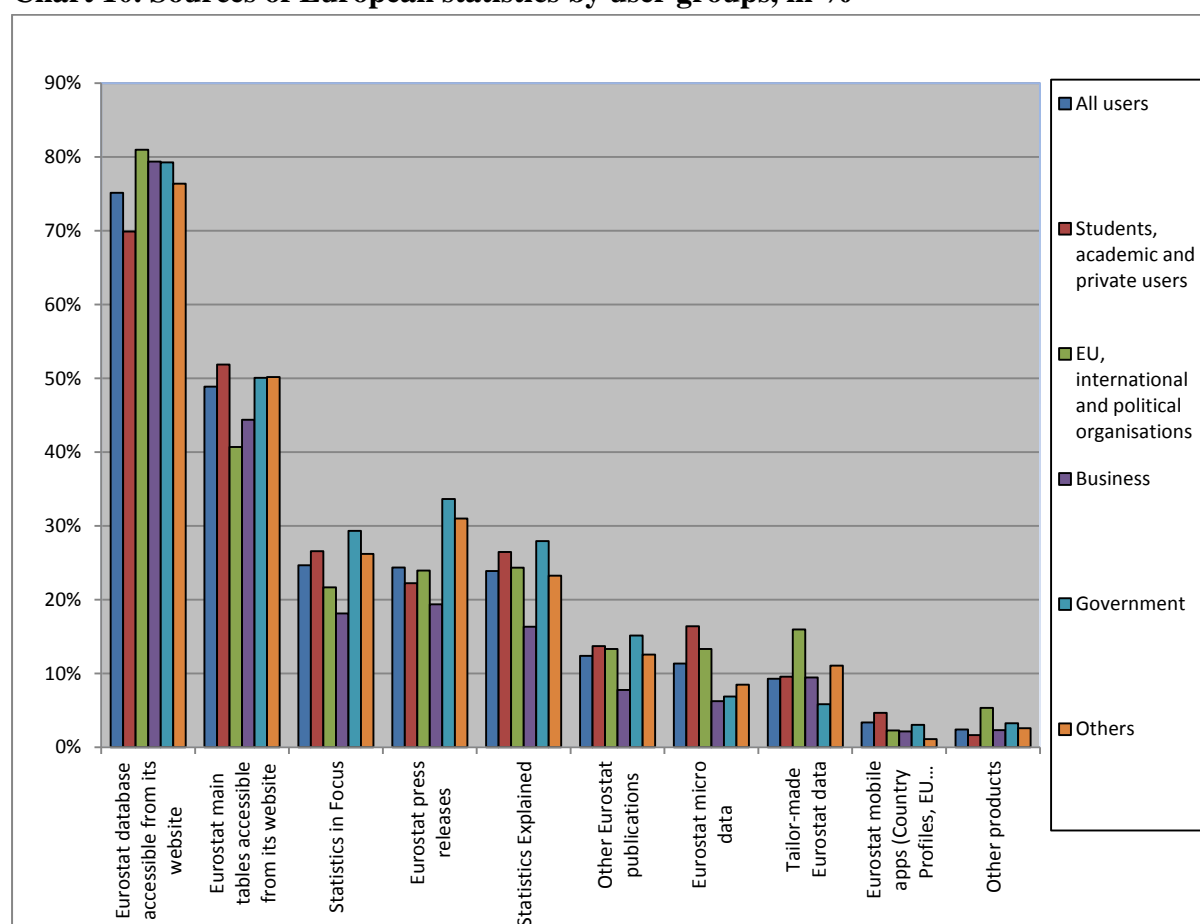
Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

3.1.3 Where are European statistics obtained from?

When asked to specify the source of retrieving European data (Chart 10), Eurostat database stood out as the most popular source with 75.2% of all respondents accessing it. The share of responses remained highest across all user groups, however, the database was the most popular among EU, international and political organisations (81.0%) with business and government figures being very close (79.4% and 79.3% respectively)

With regard to other sources, nearly half of the users (48.9%) used Eurostat's main tables, which were most popular with students, academic and private users (51.9%). Database and main tables were followed by Statistics in Focus, Eurostat press releases and Statistics Explained, which accounted for respective shares of 24.7%, 24.4% 23.9% of all users. Eurostat applications for mobile devices are used by a quite small share of respondents, which was also the case in the previous year. Students, academic and private users were those using them relatively more (4.7%).

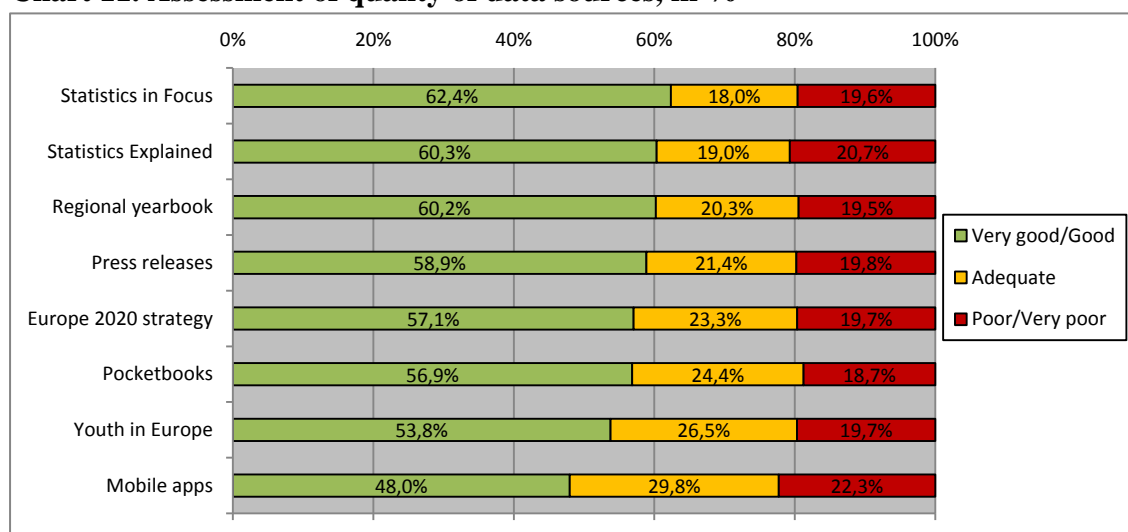
Chart 10. Sources of European statistics by user groups, in %



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

Respondents were also asked to assess the quality of the sources. Highest evaluations were received by Statistics in Focus (62.4%), Statistics Explained (60.3%) and the Regional Yearbook (60.2%). Only for the mobile applications, which remained being used by a mere 3.4% of the respondents, the rate of "very good/good" replies was just below 50% (48.0%).

Chart 11. Assessment of quality of data sources, in %



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

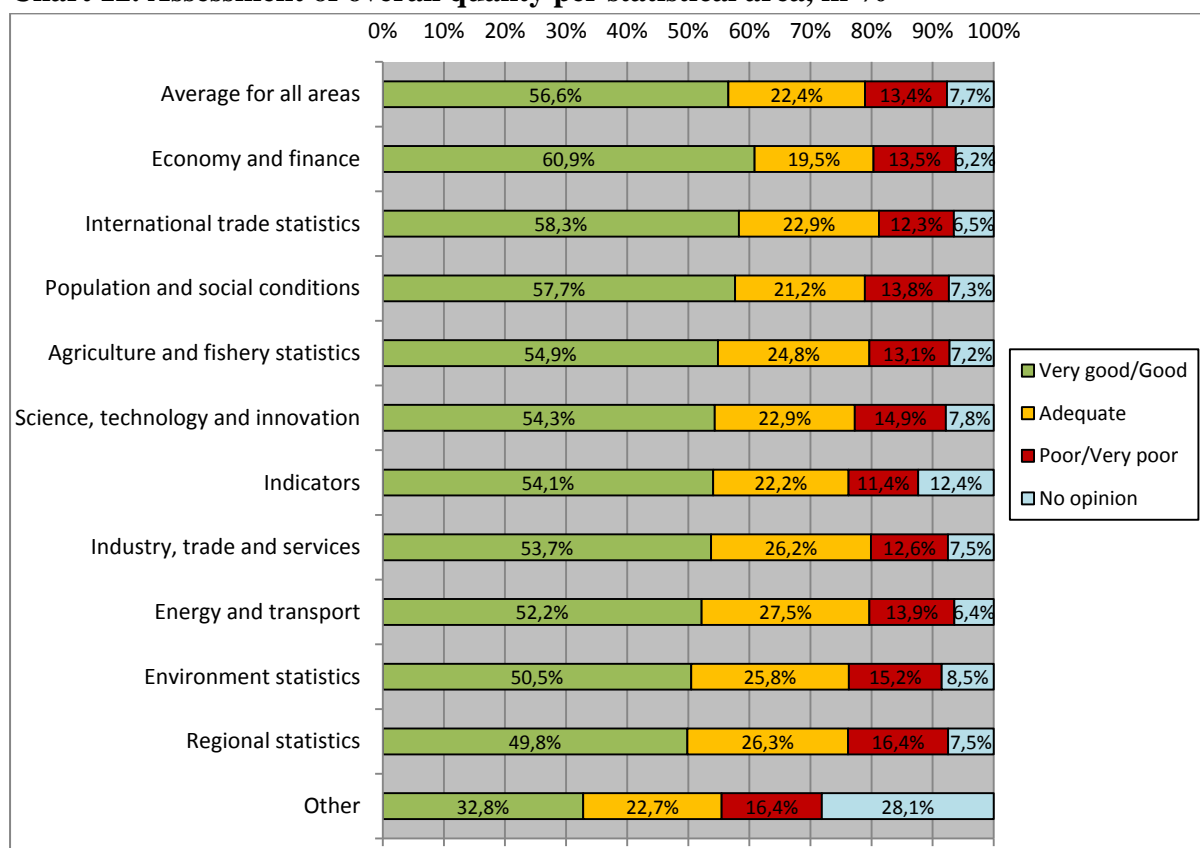
3.2 Information on quality aspects

In accordance with the Eurostat's mission statement, quality considerations play a central role in both its corporate management and day-to-day statistical operations. It is thus important to find out how users assess the quality of the European statistics produced and disseminated by Eurostat. In addition to the overall quality, the survey looked at three different aspects of quality that are considered as the most important for Eurostat - timeliness, completeness and comparability.

3.2.1 Overall quality

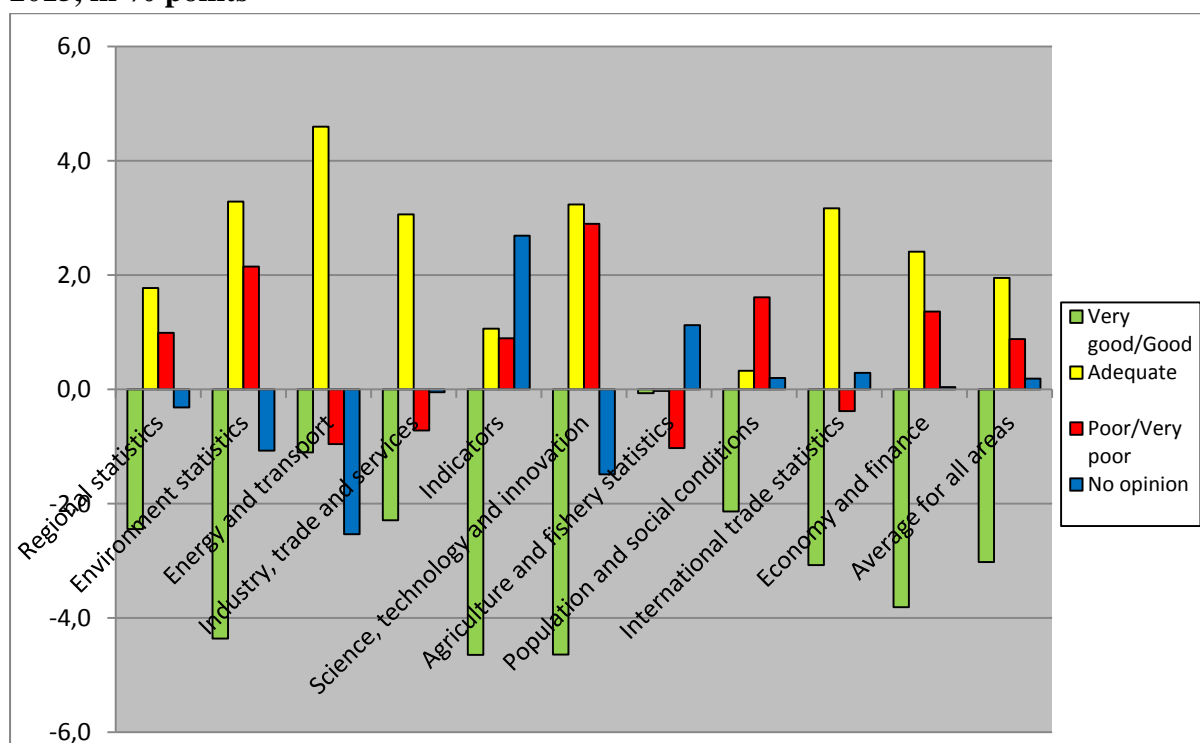
As in the past, this year evaluations were generally positive with more than 50% of users viewing the quality of statistics as "very good" or "good". As can be seen from Chart 12, the level of satisfaction with the overall quality of European data remained high, with 56.6% of all users considering the quality to be "very good" or "good" and 22.4% as "adequate". Compared to 2014, this represents a small decrease from the corresponding figures last year (59.6% and 20.4% respectively), as shown in Chart 13.

Chart 12. Assessment of overall quality per statistical area, in %



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

Chart 13. Difference in the assesment of overall quality per statistical area in 2014 and 2015, in % points



Source: Eurostat 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

At a more disaggregated level, “Economy and finance” again received the highest positive evaluation (60.9% of “very good/good” answers). Just like in 2014, it was followed by “International trade” and “Population and social conditions”, with shares of 58.3% and 57.7%, respectively. In spite of the slight fall of the satisfaction with the quality of the statistics with the latter two domains to below 60%, these three areas remain the leaders, as it has been the case every year.

It should also be noted that “Economy and finance” continue to be the highest rated area across all quality dimensions. Given the interest in economic and financial developments in Europe during the recent years and the fact that this domain is used most frequently, high evaluations represent positive views of European data users. A more detailed analysis of the domain revealed that “National accounts, “Price statistics”,” and “Balance of payments” came to the top of the list with the first receiving 63.3% and the other two 60.8% both of “very good/good” assessments.

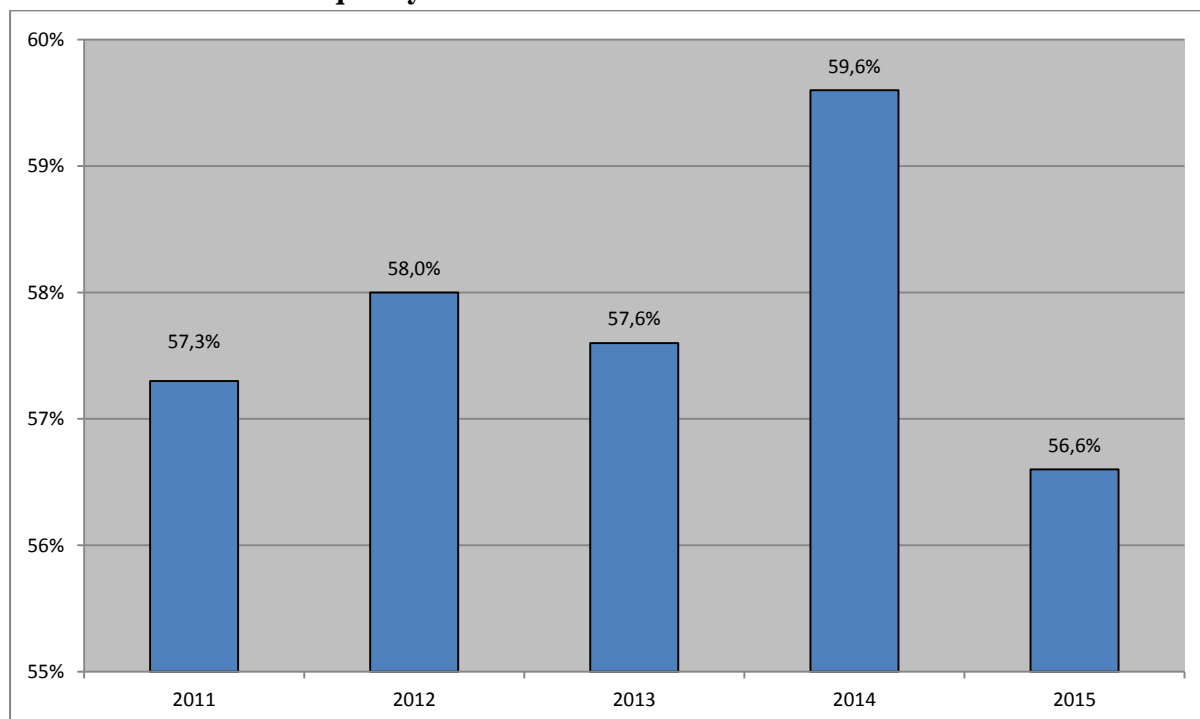
On the other side of the spectrum, “Regional statistics”, “Environment statistics” and “Energy and transport” were among the ones with lowest share of positive views on overall quality, with 49.8%, 50.5% and 52.2%, respectively. Nevertheless, all statistical domains (excluding “other statistics”) account at least for around half of “very good/good” evaluations.

As far as regional data is concerned, some inherent characteristics are likely to be responsible for a lower evaluation. Regional data is generally prepared in the ESS after national data and in addition often implies supplementary data collections from regional offices. A consistent request of users is also for more regional detail which frequently conflicts with resource requirements in Member States.

When analysed by user groups, government officials remain the most positive, as in 2014, about the overall data quality with a percentage of “very good/good” responses reaching 60.4. They were followed by EU, international and political organisations (59.5%) and students, academics and private users (58%) – the same groups as last year, only in a reverse order. Government respondents are also the most positive when judging the data timeliness while EU, international and political organisations are so on the data completeness and comparability.

Chart 14 shows that there has not been a lot of difference with the overall data assessment in the period from 2011 to 2015, and that a peak of user satisfaction was observed in 2014 when nearly 60% of them claimed the data to be either very good or good.

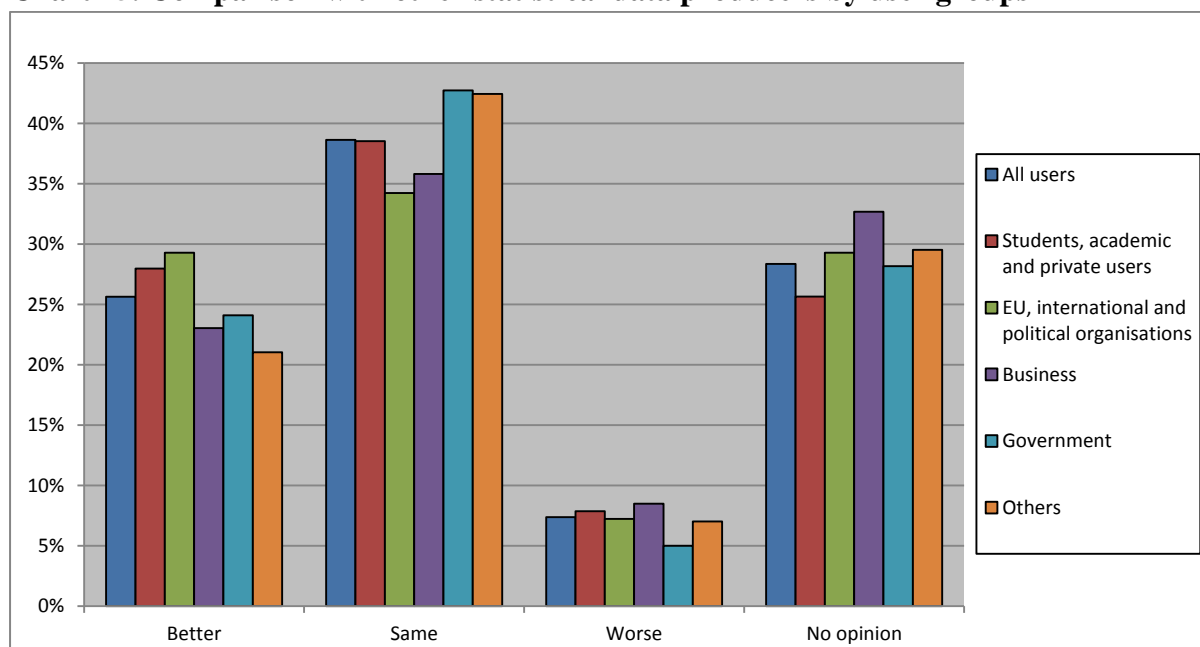
Chart 14. Overall data quality 2011-2015



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

Given that there are several producers of European statistics, respondents were also asked to compare the quality of Eurostat's data with that of national statistical institutes and other international organisations. The results are presented in Chart 15.

Chart 15. Comparison with other statistical data producers by user groups



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

As can be seen, the majority of participants consider the quality to be better or the same, resulting in a combined share of 64.2%. Among other positive sides of Eurostat, users

highlighted better quality and reliability of the data provided, more complete, more detailed and harmonised data, better coverage and comparability, more metadata, better interface and search engine, and a possibility to download data for free.

Less than one in ten of all users (7.4%) considered European data of a worse quality when compared to other sources. Respondents mentioned shorter time series, limited coverage of non-EU sources and limited micro data, data completeness and timeliness and language problems as major drawbacks due to which they may prefer other data sources. Some also reported problems with the website. There were also users who saw Eurostat's dependency on the data from NSIs as a shortcoming.

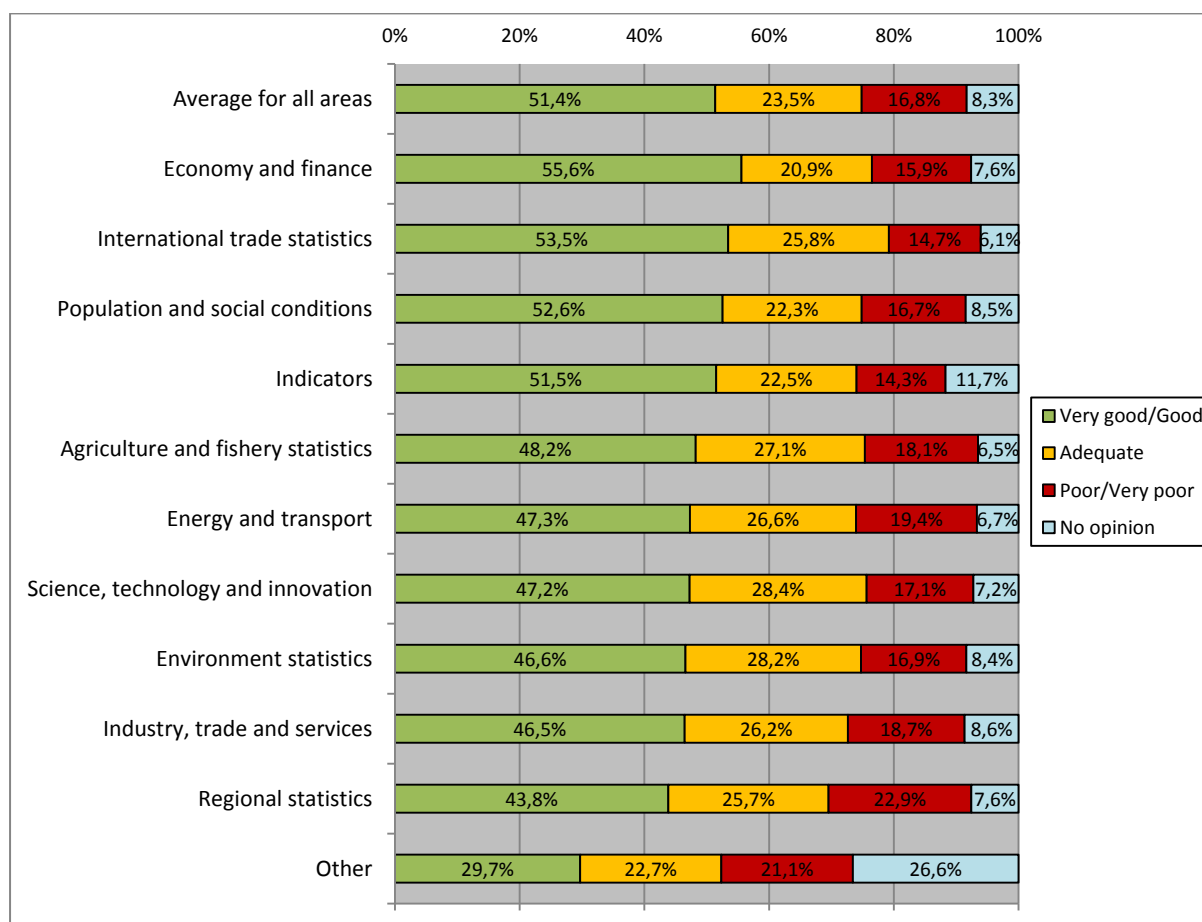
It is also worth noting that more than a quarter (28.4%) of the respondents did not have an opinion on the issue, suggesting that a relatively large share of Eurostat statistics' users either do not use other data sources or find it hard to formulate such comparisons.

3.2.2 Timeliness

The aspect of information timeliness reflects the length of time between its availability and the event or phenomenon it describes. According to the results, which are presented in Chart 16, on average 51.4% of users saw timeliness of European data as “very good” or “good”, 23.5% as “adequate” and 16.8% as “poor” or “very poor. Timeliness remains the quality dimension, of the three investigated, with the best performance.

From a statistical domain perspective, “Economy and finance” was again rated as having the best timeliness across all areas, followed this time by “International trade” and “Population and social conditions”, accounting for 55.6%, 53.3% and 52.6% of “very good/good” responses, respectively.

Chart 16. Assessment of timeliness per statistical area, in %



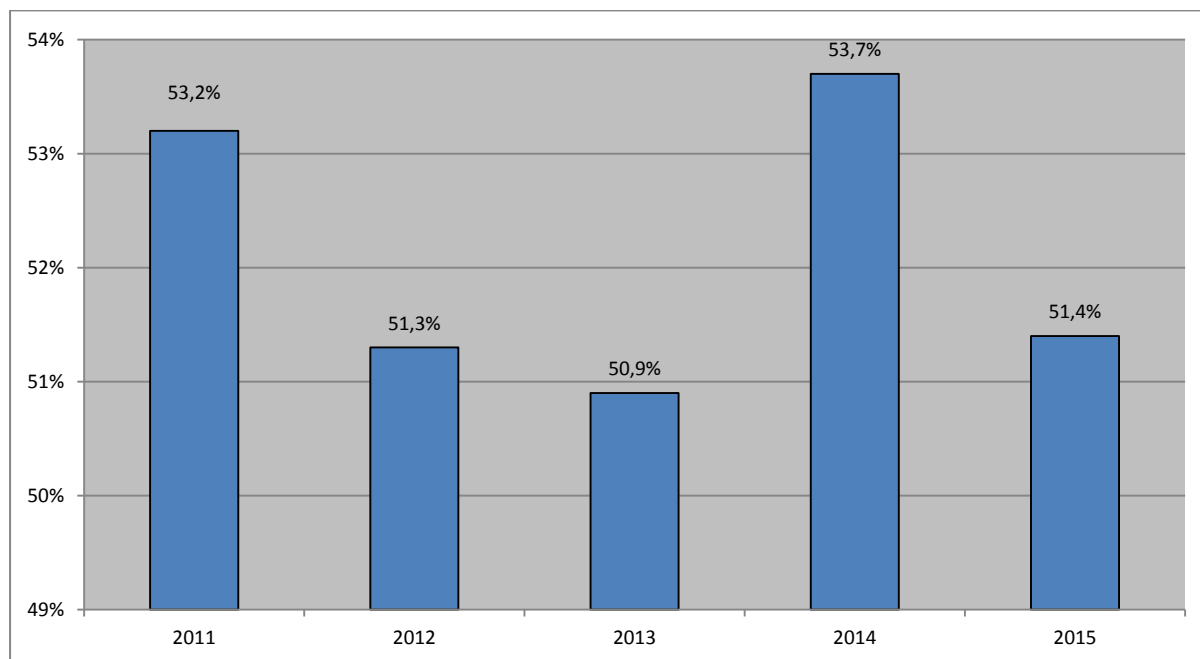
Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

Looking at the user groups, 54.0% of government officials rated the timeliness as “very good/good” and were closely followed by students and private users (53.6%). Businesses were the least enthusiastic (45.0%).

From a timeliness perspective, 55.1% of all users considered Eurostat's timeliness to be better than or the same as timeliness of national statistical offices in the member countries. Last year the rate was 56.5%. Those perceiving timeliness as worse accounted for 15.7% versus 14.5% in 2014.

A slight decrease in the assessment of the overall timelines from 2014 can be seen in Chart 17. In fact, as Chart 17 demonstrates, 2014, with 53.7% of respondents reporting the timeliness to be “very good” or “good”, was a peak year in terms of the positive assessment of this indicator. Nonetheless, as can be seen in the same chart, in the other four years the figure was only very slightly behind, with at least half of the respondents choosing either a “very good” or “good” as their response.

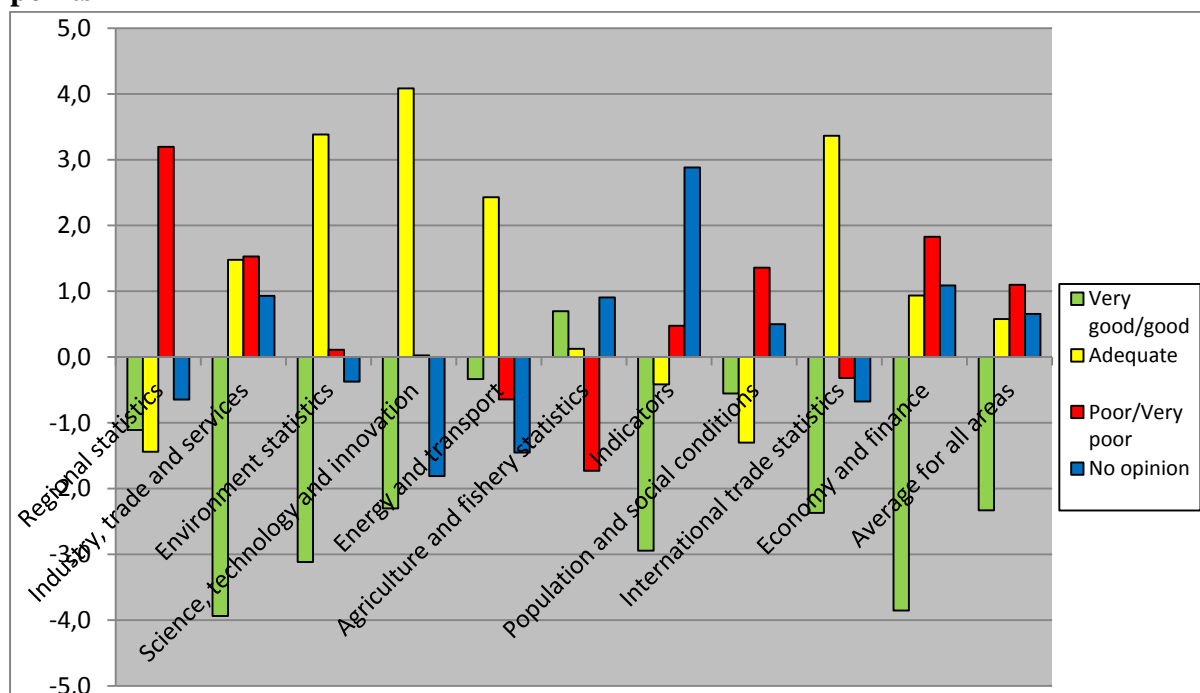
Chart 17. Assessment of overall timeliness in 2011-2015



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

The slight decrease of “very good” and “good” responses this year is further illustrated by Chart 18 which shows that every statistical domain, with an exception of Agriculture and Fishery, received fewer “very good/good” responses in 2015, compared to 2014. It can also be seen that the decrease was small, not exceeding 4% points in any of the domains, and being less than 1% point in some of them.

Chart 18. Differences in the assessment of data timeliness between 2014 and 2015 in % points



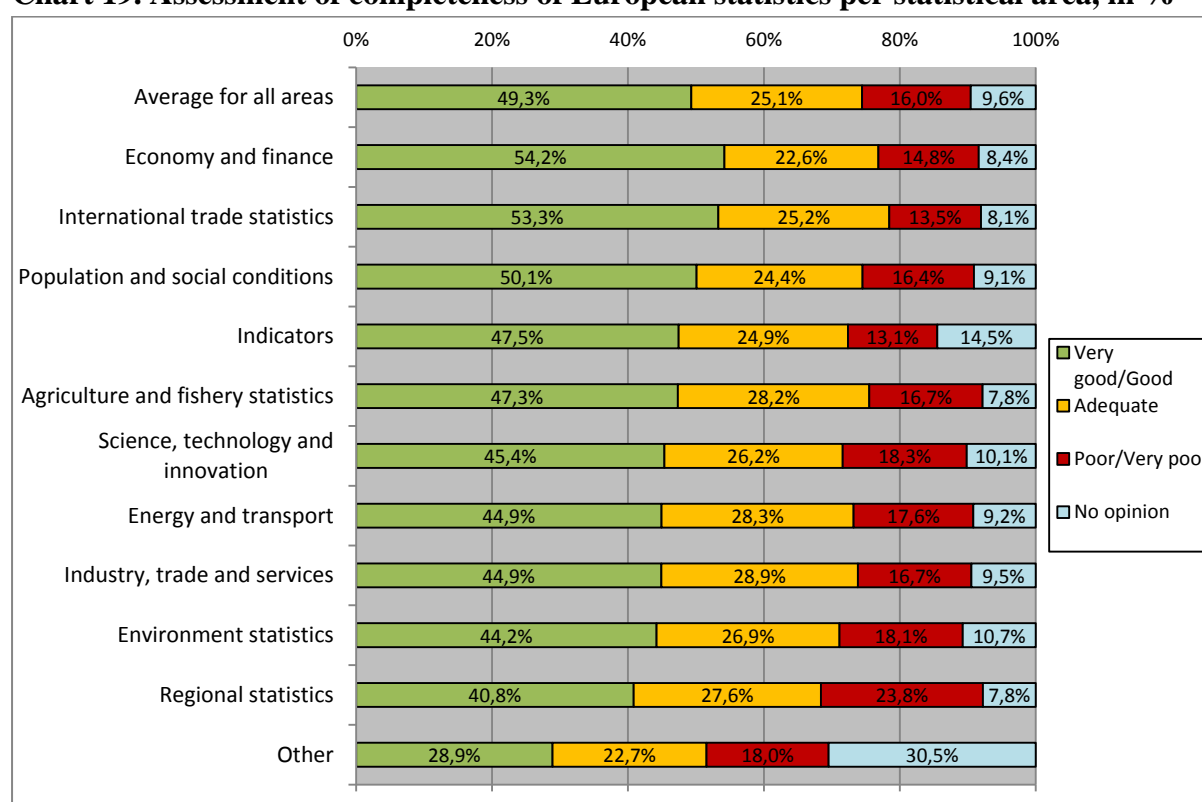
Source: Eurostat 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

3.2.3 Completeness

Completeness is the extent to which all statistics that are needed are available. It is usually described as a measure of the amount of available data from a statistical system compared to the amount that was expected to be obtained. Chart 19 presents the results of user views on data completeness in 2015.

On average for all areas, 49.3% of users saw data completeness as “very good” or “good”, 25.1% thought it was “adequate” and 16.0% perceived it as “poor” or “very poor”. “Economy and finance” once again stood out as the best rated domain, followed by “International trade” (54.2% and 53.3% of “very good/good” replies, respectively). The least performing area remained “Regional statistics” with over a fifth (23.8%) of respondents stating completeness of this domain was either “poor” or “very poor”.

Chart 19. Assessment of completeness of European statistics per statistical area, in %

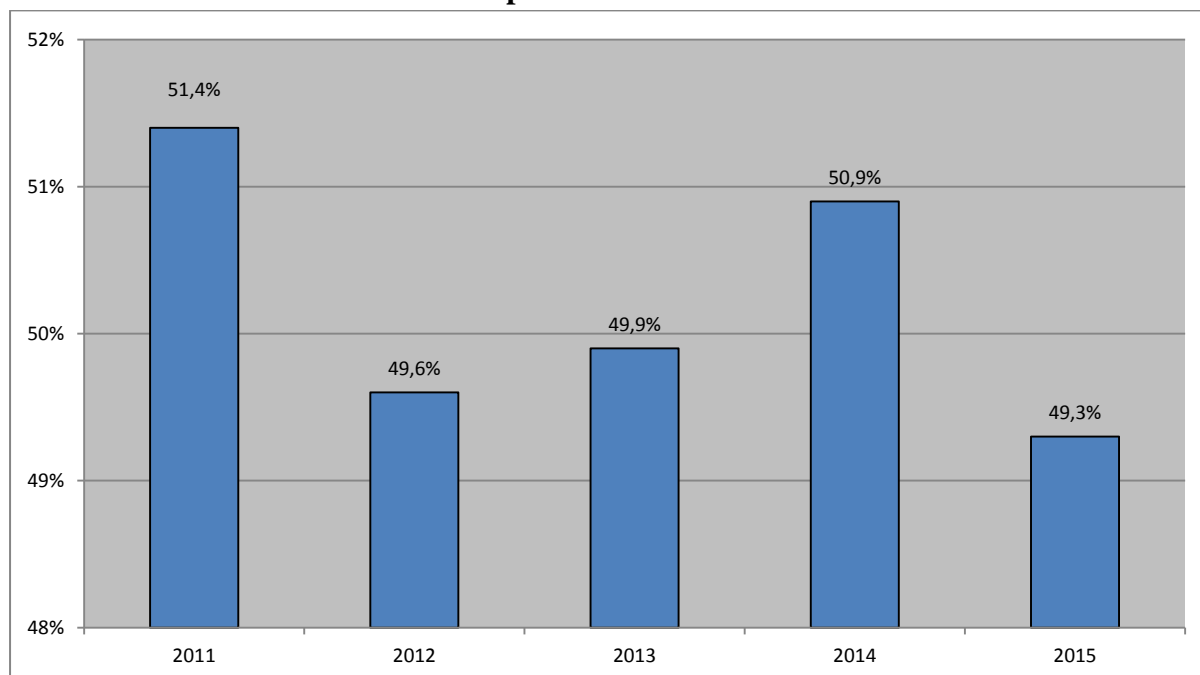


Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

From the user group perspective, EU, international and political organisations were most positive about the completeness of European data (53.1% of “very good/good” ratings). The least satisfied group were business users, who accounted for the lowest level of positive responses (44.9%).

As Chart 21 shows, compared to 2014, there was a small decrease (1.6%) in the “very good” and “good” assessments of data completeness this year. Again, as can be seen in Chart 20, the differences in the user satisfaction with this indicator in the last five years were minimal. The share of those choosing “very good” and “good” as their response was around a half (49.6% to 51.4) during all the five year period.

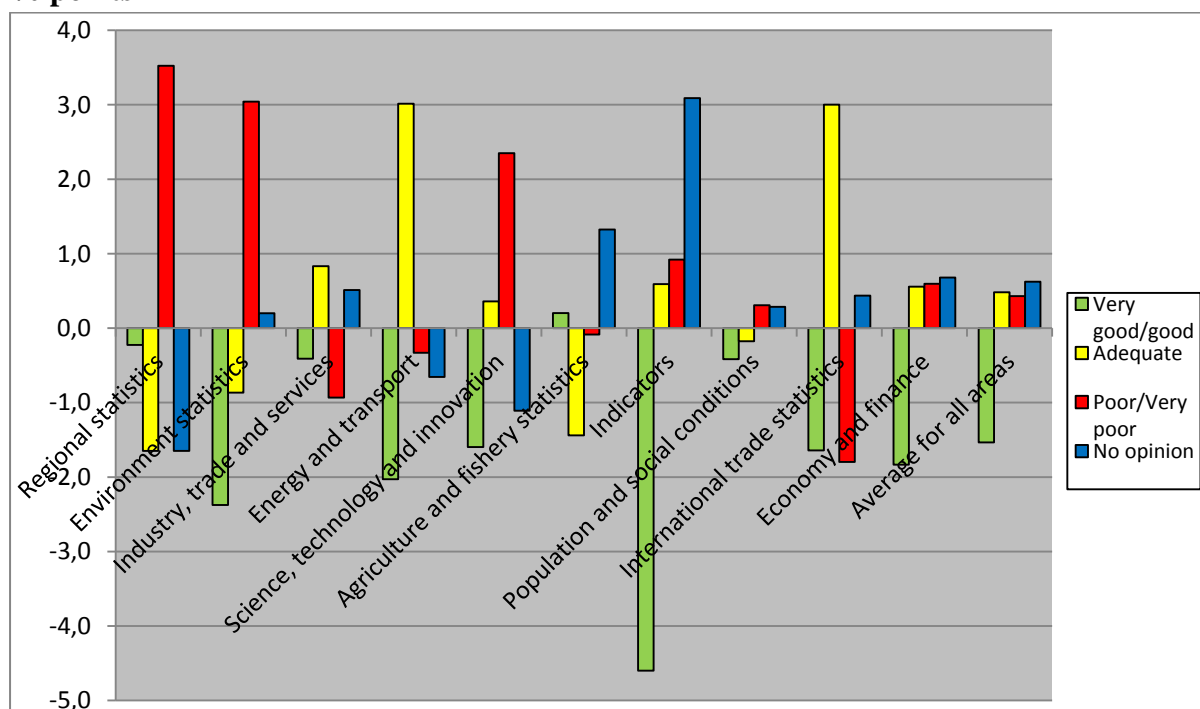
Chart 20. Assessment of overall completeness in 2011-2015



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

A closer look to the different statistical domains again reveals slight decreases in the share of “very good” and “good” responses between 2014 and 2015 in all the areas apart from Agriculture and Fishery (Chart 21). It must be noted that the decrease did not reach 5% points for any of the domains and was as little as 0.2-0.4% points in some cases.

Chart 21. Differences in the assessment of data completeness between 2014 and 2015 in % points



Source: Eurostat 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

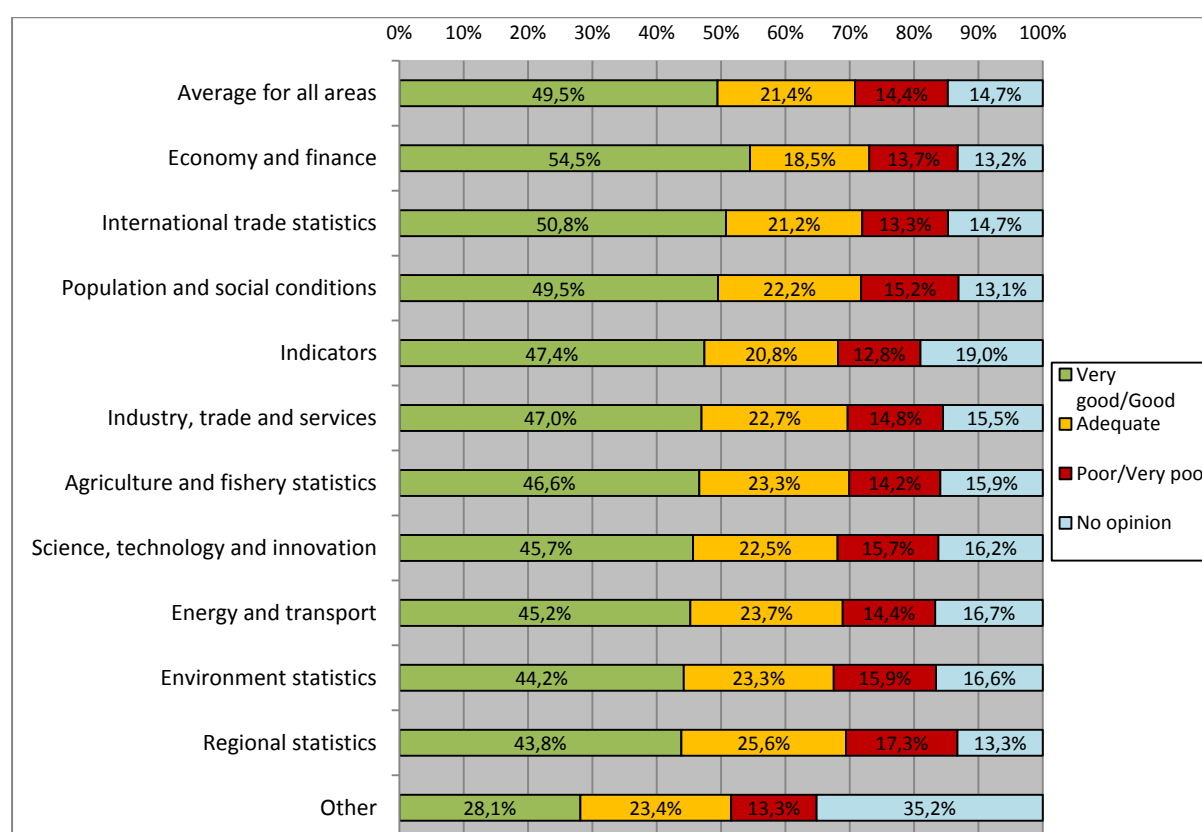
3.2.4 Comparability

Comparability is the extent to which differences between statistics from different geographical areas, non-geographic domains or over time can be attributed to differences between the true values of statistics.

As seen from Chart 22, an average of “very good/good” responses across all areas was 49.5% this year. 21.4% saw comparability as “adequate” and 14.4% did not feel positive about it. Once again, “Economy and finance” as well as “International trade” were among the highest rated domains with 54.5% and 50.8% of “very good” and “good” shares respectively. Similarly to timeliness and completeness, “Regional statistics” received the lowest share of positive responses; however, more than 2 in 5 respondents (43.8%) considered the comparability of this domain to be either “very good” or “good”.

This year it was the EU, international and political organisations that were most satisfied with the comparability of the data. 56.9% of them saw this quality aspect as “very good” or “good”, an increase of 6.9% points compared to 2014.

Chart 22. Assessment of comparability of European statistics per statistical area, in %

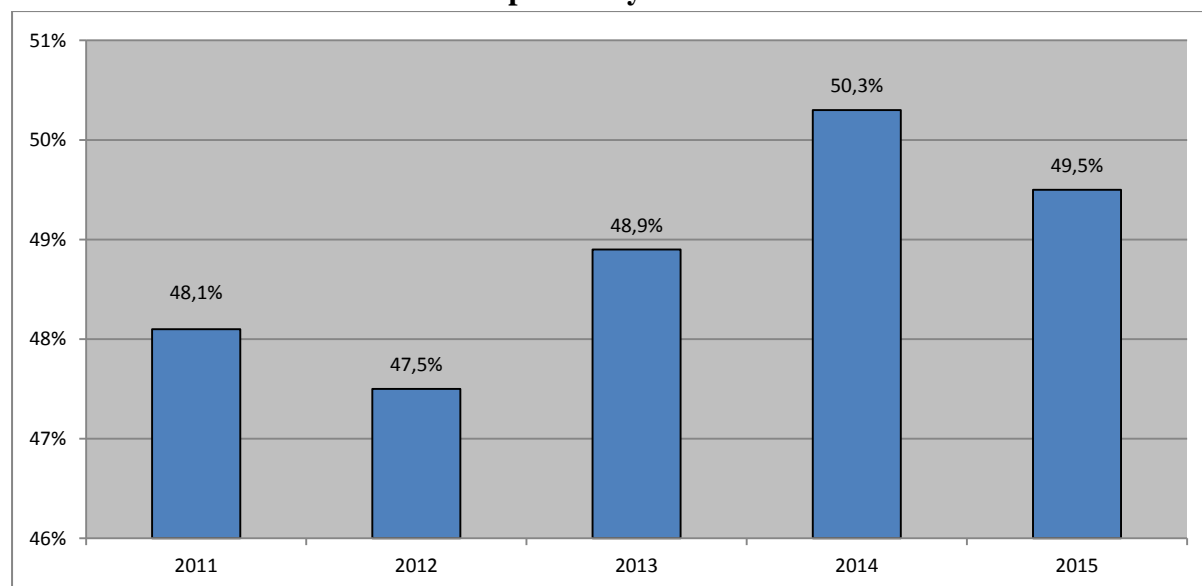


Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

There has been a minimal (0.8% points) decrease in the assessment of the overall comparability compared to last year (Chart 24), 2014 again being the year with the highest user satisfaction (50.3%), as shown in Chart 23. Within the five year period, 2015 is the second best year in terms of user satisfaction with overall comparability. Chart 23 also demonstrates that those choosing either “very good” or “good” as their response when

assessing data comparability accounted for at least nearly half of the respondents (47.5% to 50.3%) throughout the period of 2011 to 2015.

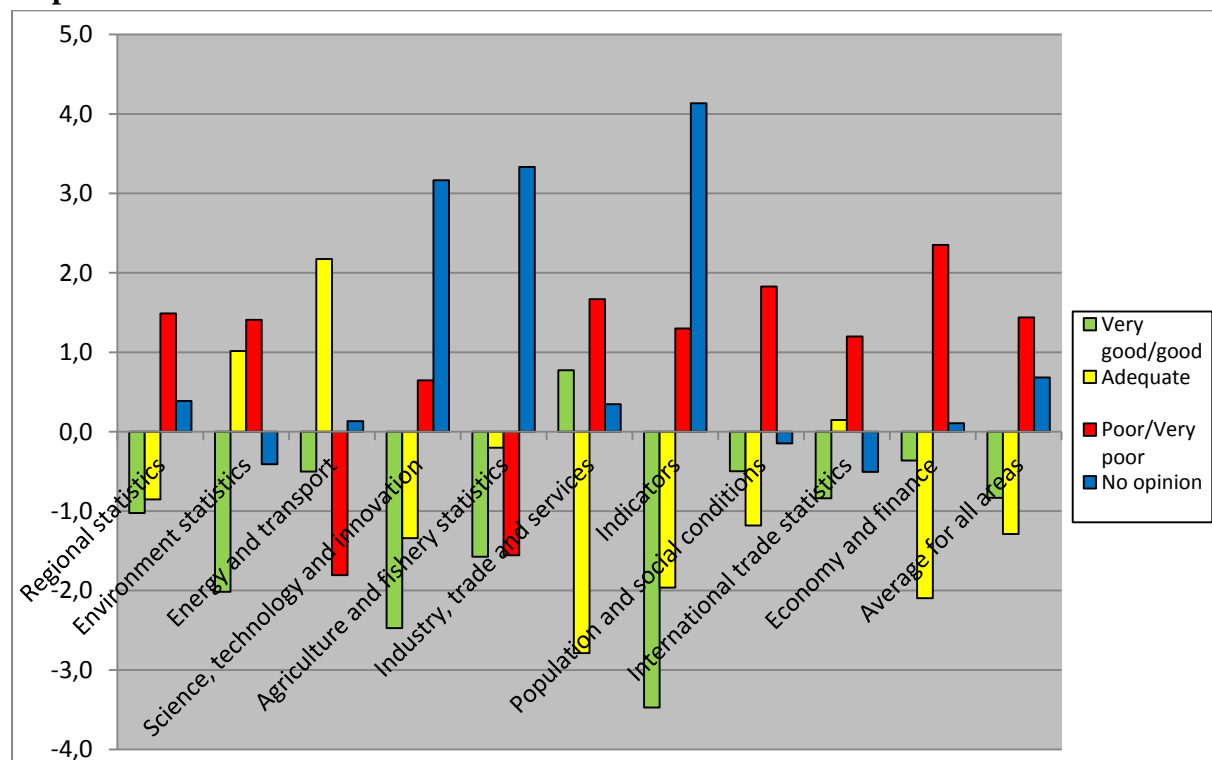
Chart 23. Assessment of overall comparability in 2011-2015



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

The slight decrease of “very good” and “good” responses between years 2014 and 2015 is mirrored in all the statistical domains except for Industry, Trade and Services (Chat 24). The differences between the two years were small however, ranging from 0.4 to 3.5% points.

Chart 24. Differences in the assessment of data comparability between 2014 and 2015 in % points



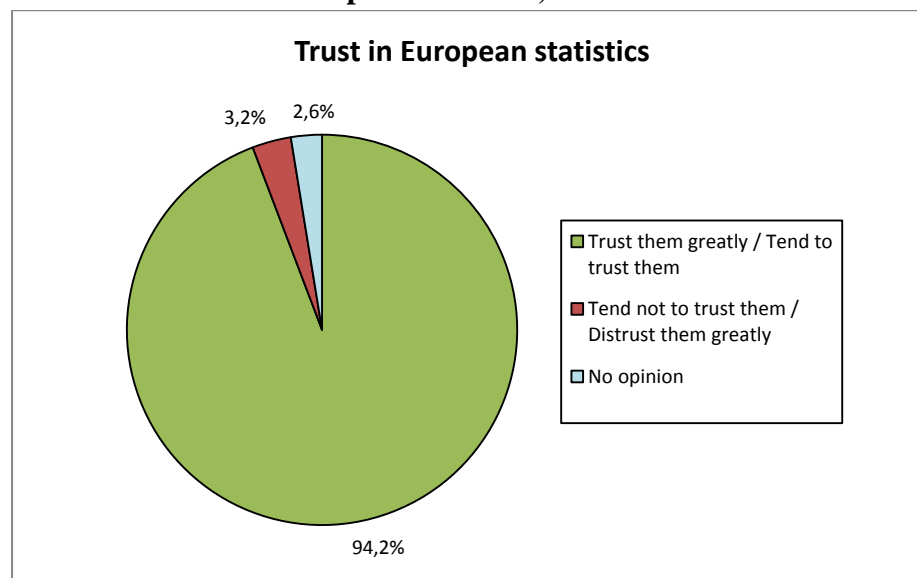
Source: Eurostat 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

3.3 Trust in European statistics

In a period when European citizens sometimes seem to be sceptic about the role and functioning of the EU institutions, it was interesting to check if users continue to trust the statistics produced by Eurostat. Results are presented in Chart 25.

As in previous years, responses were overwhelmingly positive, with 94.2% of users stating they trusted European statistics greatly or tended to trust them. Only 3.2% said they did not trust statistics and 2.6% had no opinion.

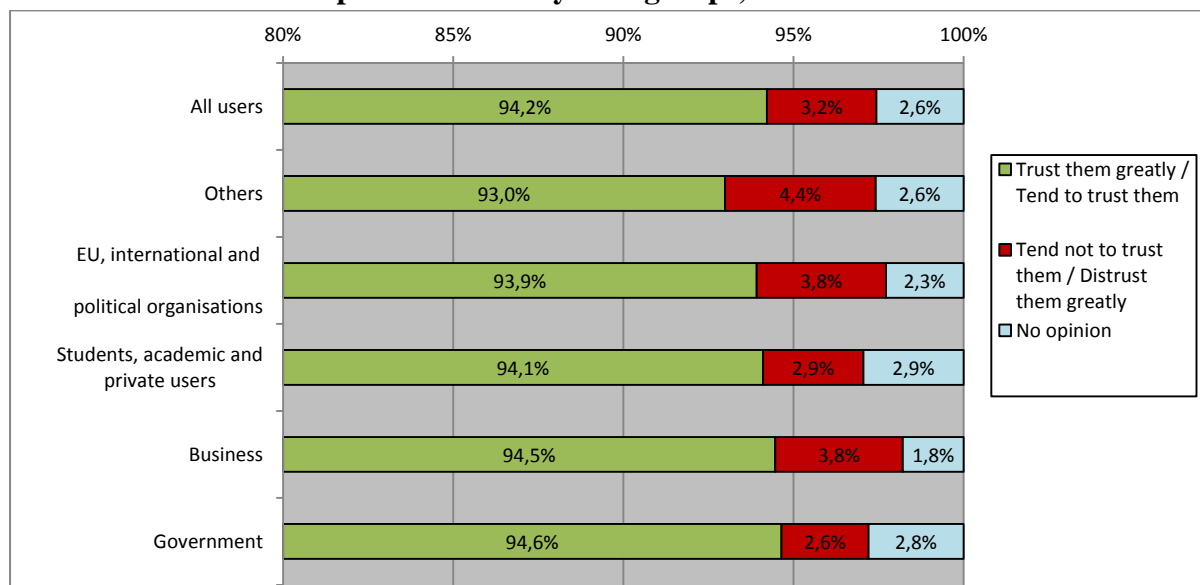
Chart 25. Trust in European statistics, in %



Source: Eurostat 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

Despite the potential bias that comes from the fact that Eurostat's data users should generally trust the data they use, the constantly high rate of positive answers over time demonstrates a very good and encouraging sign on the confidence of users in the statistics disseminated by Eurostat.

Chart 26. Trust in European statistics by user groups, in %



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

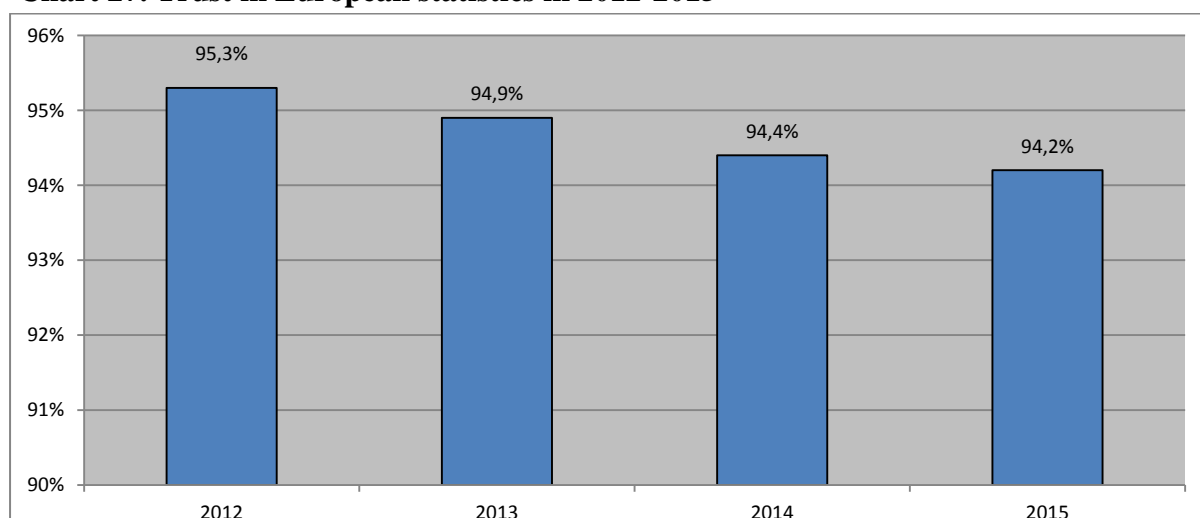
When looking at the distribution of responses by user groups (Chart 26), the share of respondents trusting European statistics is very similar for all groups, none going below 93%.

Looking at the responses, some of the reasons while people trust the statistics are that there are no significant errors or discrepancies, and in the cases where they occur they are detected, corrected and/or explained. The fact that Eurostat is professional and independent, has legal obligations and is not politically influenced also helped to gain user trust.

As in 2014, the most recurrent comment of those few who tend not to trust European statistics is because they depend on national statistics. Some also reported implausible data, errors or discrepancies.

Between 2012 and 2015 there has been a continuous but very small decrease in trust in European statistics – around 1% point over the 5 year period (Chart 27).

Chart 27. Trust in European statistics in 2012-2015



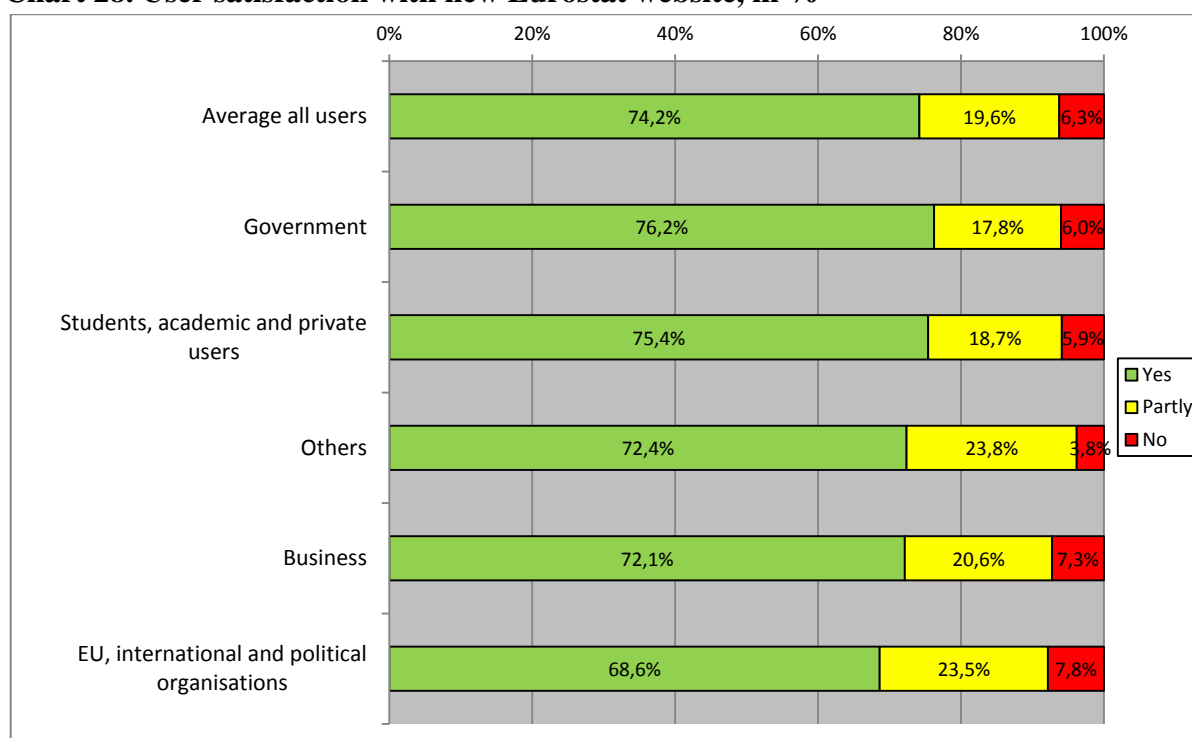
Source: Eurostat 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

3.4 Information on dissemination aspects

This section covers a number of aspects concerning dissemination of European statistics (access to the European statistics, content and characteristics of Eurostat's website, release calendar and user support provided by Eurostat).

One of the key new questions of the user satisfaction survey 2015 was an enquiry about the satisfaction with the new version of Eurostat's website. The results, presented in Chart 28, have revealed overwhelming support to the updated version, with nearly three in four users, not counting those who did not express an opinion, claiming to be “satisfied” (74.2%). Further 19.6% stated that they were “partly satisfied”. In other words, the vast majority of the surveyed website users were at least partly satisfied with the current version. Government as well as students, academic and private users had the highest rate of “satisfied” responses (76.2% and 75.4% respectively). Interestingly, the category with the smallest share of these responses turned out to be EU, international and political organisations. However, this user group had a larger than average share of “partly satisfied” respondents (23.5%). It can be assumed that, since individuals working for such institutions tend to use Eurostat's statistics often, and maybe they are working on continuous projects consulting the website every year, they now need time of adaptation to the changes. It will be interesting to see how satisfaction of this group – and indeed of all the users – changes in the upcoming years, once the users have had the time to adjust to the new website.

Chart 28. User satisfaction with new Eurostat website, in %



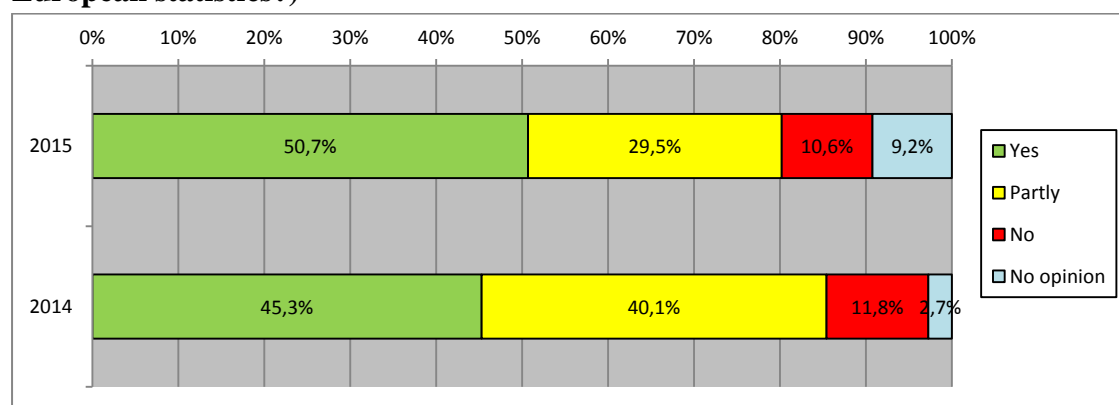
Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

3.4.1 Access to European statistics on Eurostat's Website

The positive effect of the new website is shown also by the results of the two questions on easiness of access to European statistics and of understanding them. This year, there has been an increase in the share of the respondents finding it easy to access European statistics (Chart 29), with 50.7% of the respondents describing the access as “easy”, in comparison to 45.3% in 2014. Last year more of the respondents found it “partly easy” (40.1% in 2014 vs. 29.5% in 2015). With regard to the presentation (user-friendliness) of European data, 65.4% of respondents found European statistics easy to understand, an increase of 8.2% points compared to 2014, and a further 21.6% “partly easy” (Chart 30).

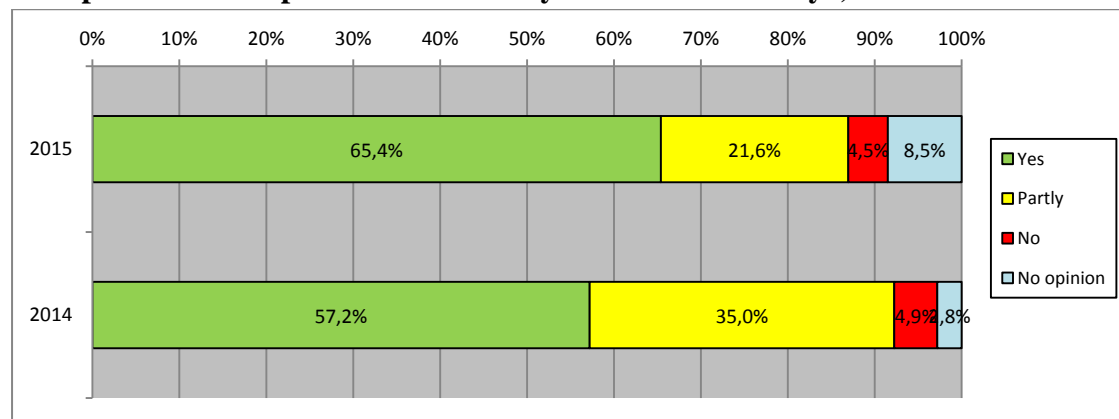
What is more, the number of users not having an opinion on these two questions has noticeably increased this year (9.2% and 8.5% in 2015 vs. 2.7% and 2.8% in 2014 respectively). Perhaps this can be partly attributed to the novelties of the website. It is possible that some users are not entirely sure how to access the statistics in the quickest way, or are not able to understand them immediately, but they might not be sure whether it is truly hard for them to reach these goals or whether they simply need some more time to get used to the website.

Chart 29. Assessment of the access to European statistics, in % (Is it easy to access European statistics?)



Source: Eurostat 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

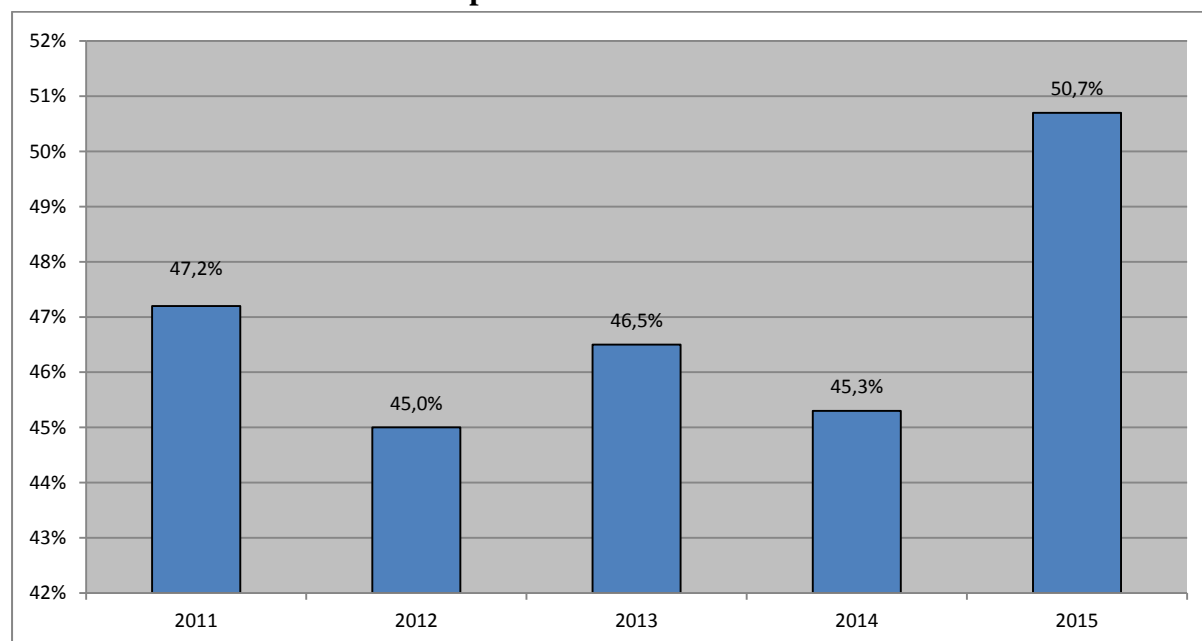
Chart 30. Assessment of the presentation of the statistics on the website, in % (Are European statistics presented in an easy-to-understand way?)



Source: Eurostat 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

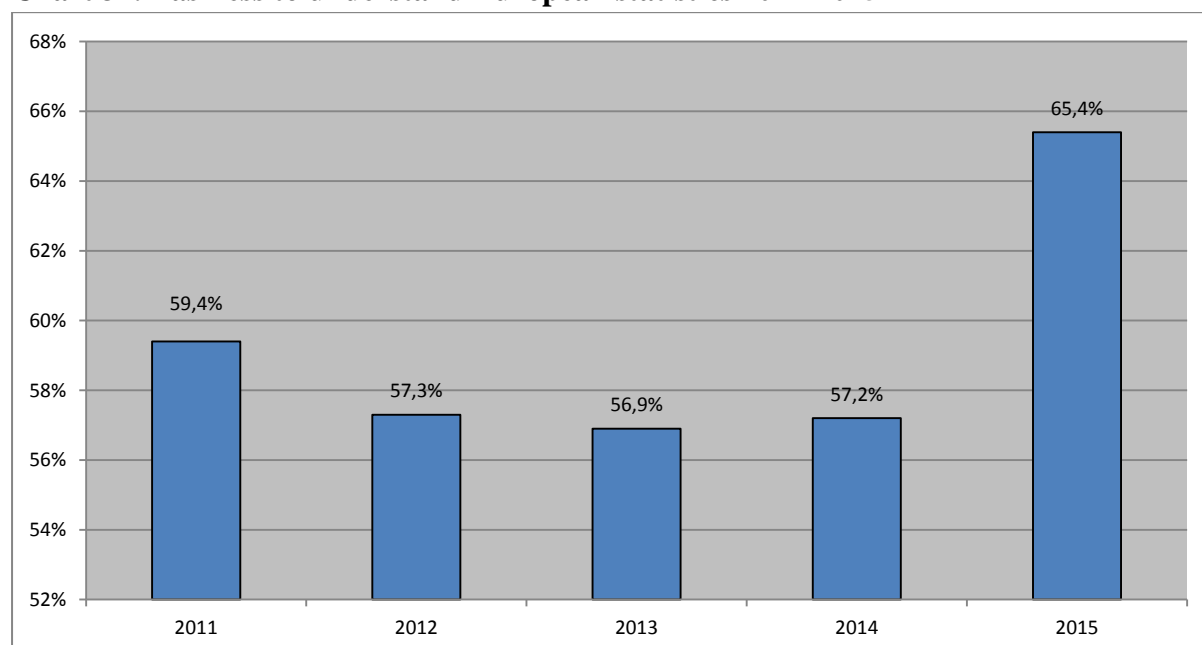
As can be seen from the following Charts 31 and 32, both access to European statistics and understanding them has, overall, become easier in the period between 2011 and 2015. This is largely due to the peak in perceived easiness of both indicators in 2015, which has probably increased because of the revamping of Eurostat's website.

Chart 31. Easiness to access European statistics 2011-2015



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

Chart 32. Easiness to understand European statistics 2011-2015



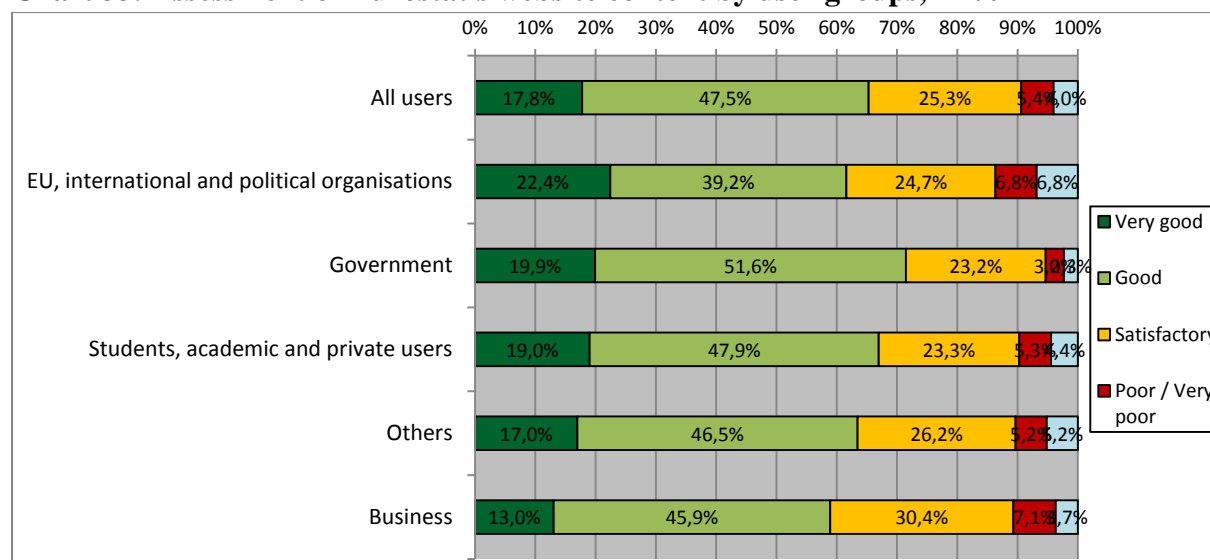
Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

Users were also asked to evaluate the content of Eurostat's database. As in previous years, responses were very positive (Chart 33). On average 17.8% of all users were very satisfied with the content and another 47.5% thought it was good. This gives a combined 65.3% of

positive feedback which is highly valuable for Eurostat and which rose by 2.3% points from 2014.

Just like in the previous year but in a reverse order, government representatives as well as students, academic and private users were the ones with the highest rates of “good/very good” responses (71.5% and 66.9% respectively).

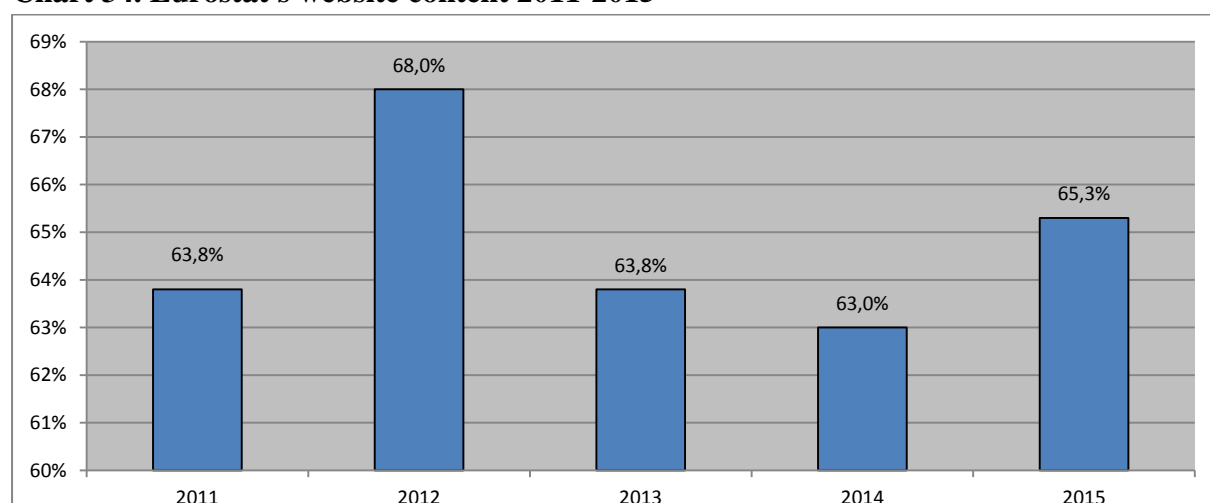
Chart 33. Assessment of Eurostat's website content by user groups, in %



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

Looking at the five-year period (Chart 34), one can notice that there was a peak in satisfaction in 2012 which proved difficult to replicate afterwards. However, the difference between the peak figure and the current one is smaller than 3% points.

Chart 34. Eurostat's website content 2011-2015



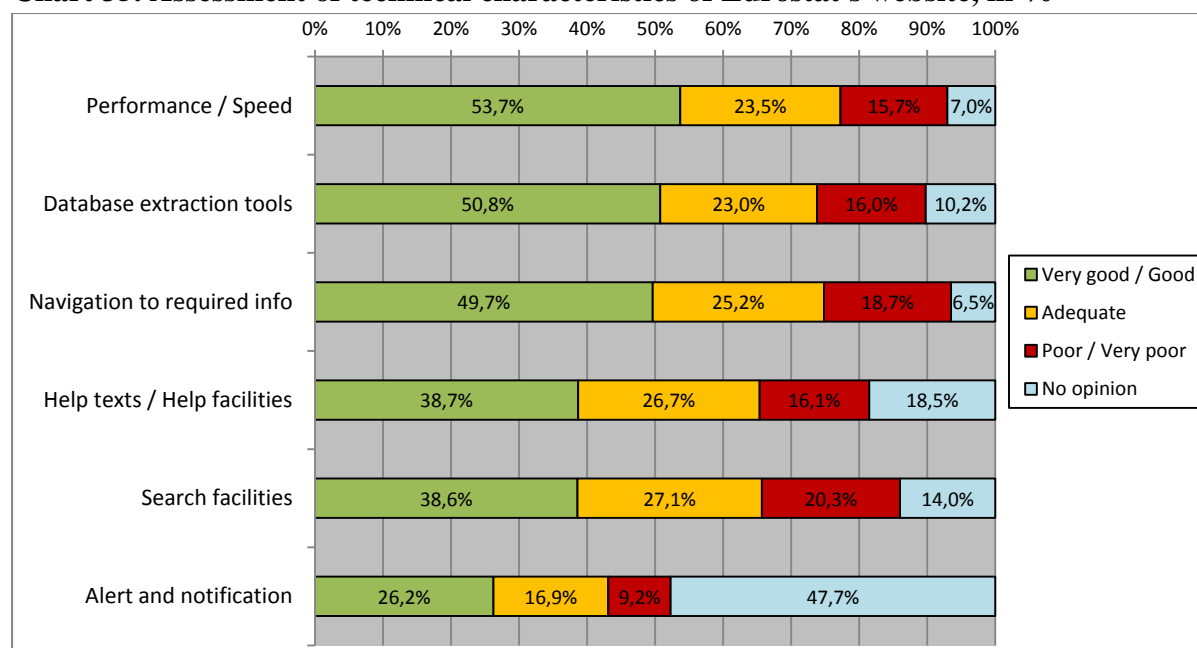
Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

In another question, users were requested to judge its technical characteristics (Chart 35). Despite relatively high shares of “very good/good” or “adequate” evaluations, results were again not as positive as in the case of the website’s content.

Quantitative results were very much in line with the qualitative assessment of free text comments provided by the users. Just as in 2014, overall performance and speed as well as database extraction tools received relatively high evaluations with respective shares of “very good/good” responses reaching 53.7% and 50.8%.

Looking at the negative side, search facilities along with navigation to required information were once again the ones with highest percentage of “poor/very poor” responses. As the results were similar, although slightly better, to last years, it can be concluded that these attributes still require further attention and improvements.

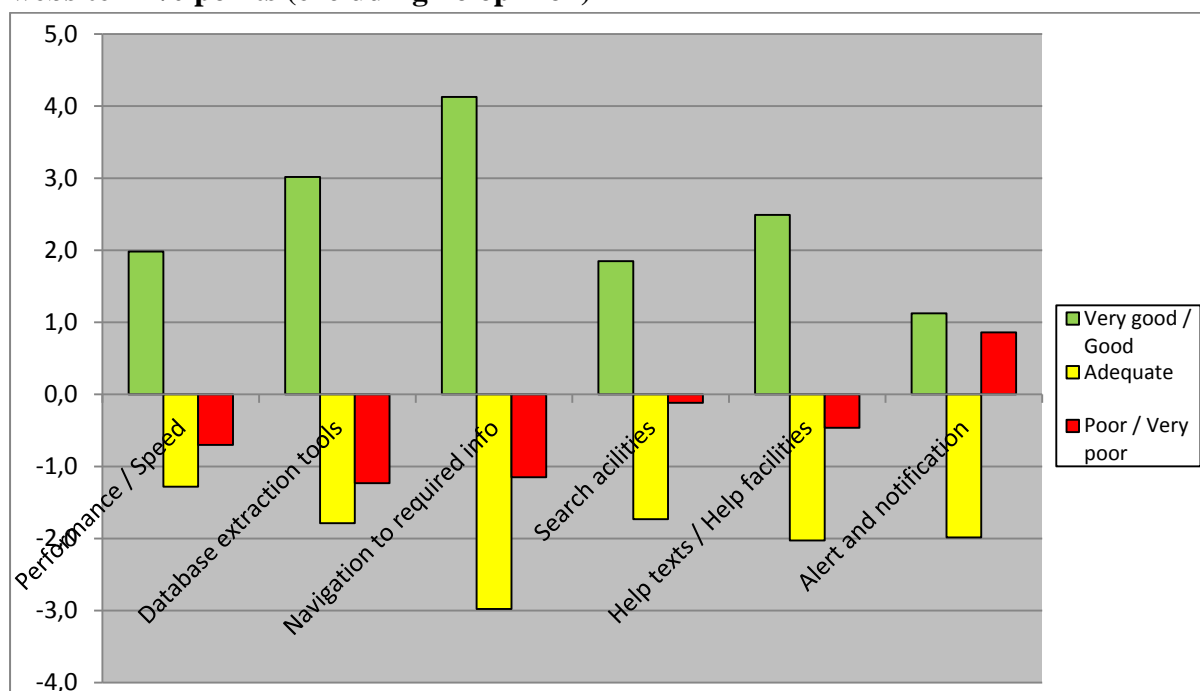
Chart 35. Assessment of technical characteristics of Eurostat's website, in %



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

Chart 36 provides a visual comparison of how the user satisfaction with technical characteristics has changed between 2014 and 2015, demonstrating that there has been a clear increase in “very good” and “good”.

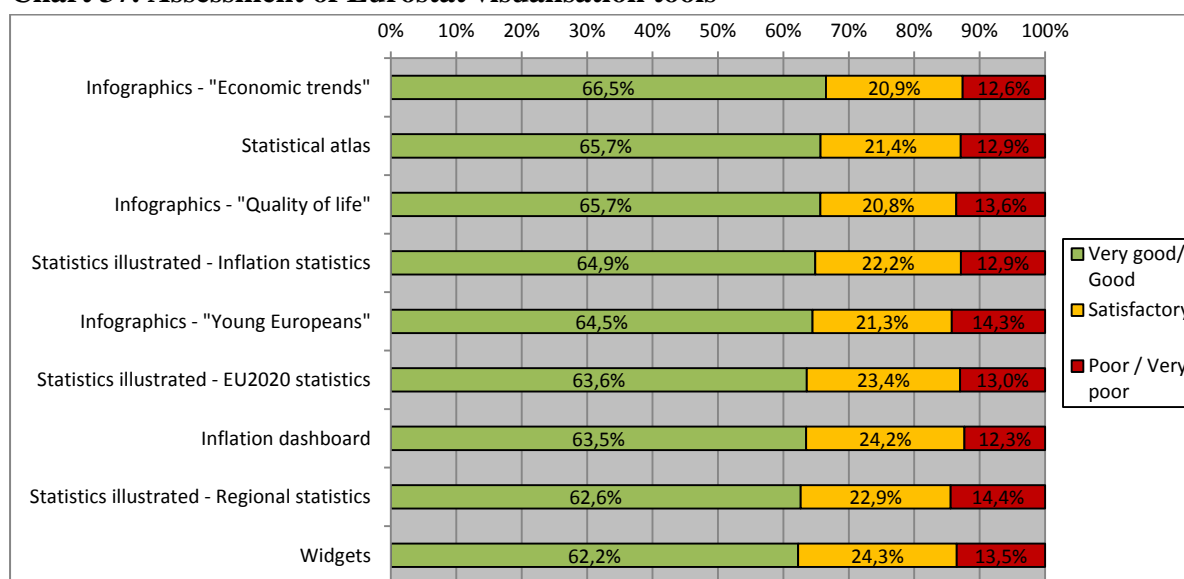
Chart 36. Differences in the assessment of the technical characteristics of Eurostat's website in % points (excluding no opinion)



Source: Eurostat 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

This year the users were asked to rate Eurostat's visualisation tools and Eurostat's mobile applications. The satisfaction with the former indicator is presented in the Chart 37, and is generally very positive, with virtually two thirds of respondents (66.5%) seeing the highest-rated tool – Infographics “Economic trends” as very good or good, followed closely by Statistical atlas and Infographics “Quality of life” (65.7% “good/very good” responses for both indicators). Even the least-rated tool – Widgets – was rated as very good or good by 62.6% of the respondents who have used them and expressed an opinion.

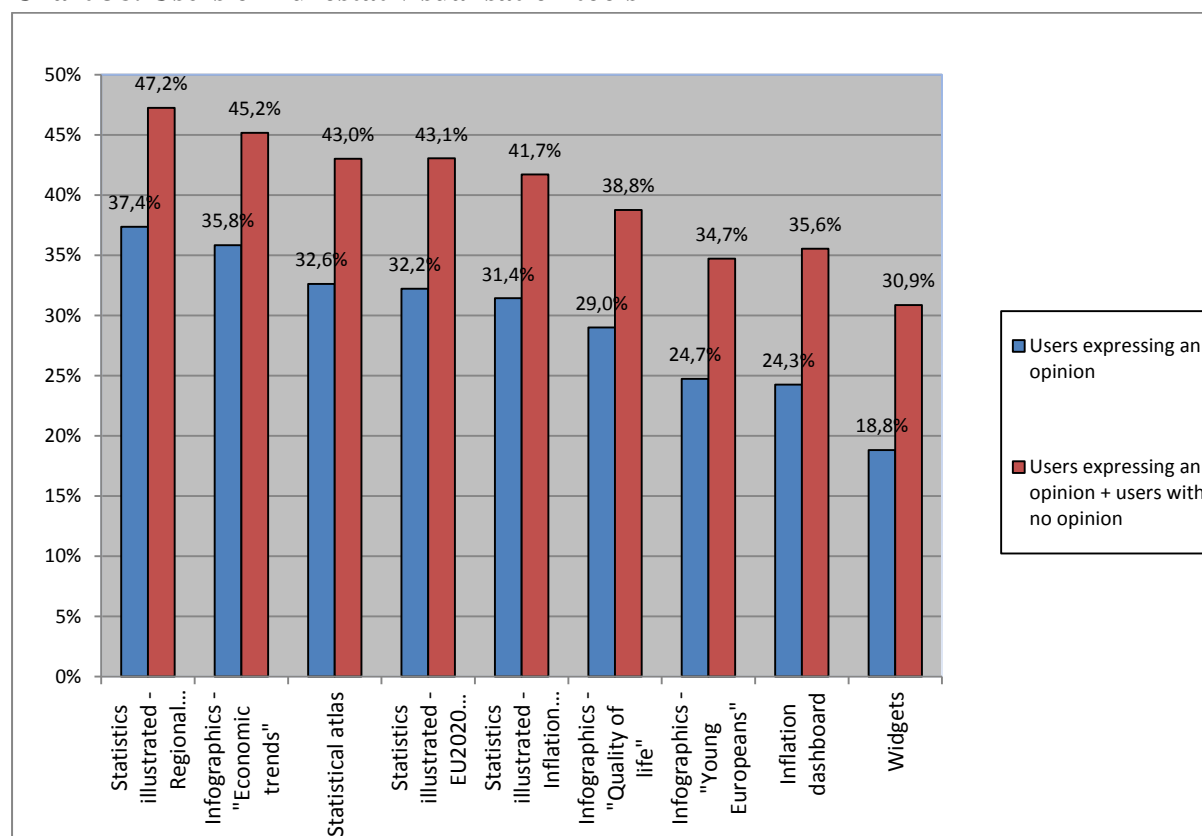
Chart 37. Assessment of Eurostat visualisation tools



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

It is worth noting that there is a considerable difference between all the survey respondents, the respondents who used Eurostat's visualisation tools, and the respondents who used these tools and chose to express an opinion. As demonstrated in Chart 38, 30.9% to 47.2% of the survey respondents used the different visualisation tools, Statistics Illustrated – Regional Statistics being the most widely utilised tool, followed by Infographics “Economic trends” (45.2%). However, as it can be seen in the same chart, the percentage of users who actually gave their opinion in the question concerned was about 10% points smaller than the number of tool users for each of the visualisation tools. In some cases, namely Infographics “Economic trends”, Inflation dashboard and Widgets, this meant that the assessment was given by less than 25% of users who filled in the survey. While the 18.8-24.7% represents a reasonable absolute number of respondents, the differences of how many users expressed an opinion is something to take into account when making comparisons between the assessments of the different tools.

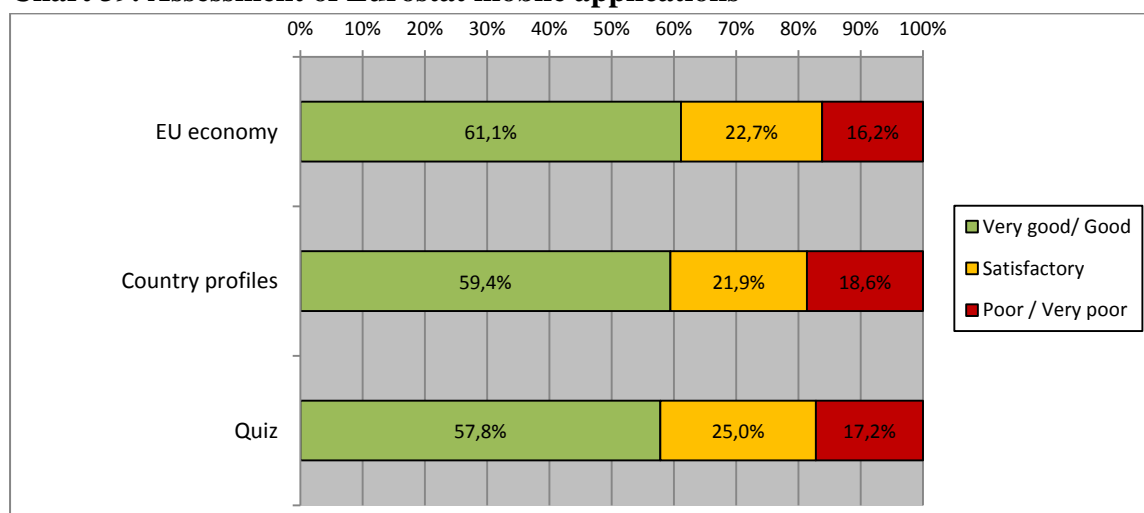
Chart 38. Users of Eurostat visualisation tools



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

User assessment of Eurostat's mobile applications were quite similar to that of the visualisation tools, with 61.6% of the users rating EU economy application either as very good or good, and respectively 59.4% and 57.8% rating Country profiles application and Quiz as “very good/good” (Chart 39).

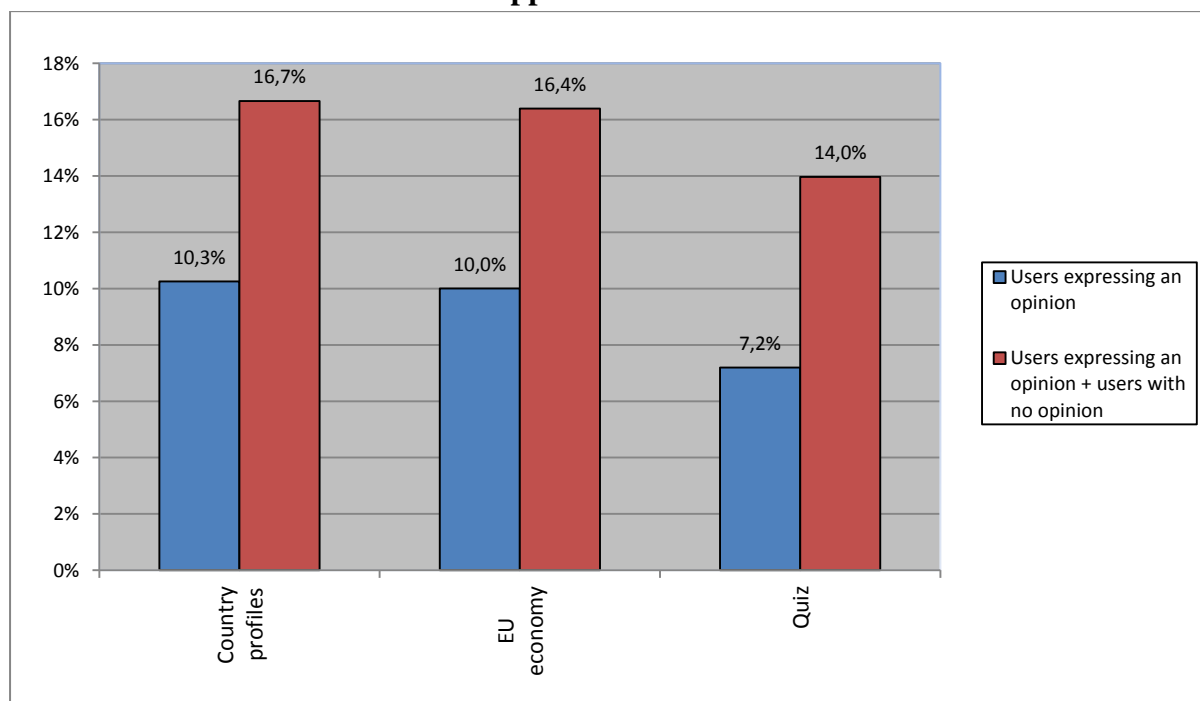
Chart 39. Assessment of Eurostat mobile applications



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

As chart 40 demonstrates, there is an even bigger gap between the overall number of survey respondents and the users actually expressing an opinion on this specific subject. Among the survey respondents, between 14% and 16.7% appear to have used each of them (calculated by adding the users who rated the application and the users who stated that they have no opinion). The number of respondents who actually gave the rating was between 7.2% and 10.3% for the different applications, again indicating that some caution is needed when interpreting the results.

Chart 40. Users of Eurostat mobile applications



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

Overall, the open-ended comments of the respondents on the new website of Eurostat suggest that users are satisfied with it, but that some nonetheless still find the interface non-intuitive.

Compared to the old website, users seem to prefer the aesthetics, presentation and design of the current one, and also find the new website faster, easier to navigate and with fewer bugs. Naturally, some of the respondents who were used to the previous website would have liked not to change it. Those who preferred the previous website tended to find it more convenient and noted that some of the data seemed to be no longer available and / or that there have been unexplained changes in coding in the updated version. There have been instances of users finding it hard to locate previously used data.

Questioned on what they would like to improve in the website, respondents gave many useful comments, which include the following. A lot of respondents still found it rather difficult to find data, especially for new users or those who do not use the webpage daily. Some have reported headings to be confusing, and others felt that a clear overview was missing. The size of the database and the high level of detail of data were also seen as a drawback by some users who found it hard to find the specific data they needed. The lengthy pathway to the actual data was also problematic for some; they found it time-consuming to access data other than the most basic tables. Opinions were also voiced that data could be organised in other ways than by theme.

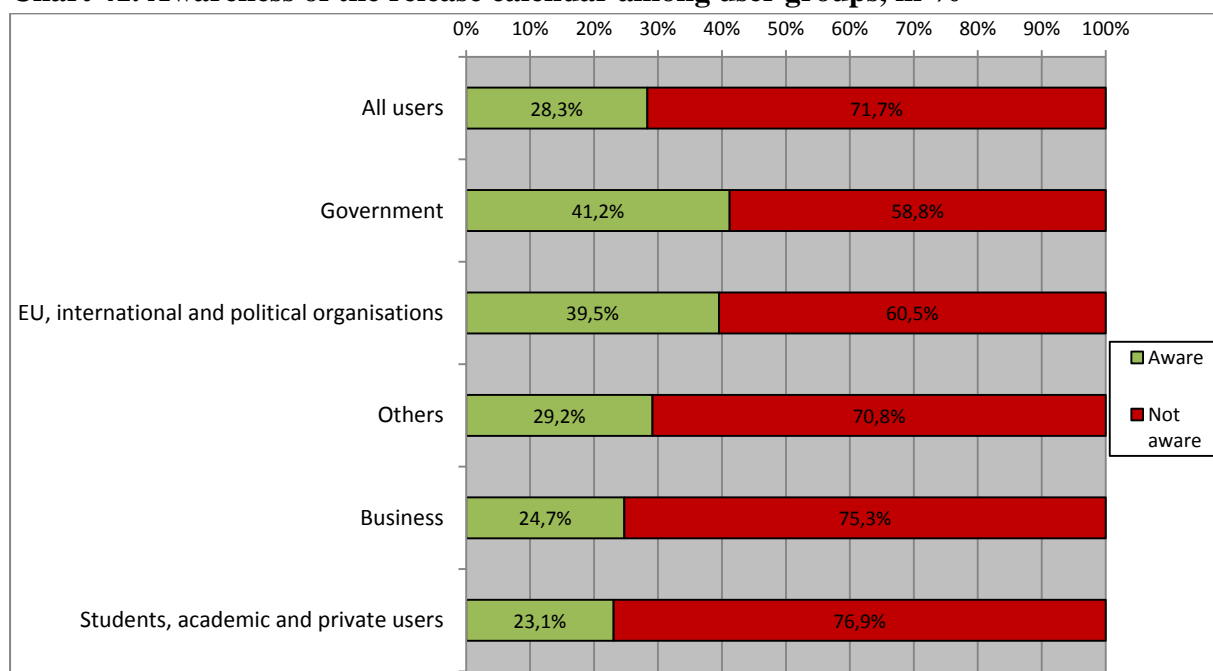
Regarding data search, there were users dissatisfied with the search engine, some of whom would have preferred to a search targeted exclusively to databases rather than the whole website. Search by keywords was also difficult for a number of users. Respondents also reported difficulties in understanding definitions and metadata for the users who are not statisticians themselves.

To a lesser extent, units in which data is measured was reported to be confusing at times. Some users also pointed to problems of consistency / homogeneity between tables and stated that it was difficult to compare data; others found it confusing that some data sets were present in more than one place. Origin of data and calculations behind them were also unclear for some of the respondents, and others found it difficult to compare data either within Eurostat or with that of other institutes. Finally, there were critical comments on the complexity of data extraction and the limited choices that the user has in the process.

3.4.2 Release calendar

When asked about their awareness of Eurostat's [release calendar](#) (Chart 41), which provides information on the dates and times of Euro indicators' publications, less than a third of users seemed to be aware of it (28.3%), a slightly smaller share than in 2014 (29.2%). Among user groups, government as well as EU, international and political organisations were most informed, with the shares of aware users being 41.2% and 39.5%, respectively. A possible explanation could be the fact that these users are interested in the newest data and try to get them as soon as they are available. This year, unlike in 2013 and 2014, it was students, academic and private users who were the least informed, with only 23.1% of them being aware of the calendar.

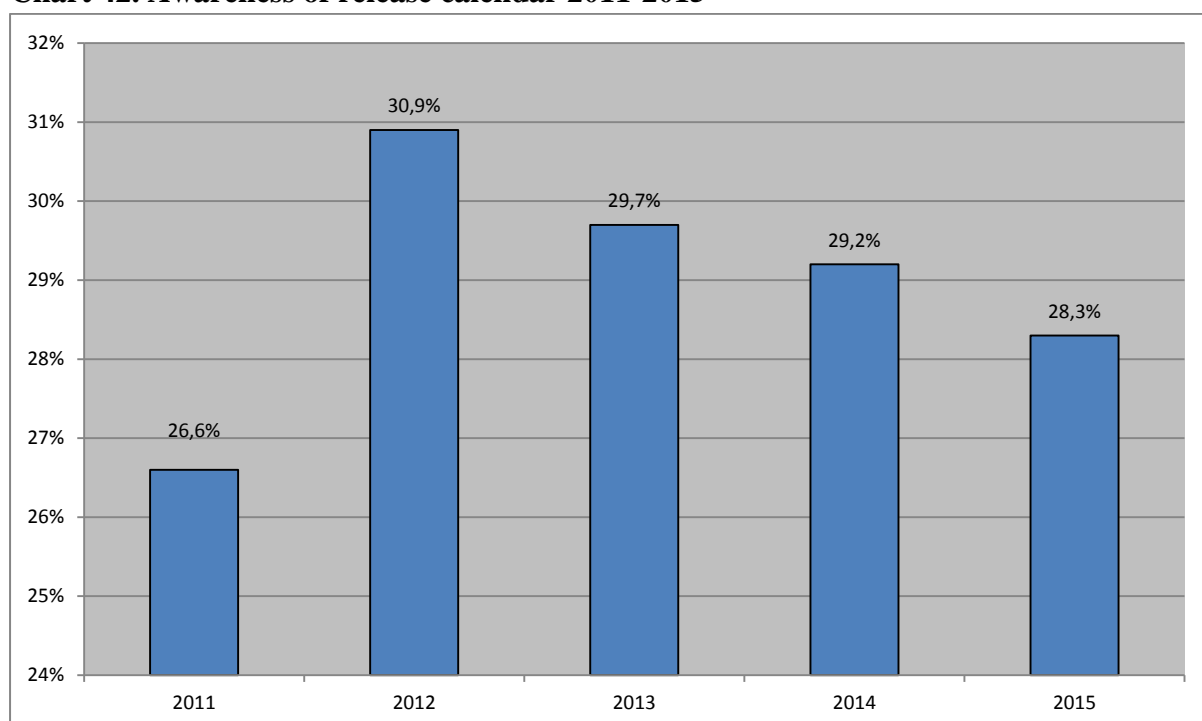
Chart 41. Awareness of the release calendar among user groups, in %



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

Within the five-year surveying period, the sharpest change in the awareness of the release calendar occurred between 2011 and 2012, when the awareness climbed by more than 4% points. Since then, there has been a continuous but very slight decrease in the awareness.

Chart 42. Awareness of release calendar 2011-2015

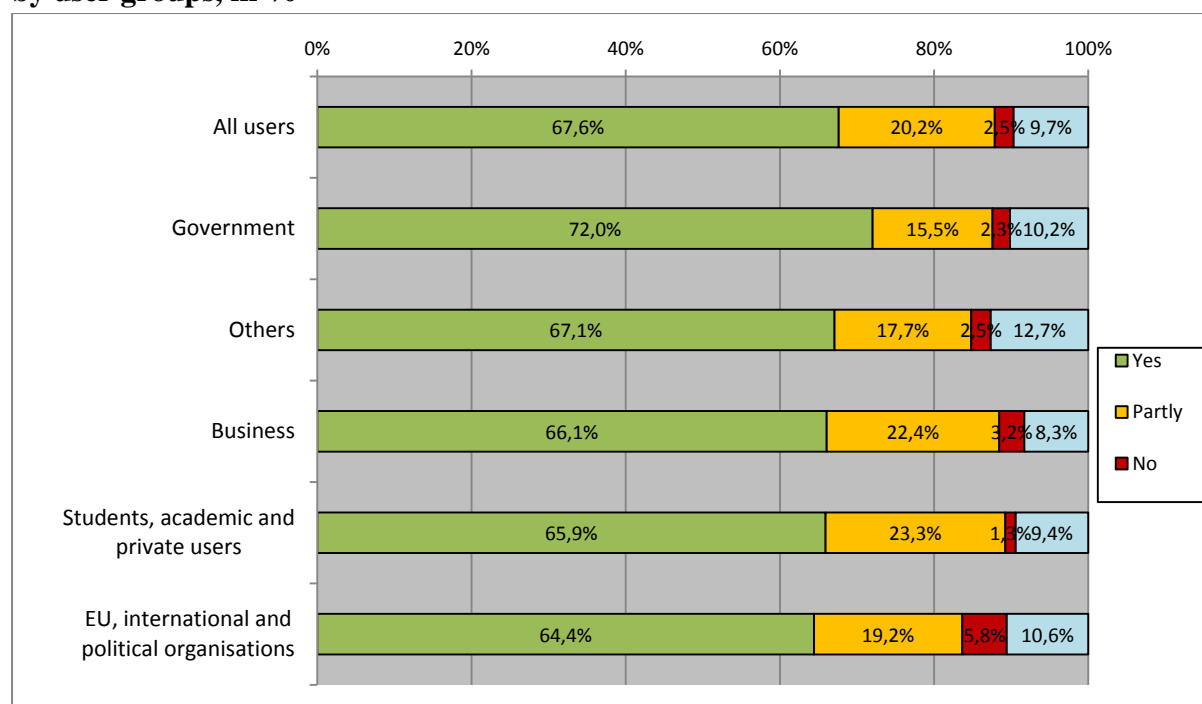


Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

Those who were aware of the calendar were also asked to assess whether the release calendar had sufficient and relevant information to fulfil their needs (Chart 43). An even higher rate of

positive responses than 2014 (67.6% of all aware users in 2015 vs. 64.2% in 2014) indicates that Eurostat release calendar continues to be of great value for those who are aware of it and use it for their needs. 20.2% more of respondents said the calendar satisfied their needs partly.

Chart 43. Assessment of sufficiency and relevance of information in the release calendar by user groups, in %



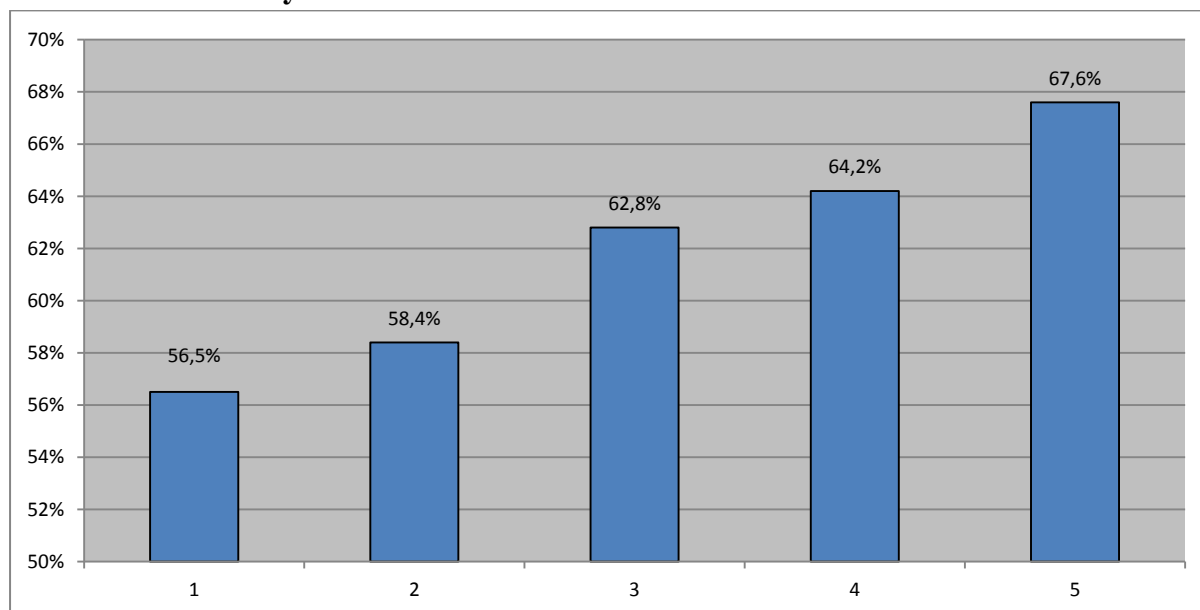
Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

Just as in 2014, government officials were among the most satisfied users with 72.0% of “yes” replies. EU, international and political organisations were again among the least satisfied, however the share of the satisfied users in this group noticeably has gone up from 58.7% to 64.4%.

In their comments users expressed the wish to be able to consult indicators / press releases via a direct link, and some would have preferred to have more topics covered by the release calendar.

Since 2011, user satisfaction with the sufficiency and relevance of information in the release calendar has been steadily growing, showing an overall increase of 11.1% points over the five-year period (Chart 44).

Chart 44. Sufficiency and relevance of information in the release calendar 2011-2015

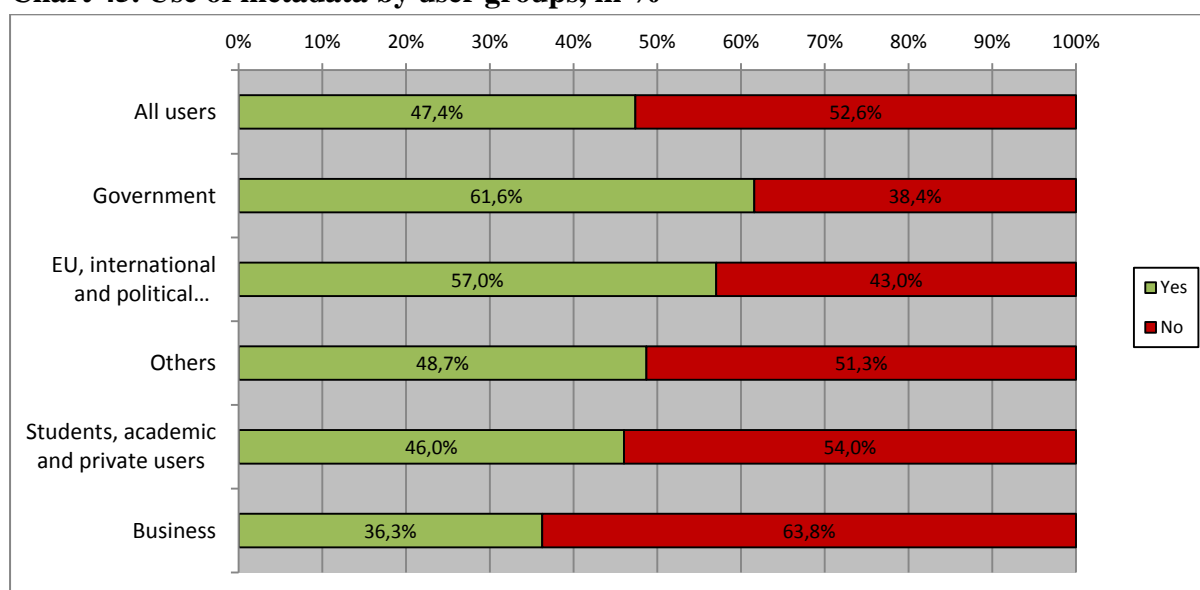


Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

3.4.3 Metadata and methodological information

Eurostat publishes metadata in order to provide better background information about the data (definitions, methodology, classifications, nomenclature, etc.) and to explain their limitations.

Chart 45. Use of metadata by user groups, in %



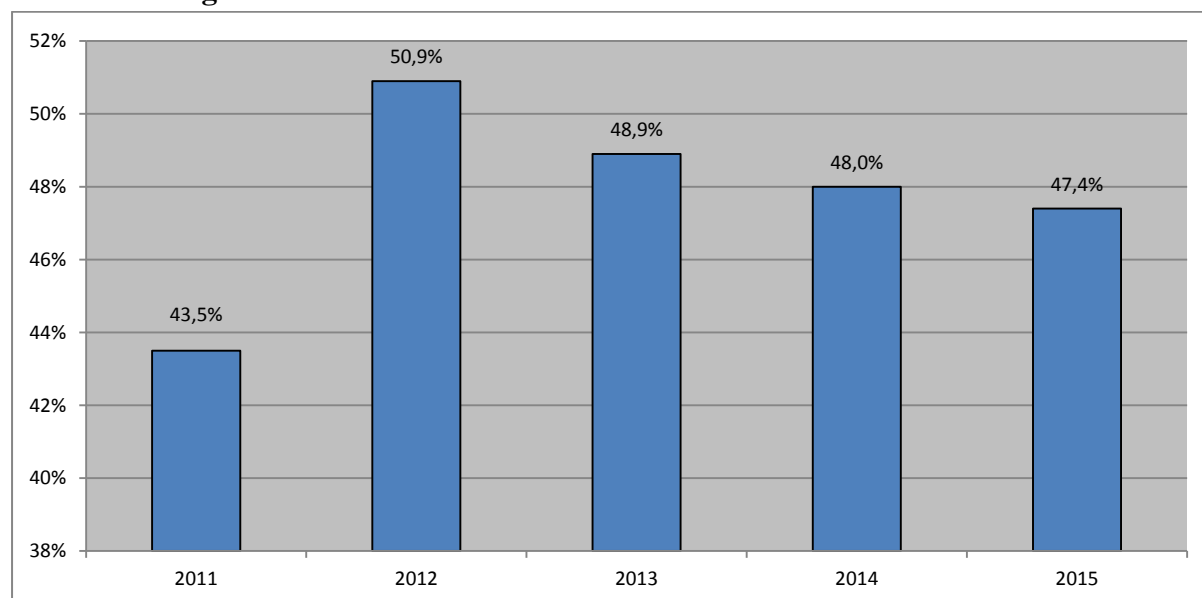
Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

Users were asked to indicate whether they used metadata provided by Eurostat. As seen from Chart 24, metadata was utilised by almost a half of European data users (47.4%), only a marginal difference from last year (48.0%). This year, it was users from the government who used metadata the most, followed by EU, international and political organisations. In these

groups shares of metadata users reached 61.6% and 57.0%, respectively. As in previous years, business users were using metadata the least (36.3%).

Within the last five years, the most notable change in the use of metadata was a 7.4 points increase in 2012. Since then, a very slight yearly decrease in usage has been observed.

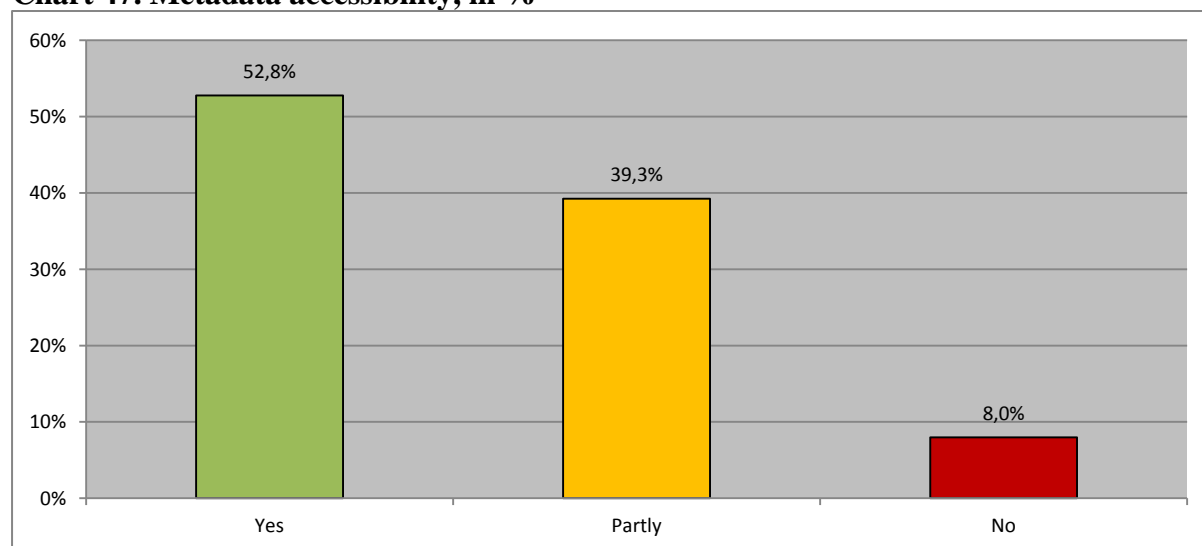
Chart 46. Usage of metadata 2011-2015



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

Metadata users were also asked about their accessibility. Results of Chart 47 reveal that this year the share of respondents who find it easily accessible has grown to more than a half (52.8%). A share of 39.3% thought it was partly easy to find and 8.0% experienced difficulties.

Chart 47. Metadata accessibility, in %

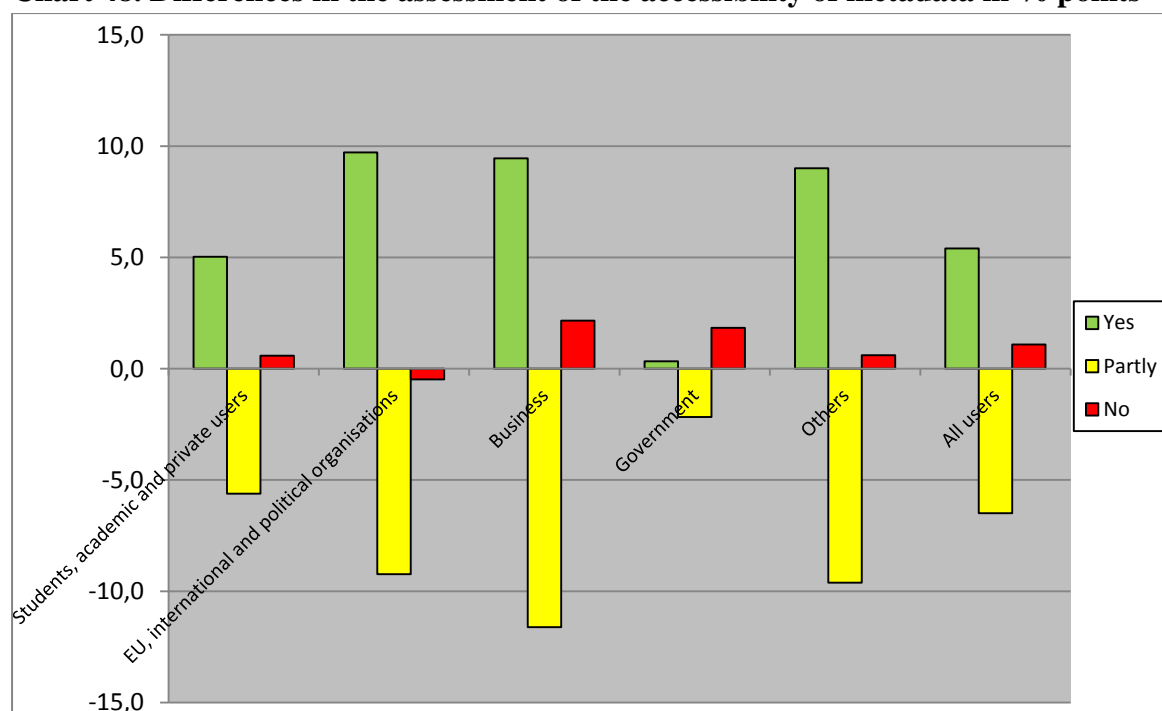


Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

The increase in the share of users who find metadata easily accessible between 2014 and 2015 is true for all of the user groups, as demonstrated in Chart 48. For some of the groups,

namely EU, international and political organisations, business and 'other' users, this increase has approached 10% points.

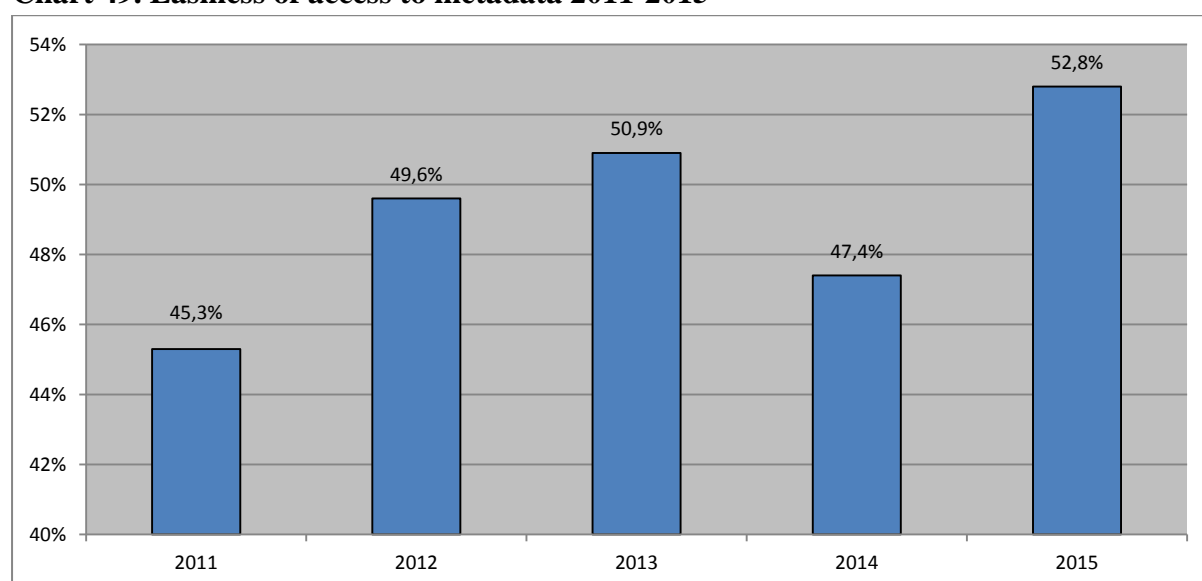
Chart 48. Differences in the assessment of the accessibility of metadata in % points



Source: Eurostat 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

As can be seen from Chart 49, 2014 was in fact an exceptional year with a drop in the share of users who find metadata easy to access. Otherwise, this measure shows a steady increase throughout the five year period, suggesting that users become more and more skilled in finding the metadata suitable for their needs. The 5.4% points increase in 2015 also indicates that the new website may have made easier for some of the users to locate metadata.

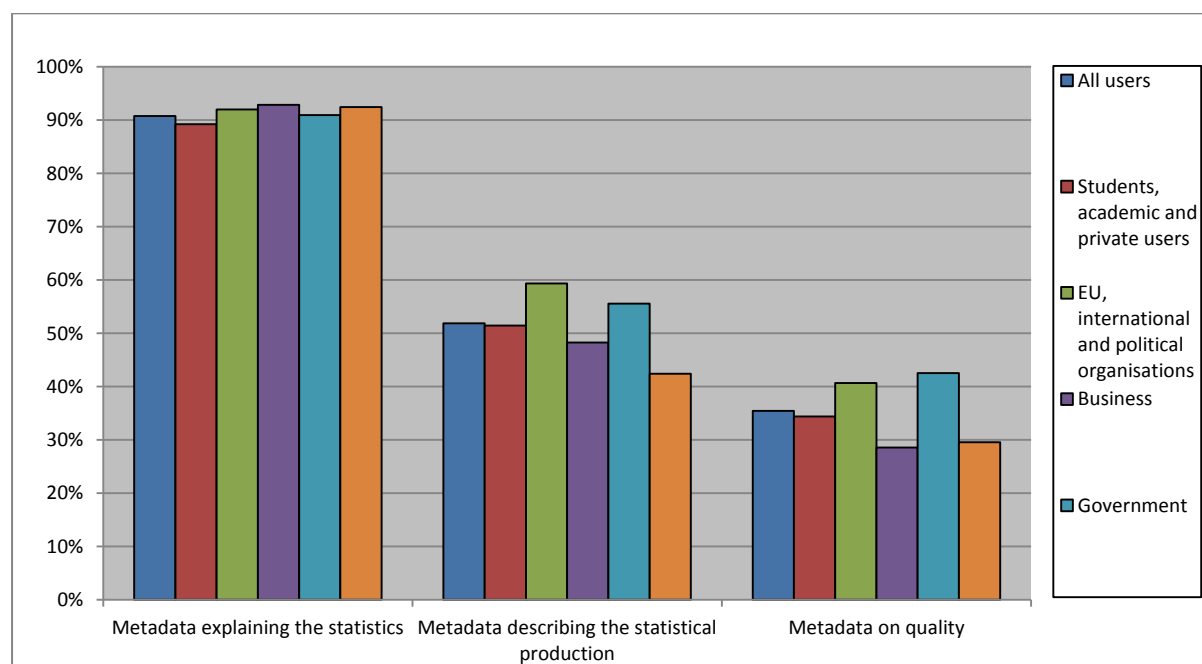
Chart 49. Easiness of access to metadata 2011-2015



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

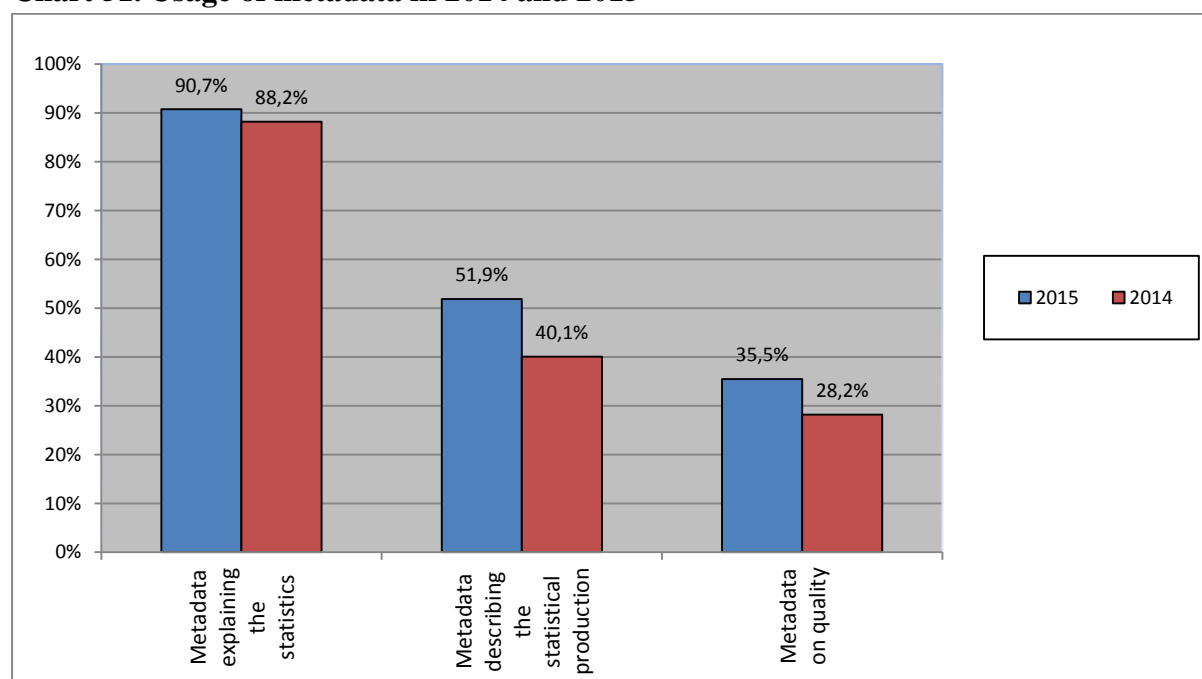
Out of different types of metadata, metadata explaining statistics was the most popular (Chart 50). 90.7% of respondents that used metadata specified they utilised it. Metadata describing statistical production and metadata on quality were used by 51.9% and 35.5% of users respectively. These proportions are higher than last year, with an increase of 2.5% points for metadata explaining statistics; 11.8% points for metadata describing statistical production; 7.3% points for metadata on quality (Chart 51).

Chart 50. Metadata use by types of metadata and user groups, in %



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

Chart 51. Usage of metadata in 2014 and 2015

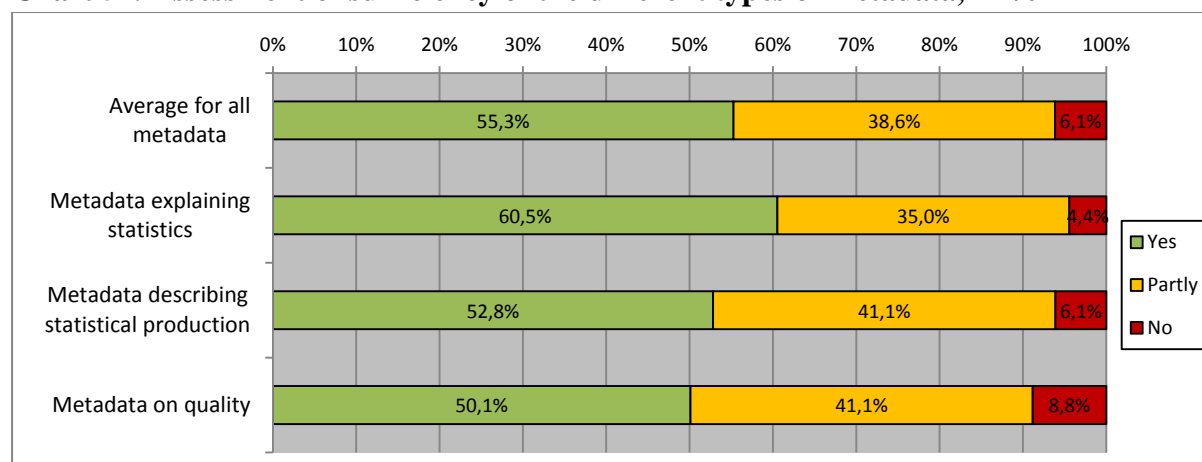


Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

Metadata users were also generally satisfied with its sufficiency (Chart 52). On average 55.3% - virtually the same as last year - found metadata sufficient for their purposes and another 38.6% partly sufficient. 6.1% stated metadata was not sufficient.

Apart from being most popular with all users, metadata explaining statistics was also the one evaluated the best. 60.5% of respondents said it was sufficient and adequate for their needs.

Chart 52. Assessment of sufficiency of the different types of metadata, in %

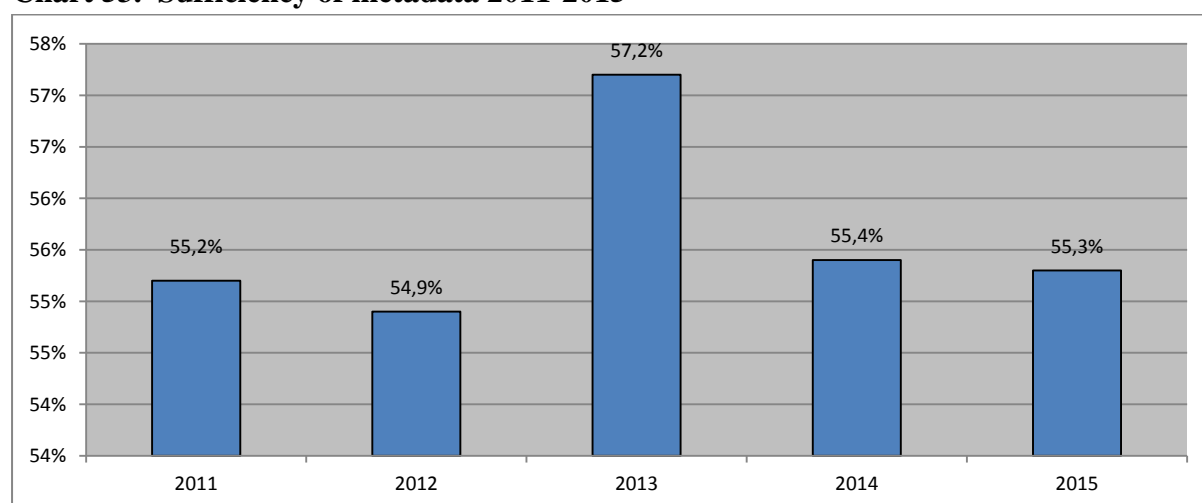


Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

Similarly to 2014, some of the user comments pointed to further improvement of metadata by: (i) providing more detailed meta information and definitions to all published data, (ii) making clear, user-friendly and less technical explanations on calculations and definitions, trying to avoid specialist language, (iii) clearly explaining data gaps, (iv) providing metadata in more languages, (v) making it easier to find and understand its purpose, which could be done by covering these issues in FAQ.

As Chart 53 demonstrates, as a whole there has been very little change in the user assessment of metadata sufficiency between 2011 and now. 2013 proved to be a year when users were more satisfied with this criterion.

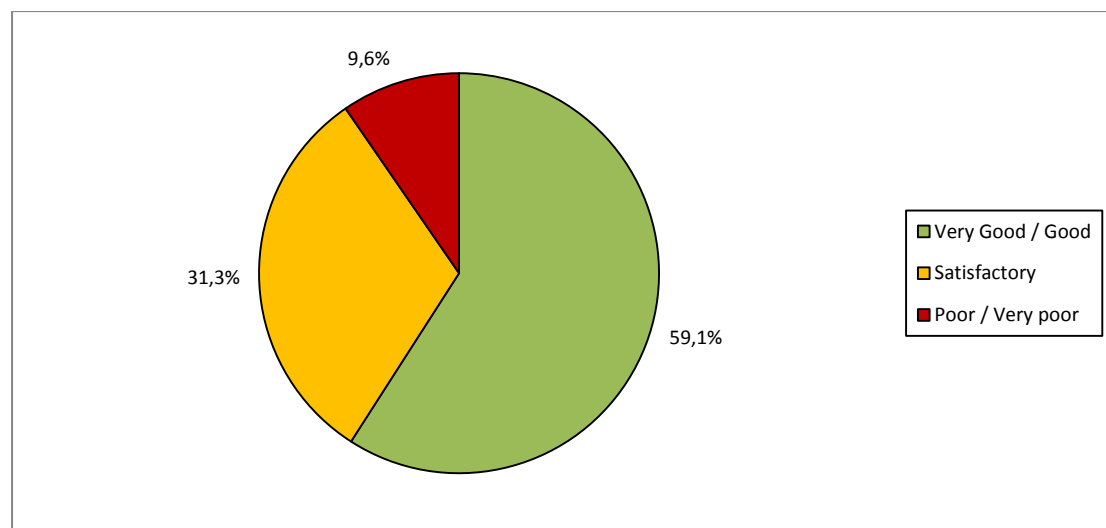
Chart 53. Sufficiency of metadata 2011-2015



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

This year users were also asked to rate the interest of Eurostat's Twitter feed and a bit more than 10% of the respondents expressed their opinion. The responses (Chart 54) showed a positive evaluation, with over 90% of the respondents rating it as at least satisfactory. Out of all respondents who expressed their opinion, 59.1% saw the interest of the Eurostat's Twitter feed as good or very good.

Chart 54. Interest of Eurostat's Twitter feed



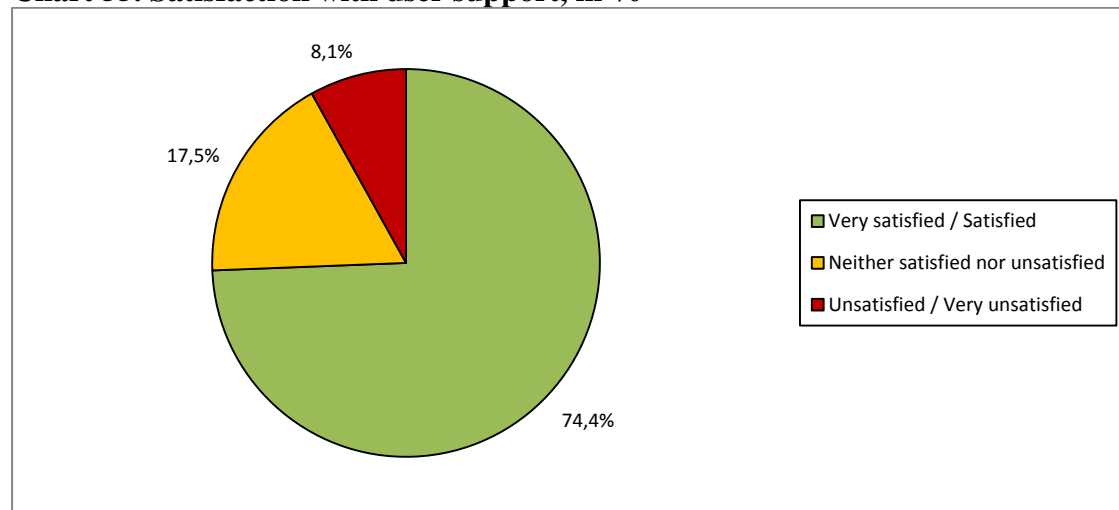
Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

3.4.4 User support

In the survey, users also had the opportunity to express their opinion on the support services offered by Eurostat. Results are presented in Chart 55.

Leaving out those with no opinion or not aware of the user support function, nearly three in four of the respondents (74.4%) said they were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the support service provided by Eurostat – the figure raised by 2.5% points from 2014. The share of unsatisfied users was 8.1% this year.

Chart 55. Satisfaction with user support, in %

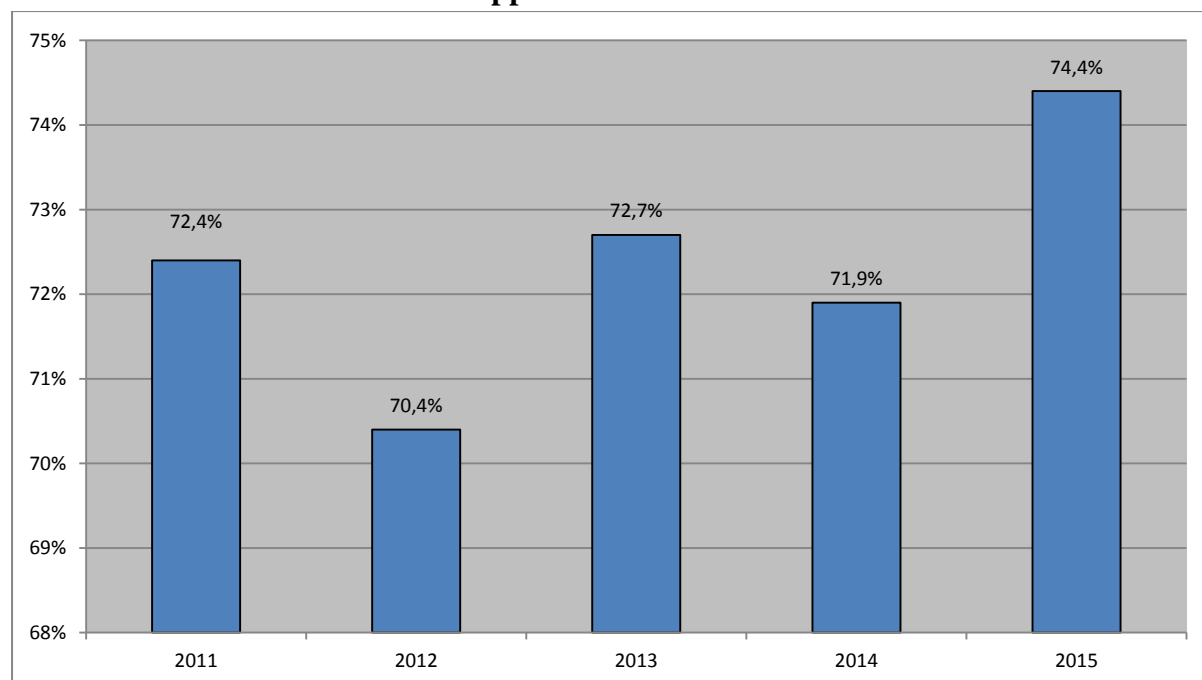


Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

From a user group perspective, government users were the most satisfied with the user support (79.8%), followed by EU, international and political institutions (79.5%) and students, academics and private users (73.8%). Similarly to the last year, businesses were slightly less satisfied with the lowest share of positive responses, however the share of “very satisfied/satisfied” business users has shown a notable increase from 66.8% to 70.9% since 2014.

Between 2011 and 2015, overall satisfaction with user support has improved by 2% points, as shown in Chart 56.

Chart 56. Satisfaction with user support 2011-2015

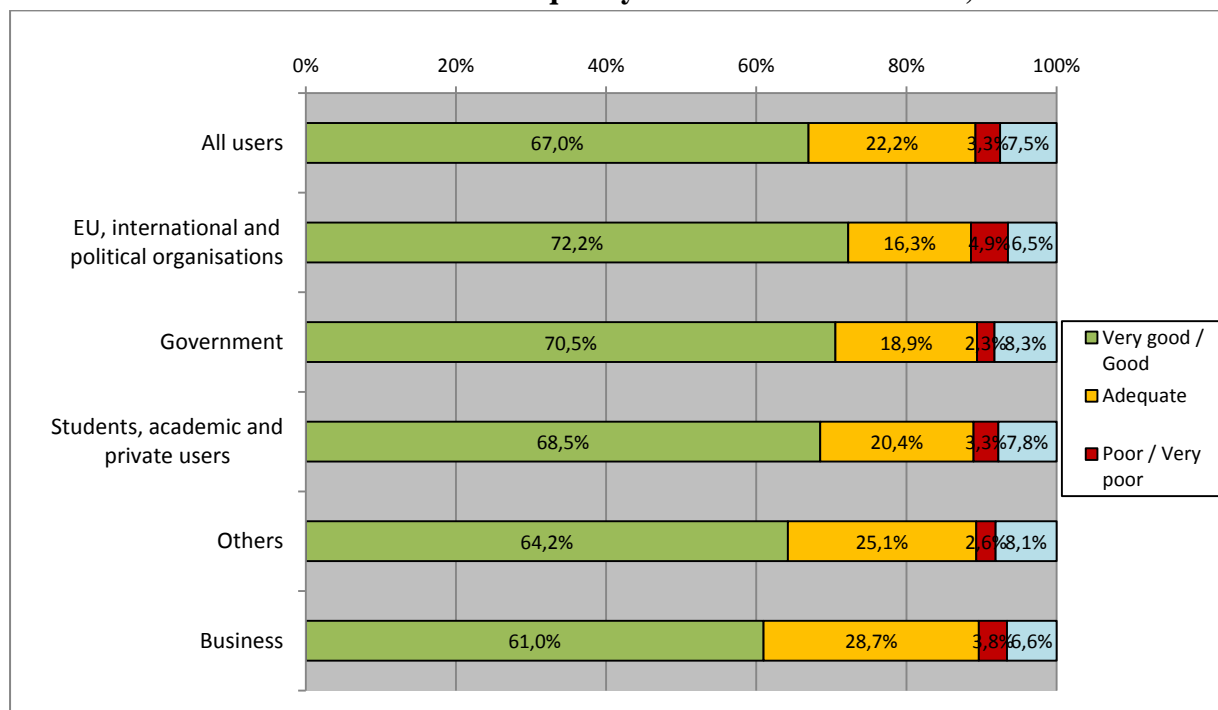


Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

3.5 Overall quality of data and services

Users were also asked to express their views on the overall quality of the *data and services* provided by Eurostat. As can be seen from Chart 56, the level of overall satisfaction remained quite high with 67.0% of all respondents evaluating data and services as “very good” or “good”, 22.2% as “adequate” and only 3.3% as “poor” or “very poor”. This year, EU, international and political institutions as well as government provided most positive feedback (72.2% and 70.5% choosing highest evaluations respectively).

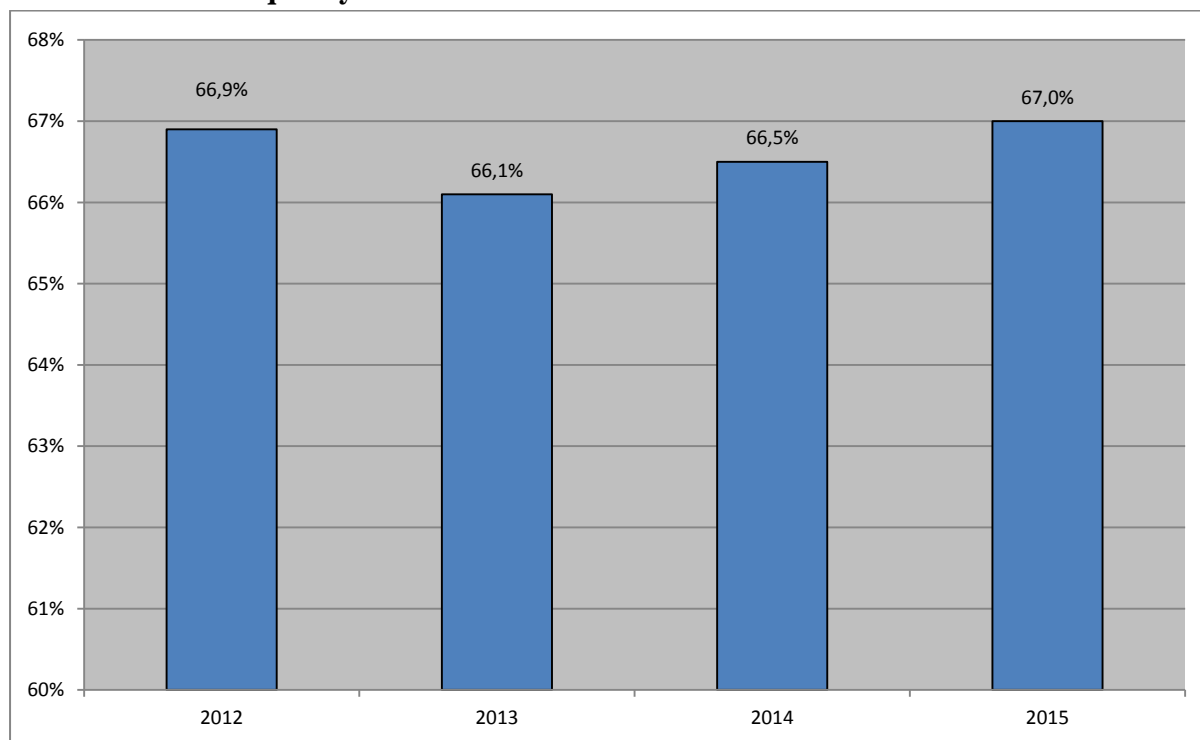
Chart 57. Overall satisfaction with the quality of the data and services, in %



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

As Chart 58 demonstrates, there has been little change in the assessment of the overall quality of data and services since 2012.

Chart 58. Overall quality of data and services 2012-2015



Source: Eurostat 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 user satisfaction surveys

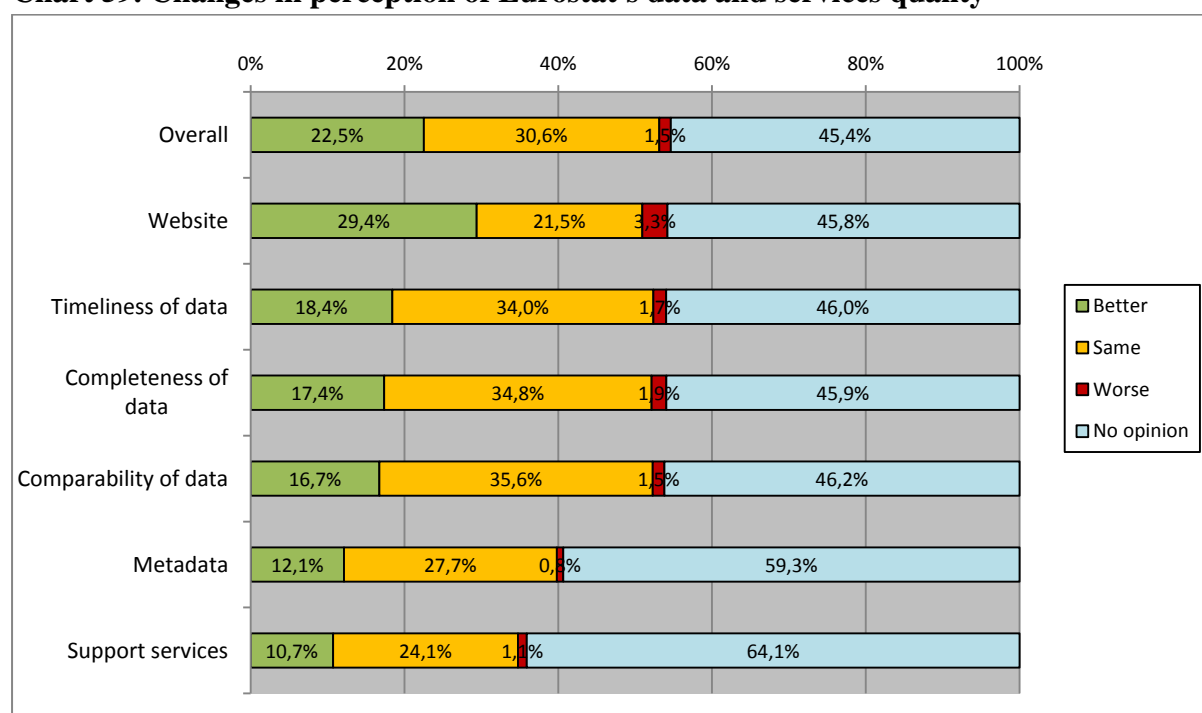
3.6 Comparison with previous year

It is interesting to note that more positive feedback came again, as in 2013 and 2014, from the comparison of overall evaluation of Eurostat's data, products or services with the previous year (Chart 59).

Contrary to the assessments of distinct quality components (timeliness, completeness and comparability), a number of respondents stated they saw data quality components as “better” than last year when looking at the bigger picture (18.4%, 17.4% and 16.7% respective shares for the three quality components). This phenomenon might be explained by a potential continuous increase in quality standards that users expect from Eurostat. Users may see improved data or service quality from last year, but are not necessarily more satisfied with it. What is more, users perceived improvements in Eurostat's website, metadata provision and support services (29.4%, 12.1% and 10.7% “better” responses respectively).

For every assessed criterion, the share of “better” responses was larger this year than in 2014, which is a very good sign for the direction in which the improvements of Eurostat's quality is going. However, a high percentage of “no opinion” responses remained, which can be partly explained by the fact that some users did not take part in the survey last year, did not recall their responses or simply did not have experience with the services.

Chart 59. Changes in perception of Eurostat's data and services quality



Source: Eurostat 2015 user satisfaction survey

4. Messages from the users

A list of suggestions for improvement was drawn taking into account both the quantitative analysis of the answers to different questions and the recurrent comments that respondents could give as a free text. Most of them have already been mentioned in the previous reports.

- To further improve the timeliness of statistical data, especially those with a time lag of more than one year.
- To encourage Member States to submit data on time and provide complete data, especially those specific countries for which data are often missing.
- To improve data comparability eliminating differences between national and European statistics. To ensure that all indicators are calculated in the same way for all countries and that data are identical and linked, when the same dataset exists in different places on the website.
- To make navigation, data search and extraction tools more intuitive and user-friendly. Suggestions in that sense include: to reduce the number of steps necessary to reach the requested table; to rethink headings and structure ; to make it easy to select multiple data sets; to improve filtering in the search facilities; to provide an open API.
- To expand the geographical coverage of provided data on non-EU countries.
- To improve metadata by: (i) providing more detailed meta information and definitions to all published data, (ii) making clear, user-friendly and less technical explanations on calculations and definitions, trying to avoid specialist language, (iii) clearly explaining data gaps, (iv) providing metadata in more languages, (v) making it easier to find and understand its purpose, which could be done by covering these issues in FAQ.
- To provide data at a more disaggregated level or give more options for a breakdown.
- To provide longer time series and the possibility to retrieve historical data that in some cases could not be accessed any more.
- To have more topics covered by the release calendar.
- To make micro data more accessible to the users.
- To keep further user surveys as concise and respondent-friendly as possible.

Statistical areas

1. Economy and finance, composed of

- 1.1 National accounts (including GDP, main aggregates and input-output tables)
- 1.2 European sector accounts
- 1.3 Price statistics
- 1.4 Government finance statistics
- 1.5 Balance of payments
- 1.6 Financial accounts and monetary indicators

2. Industry, trade and services, composed of

- 2.1 Structural business statistics
- 2.2 Short-term business statistics
- 2.3 Tourism
- 2.4 Information society

3. Population and social conditions, composed of

- 3.1 Labour market (including labour force survey)
- 3.2 Population
- 3.3 Health
- 3.4 Education and training
- 3.5 Living conditions and social protection

4. International trade statistics

5. Environment statistics

6. Agriculture and fishery statistics

7. Energy statistics

8. Transport statistics

9. Science and technology and innovation

10. Regional statistics

11. Europe 2020 indicators

12. Sustainable Development indicators

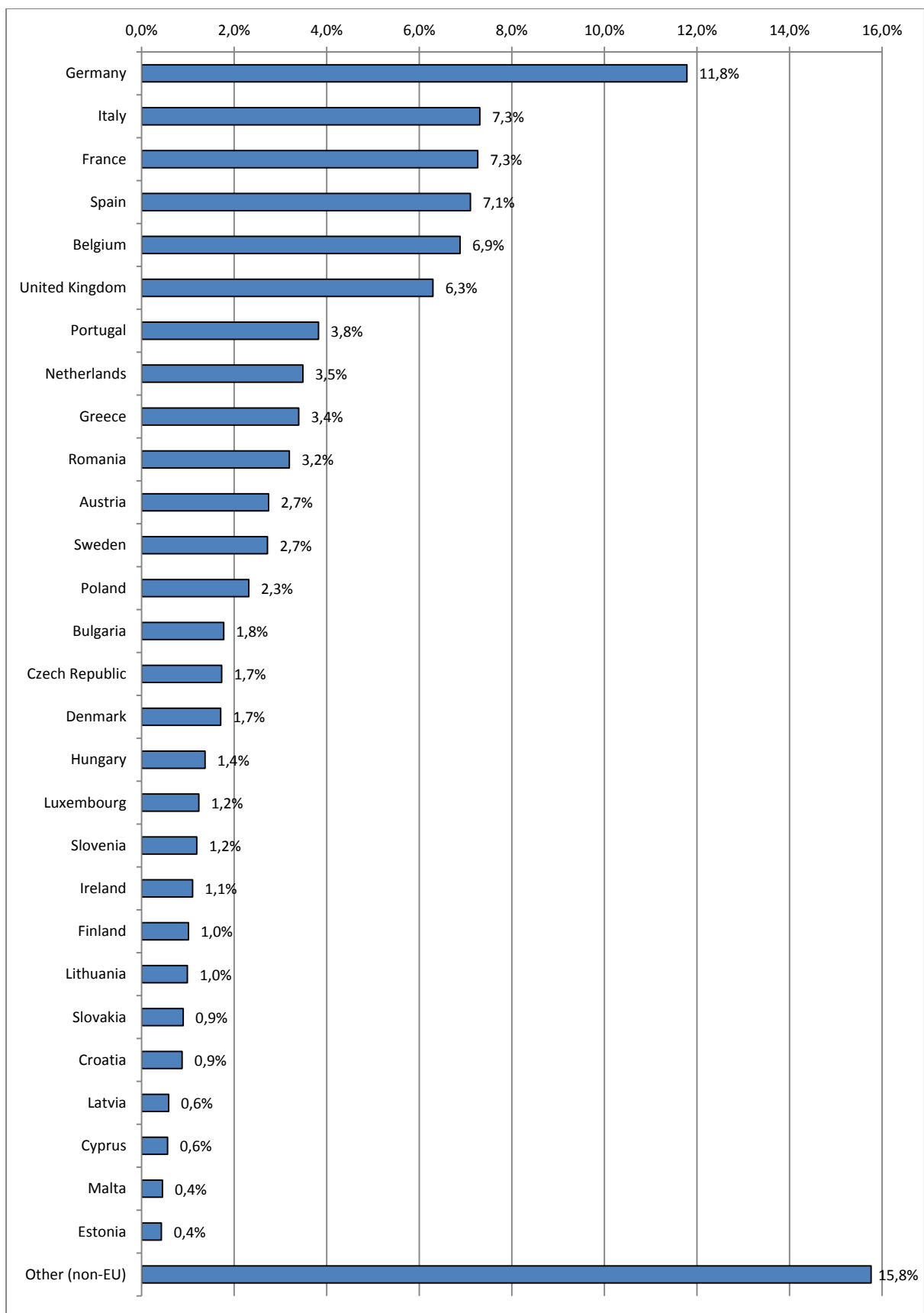
13. Euro indicators / PEEIs (principal European Economic Indicators)

14. Globalisation indicators

15. Other

Breakdown of respondents by user group and country of work place

	Students, academic and private users	EU, international and political organisations	Business	Government	Others	Total
Belgium	65	85	90	54	12	306
Bulgaria	49	1	11	11	7	79
Czech Republic	31	0	23	19	4	77
Denmark	22	6	26	20	2	76
Germany	206	17	199	63	39	524
Estonia	10	0	0	7	2	19
Ireland	26	3	4	12	4	49
Greece	100	4	24	13	10	151
Spain	179	13	40	63	21	316
France	117	15	123	43	25	323
Croatia	20	0	7	9	3	39
Italy	139	18	71	78	19	325
Cyprus	10	0	4	10	1	25
Latvia	12	0	5	9	0	26
Lithuania	22	1	6	11	4	44
Luxembourg	15	11	13	14	2	55
Hungary	32	1	12	6	10	61
Malta	6	1	1	10	2	20
Netherlands	59	3	59	27	7	155
Austria	48	5	25	33	11	122
Poland	49	4	20	27	3	103
Portugal	100	6	31	28	5	170
Romania	85	4	25	24	4	142
Slovenia	18	1	8	24	2	53
Slovakia	25	1	4	7	3	40
Finland	15	3	12	12	3	45
Sweden	45	6	28	36	6	121
United Kingdom	114	12	107	31	16	280
Other (non- EU)	315	42	142	158	44	701
Total	1934	263	1120	859	271	4447



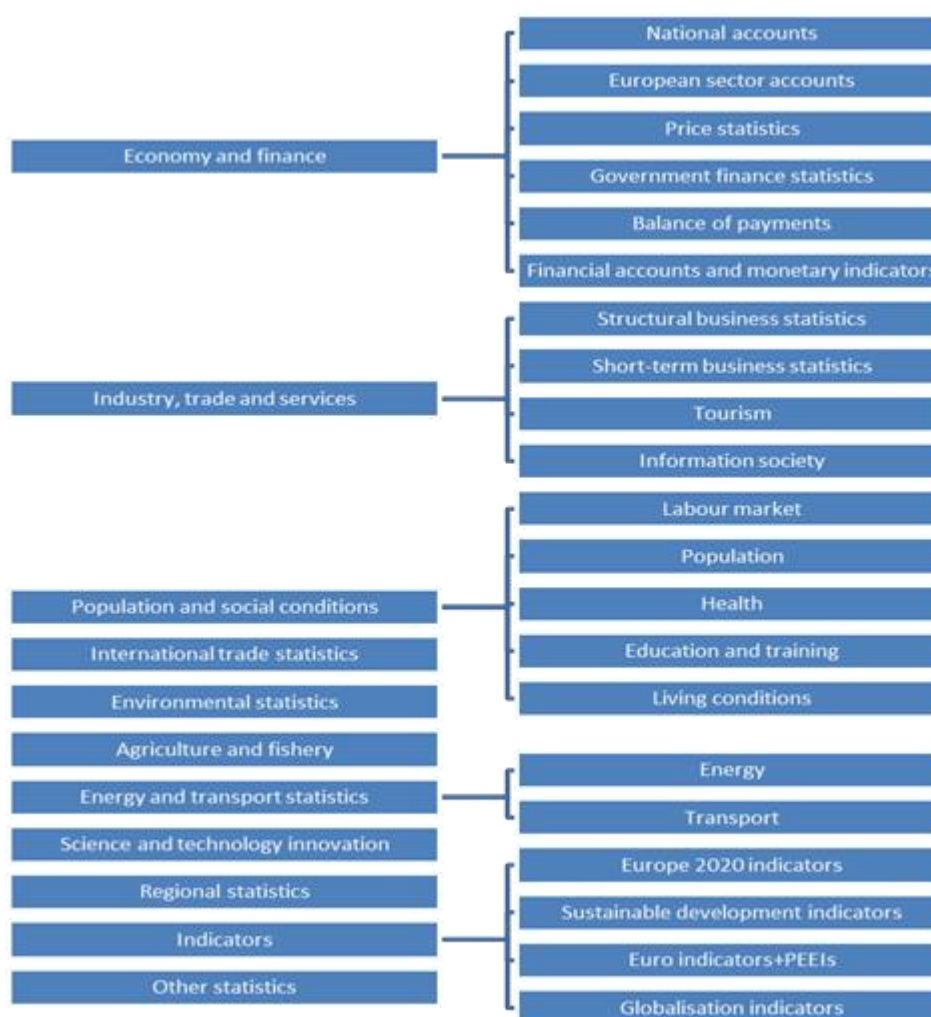
Brief description on the methodology for compiling the information on quality

Respondents to the user satisfaction survey had to choose the statistical areas they utilise data from in one of the very first questions. Only for the areas selected by them in this question they could later in the questionnaire provide an answer on the three quality aspects of timeliness, completeness and comparability and on the overall quality.

The answers were summarised by Eurostat in the following way:

1. For all statistical areas that were composed of sub-areas the answers were summed-up in such a way that the results would be compiled for the bigger heading (left column). As an example we can take the bigger heading of "Industry, trade and services statistics", which is composed of "Structural Business Statistics (SBS)", "Short term Statistics (STS)", "Tourism" and "Information Society (INFSO)". Answers were provided for an assessment of SBS, STS, Tourism and INFSO quality aspects but the results were added to come up with the figures for the heading "Industry, trade and services statistics". The detailed results for SBS, STS, Tourism and INFSO are also available but not published in this report.

The statistical domains (on the right) have been grouped under a bigger heading in the following way:



2. Another compilation aspect is the adding up of the answers "very good" and "good" into one answering category as well as adding up answers of "very poor" and "poor" into one answering category. In the question about trust, the options "trust them greatly" and "tend to trust them" as well as "tend not to trust them" and "distrust them greatly" were aggregated.

3. Percentages were then calculated as the share of answers for the heading of the statistical area and for the answering categories of "good" (contains "very good" and "good"), "adequate" and "poor" (contains "poor" and "very poor") as well as the "no opinion". As an example the different steps of data calculation are illustrated in annex 4 for the question on the assessment of overall quality.

4. Different smaller user categories were also aggregated in the following way to 5 broader groups:

A) Students, academic and private users

Private users

Student or academic users

B) EU, international and political organisations

Commission DG or service

European Institution/body (other than Commission)

Political party/political organisation

International organisation

C) Business

Commercial company

Trade association

D) Government

Public administration

National Statistical Institute

E) Others

Redistributor of statistical information

Other

Example of calculations for the question on overall quality

Step 1. Detailed results for all statistical areas

Q9: How do you rate the overall quality of European statistics?							
Overall Quality	Very good	Good	Adeq.	Poor	Very poor	No opinion	Total
Economy and finance - National accounts	516	805	383	186	99	99	2088
Economy and finance - European sector accounts	176	303	182	74	32	66	833
Economy and finance - Price	274	414	225	95	43	81	1132
Economy and finance - Government finance	218	331	179	95	37	58	918
Economy and finance - Balance of payments	169	248	133	62	32	42	686
Economy and finance – Financial accounts and monetary indicators	144	197	111	53	31	42	578
Industry, trade and services - Structural business services	153	375	285	98	33	61	1005
Industry, trade and services - Short term statistics	124	255	176	55	25	41	676
Industry, trade and services - Tourism	89	136	104	41	20	36	426
Industry, trade and services - Information society	83	141	95	34	12	51	416
Population and social conditions - Labour market	322	595	328	152	56	88	1541
Population and social conditions - Population	373	575	311	139	79	116	1593
Population and social conditions - Health	143	246	153	62	34	60	698
Population and social conditions - Education and training	188	356	211	93	45	92	985
Population and social conditions - Living conditions	201	347	229	93	45	70	985
International trade	259	501	299	124	36	85	1304
Environment	120	242	185	85	24	61	717
Agriculture and fishery	113	259	168	63	26	49	678
Energy and transport - Energy	137	281	225	70	29	52	794
Energy and transport - Transport	89	198	146	67	22	35	557
Science, technology and innovation	131	244	158	71	32	54	690
Regional	160	321	254	119	39	72	965
Indicators - Europe 2020 indicators	193	311	190	71	41	110	916
Indicators - Sustainable development indicators	113	180	144	49	12	63	561
Indicators – Euro indicators+PEEIs	134	165	123	28	21	79	550
Indicators - Globalisation	102	119	83	38	18	49	409
Other statistics	9	33	29	15	6	36	128

Step 2. Results are aggregated under bigger areas

Overall Quality	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor	No opinion	Total
Economy and finance	1497	2298	1213	565	274	388	6235
Industry, trade and services	449	907	660	228	90	189	2523
Population and social conditions	1227	2119	1232	539	259	426	5802
International trade	259	501	299	124	36	85	1304
Environment	120	242	185	85	24	61	717
Agriculture and fishery	113	259	168	63	26	49	678
Energy and transport	226	479	371	137	51	87	1351
STI	131	244	158	71	32	54	690
Regional	160	321	254	119	39	72	965
Indicators	542	775	540	186	92	301	2436
Other statistics	9	33	29	15	6	36	128
Total	4733	8178	5109	2132	929	1748	22829

Step 3. "Very good" and "good" and "very poor" and "poor" are merged

Overall Quality	Very good/Good	Adequate	Poor/Very poor	No opinion	Total
Economy and finance	3795	1213	839	388	6235
Industry, trade and services	1356	660	318	189	2523
Population and social conditions	3346	1232	798	426	5802
International trade	760	299	160	85	1304
Environment	362	185	109	61	717
Agriculture and fishery	372	168	89	49	678
Energy and transport	705	371	188	87	1351
STI	375	158	103	54	690
Regional	481	254	158	72	965
Indicators	1317	540	278	301	2436
Other statistics	42	29	21	36	128
Total	12911	5109	3061	1748	22829

Step 4. Final table with percentages calculated

Overall Quality	Very good/Good	Adequate	Poor/Very poor	No opinion
Economy and finance	60.9%	19.5%	13.5%	6.2%
Industry, trade and services	53.7%	26.2%	12.6%	7.5%
Population and social conditions	57.7%	21.2%	13.8%	7.3%
International trade	58.3%	22.9%	12.3%	6.5%
Environment	50.5%	25.8%	15.2%	8.5%
Agriculture and fishery	54.9%	24.8%	13.1%	7.2%
Energy and transport	52.2%	27.5%	13.9%	6.4%
STI	54.3%	22.9%	14.9%	7.8%
Regional	49.8%	26.3%	16.4%	7.5%
Indicators	54.1%	22.2%	11.4%	12.4%
Other statistics	32.8%	22.7%	16.4%	28.1%
Total	56.6%	22.4%	13.4%	7.7%