

The ESSnet Big Data: Highlights of results and outlook for future work

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Abstract

One of the main actions resulting from the Big Data Action plan and Roadmap (BDAR) is the ESSnet Big Data. In fact, there are two consecutive ESSnets, the first one ending in May 2018 and the next one planned to start in November 2018.

In the first ESSnet, which was launched in February 2016, 22 partners from 20 countries of the ESS collaborate in exploring the possibilities of using big data as a source for official statistics. The research comprises seven big data pilot projects and covers aspects such as data access, statistical processes and methods, and combining different data sources for specific domains. Cross-cutting features such as methodology, quality and IT are also looked at.

The second ESSnet is planned to have a duration of 24 months. In total 23 partners from 21 countries have expressed interest in joining the new ESSnet. In February 2018 the ESSC adopted the Business Case Smart Statistics & Big Data, which is the main reference for the second ESSnet. Apart from carrying out new pilot projects, this ESSnet aims at implementing results from the first ESSnet in a limited number of countries. A third track is exploring the possibilities of developing trusted smart statistics, thereby laying the foundation for future actions in this field.

The paper focuses on the yields of the first ESSnet, on lessons learned, and on future plans. The differences in approach between the two ESSnets will be highlighted, and the main opportunities and challenges identified.