**How to enlarge our audience: attract and explain**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

It is increasingly important for citizens to understand statistical figures presented in newspapers, on the internet and elsewhere. Due to social media and internet, it is easy to rapidly communicate and spread statistical figures of both good and bad quality. In order to help people to understand the figures, it is vital to increase statistical literacy by explaining what they mean. It is equally important to make statistics easily accessible and more attractive in order to appeal to people who are not familiar with statistics.

In a fast moving world, there is also an increasing demand among users of statistics to have short and catchy texts as well as sharable and interactive products.

Taking these demands into consideration, they can be summarised by two keywords: **attract** and **explain**!

Over the past years, Eurostat has produced a wide range of dissemination and visualisation tools. These tools do not only explain statistics in an easy and understandable language, but they also visualise statistics in a clear and explanatory way and can be shared via social media. These efforts have been undertaken to attract those not so familiar with statistics and to increase their statistical literacy.

This abstract presents examples of such Eurostat dissemination tools.

**2. ATTRACT THE READER AND EXPLAIN**

**2.1 Statistics Explained and Statistics 4 beginners**

[**Statistics Explained**](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Main_Page) is a wiki-based Eurostat website containing close to 900 articles presenting many different statistical topics in an easily understandable way. The target group is intermediate users with some familiarity of statistics who want to have easy-to-grasp texts and charts explaining the figures. This year a new look of the articles was implemented to make them more attractive, visual and easier to read. To achieve this, the following improvements were implemented:

(1) The main messages of the article are placed directly at the very top and users can share them via Twitter;

(2) A visualisation, static or interactive, is presented at the very beginning of the article to gain users attention;

(3) The text of the article is accessible through clickable chapters so that users can immediately see and chose what is of interest for them;

(4) Instead of having a long list of links to further information, these are available through icons illustrating the content of the links.

A part of Statistics Explained is a section called '[**Statistics 4 beginners**](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Beginners:Statistics_4_beginners)**'**, which is aimed at those with basic or no knowledge of statistics, and/or at pupils/teachers in upper secondary school. This project has been developed in collaboration with teachers. The section presents articles describing a range of statistical subjects and concepts in a very easy way through short and simple texts, visualisations and animations.

Currently, the following subjects are covered by short articles:

- Population: demographic indicators such as population change, fertility rate, life expectancy, etc.

- GDP: what is included, how is it calculated, how can it be compared?, etc.

- Inflation: basket of goods, weighting, classification used, how to get one inflation figure, etc.

- Government finance statistics: what is included, how are the indicators calculated?, etc.

- Statistical/numerical concepts: the difference between average and median, percentage and percentage points, etc.

Most of the texts are available in English, French, German, Bulgarian, Greek, Dutch and Portuguese. Articles explaining labour market statistics as well as international trade in goods statistics are in the pipeline and so are further translations.

**2.2 Interactive publications**

Due to an increasing demand among users for short texts, sharability and interactivity, Eurostat is moving away from traditional paper/PDF publications, which generally presents longer texts and numerous data tables, by publishing interactive publications which present topics in an innovative and modern way.

**Interactive publications** are publications which combine short texts explaining main findings with mainly interactive data visualisations, animations, illustrations etc. This combination gives a non-specialist reader the opportunity to get a clear and simple overview of a complex subject. It also offers the possibility to play with the data for example by comparing countries or trends.

So far, Eurostat has produced six interactive publications on different topics. Here follows a few examples:

"[The life of women and men in Europe](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-digital-publications/-/KS-02-17-602?inheritRedirect=true&redirect=%2Feurostat%2Fpublications%2Fstatistical-books%2Fflagship-publications)" is available in 24 languages. This project was conducted within the European Statistical System, where the participating National Statistical Institutes together produced the content of the publication as well as the translations. The aim of the publication is to present different statistics comparing women and men on different themes, ranging from demography, gender pay gap and internet use to employment, childcare and housework. The fact that this publication is available in all official EU languages gives another dimension to literacy and attractiveness: it is easier to understand and to get attracted to a product if it exists in the mother tongue of the reader.

"[The European economy since the start of the millennium](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-digital-publications/-/KS-03-18-014?inheritRedirect=true&redirect=%2Feurostat%2Fpublications%2Fstatistical-books%2Fflagship-publications)", explains and visualizes trends of macro-economic indicators since 2000 to a non-expert audience.

“[SDG's and me](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-digital-publications/-/KS-03-18-220?inheritRedirect=true&redirect=%2Feurostat%2Fpublications%2Fstatistical-books%2Fflagship-publications)”, is part of a package containing a paper publication, a leaflet and an explanatory section on the Eurostat website. It introduces the user to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals in a playful way through very short texts avoiding jargon and numerous visualisation tools where the reader can interact with the data, explore the situation of their country and compare it with others. This is a way to give a flavor of the Sustainable Development Goals to readers not familiar with the topic.

[Key figures in Europe](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/digpub/keyfigures), also forms part of a package also including a paper and a pdf version. This publication, in its different formats, serves as a shop window of the wide range of statistics available from Eurostat. Again, it aims to attract non-users' attention to Eurostat statistics through different visualisations and short texts.

**3. LESSONS LEARNED**

All these dissemination tools have been well received among the users and more such products will be released in the future. However, over time, some lessons have been learned in the production process of these products.

One is the need to have a well-functioning multi-disciplinary team containing developers, web designers, statisticians and communication experts. It is not only sufficient to have such a team at your disposal, it is also very important to coordinate it in a smooth way and to take the different points of views into consideration.

Another lesson learned is the importance of translating the products into different languages and not only to publish them in English. It is much easier to attract new users and to explain statistics if the users can read in their own language. The impact of multi-lingual products is also much higher. This was shown at the release of the interactive publication **The life of women and men in Europe,** which was released in 24 languages, and where many different national television channels and newspapers were reporting about the publication. For approaching students, **Statistics 4 beginners** has a much larger impact if it is translated into many different languages.

A third lesson learned is the maintenance of the interactive publications as it is important to update them on a regular basis with fresh data. It is relatively easy to update them, but with an increasing amount of such publications, it is important to foresee enough resources for these updates.