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**2006 Eurostat work programme
on Sustainable Development Indicators**

First meeting of the
Working Group on Sustainable Development Indicators
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2006 EUROSTAT WORK PROGRAMME ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

The aim of this document is to inform participants on planned activities by Eurostat in 2006.

1. 2006 WORK PROGRAMME

[...] The work on **sustainable development indicators** (SDI) will continue to be refined taking into account the outcome of the review of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy. Following the development work in preceding years, the focus will now shift to improving the availability and quality of the most relevant indicators.

The European Commission adopted a list of Sustainable Development indicators in February 2005. Eurostat started publishing them on-line in March 2005. The EU Sustainable Development Strategy should be reviewed in December 2005. Eurostat will continue to provide the statistical information required for the monitoring of the Strategy and for the benefit of the general public.

1.1. KEY PRIORITIES for 2006

1. After the successful completion of the project on SDI, Eurostat will implement the production of SDI as a permanent process, particularly in ensuring an automatic update of the data.
2. Eurostat will investigate the possibility to improve the set of SDI either in developing new indicators or in improving the coverage and comparability of existing ones.
3. Eurostat will respond to Commission needs for monitoring of the SD Strategy in preparing a statistical report on the basis of selected SDI. [...]

When Priority 3 was drafted, the Secretariat-General envisaged the need for Eurostat to produce an annual monitoring report on the implementation of the SD Strategy. The latest discussions – including with the Council – have shown that this proposal is no longer considered as useful and realistic and current thinking is that Eurostat should report only every second year.

1.2. 2006 OBJECTIVES

Internal number	Objective	Type of work	Depends on funding from other DG	Link to APS priority
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
101	Sustainable development: Preparation of a statistical report on the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Strategy by December 2006 (exact timing to be agreed with Secretariat-General)	S		C
102	Sustainable development: Improvement of the user-friendliness of the SDI dedicated section of Eurostat website and respond to users requests (permanent)	S		C
103	Sustainable development: Increase of the percentage of SDI with a description of the quality (quality profile) up to 50% by December 2006	S		C

2. CALL FOR TENDERS

Five activities in the field of long-term indicators (both SDIs and Structural Indicators) were mentioned in Eurostat's financing decision for 2006. They will be grouped in a call for tenders to be launched during spring 2006 in order that contractors can start effective work by November 2006. The five activities are:

1: Quality profiles for both Structural Indicators and SDIs, comprising the preparation of quality profiles for some 50 indicators;

2: Analysis of national indicator sets, comprising an analysis of the national indicator sets used in the national reform programmes and in the national sustainable development strategies (review and update of the 2002 study);

3: Analysis of interlinkages between sustainable development issues, based on sustainable development indicators, comprising a statistical analysis of interlinkages amongst a sub-set of indicators describing the main SD issues as well as a set of options for a composite indicator to measure progress towards the goals of the EU sustainable development strategy.

4: Dissemination of Sustainable Development Indicators, comprising the drafting of several publications (2007 progress report, statistics in focus, leaflet);

5: Improvement and development of indicators on good governance, comprising the improvement of data availability, the development of a number of new indicators amongst the 'best-needed' indicators and the identification of other potential candidate indicators to complete the existing list in the 'good governance' theme.

Cost estimate: Indicative EC-contribution € 450 000

3. RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

Eurostat has proposed several research projects for inclusion in the next research programmes.

3.1. 6th Framework Research Programme

Under the theme "Scientific support to policies", a call for proposals (FP6-2005-SSP-5-A) was open until 22 March 2006.

General title: Forecasting and developing innovative policies for sustainability in the medium and long term: Assessing interlinkages between different priorities of the Sustainable Development Strategy. Type of instrument: STREP (Specific targeted research project). Duration: 24 to 36 months. Cost estimate: Indicative EC-contribution € 770000.

This project has two main objectives:

- Improving and further developing methods and indicators to assess progress towards sustainable development. This will build on existing work by Eurostat on EU Sustainable Development Indicators and on related work by other relevant European and international organisations.
- Assessing interlinkages between the different priorities of the Sustainable Development Strategy.

3.2. 7th Framework Research Programme

The FP7 work programme is not yet finalised. Eurostat has proposed the inclusion of research on SDIs in the environment theme, under "assessment tools for sustainable development". This would be intended to build on the results of the above-mentioned FP6 project, and would focus on (i) further improving and developing sustainable development indicators and (ii) improving the knowledge of the interlinkages between the key issues of sustainable development and developing composite indicators summarising the key elements of sustainability.