

Use of National Accounts Data in the European Union Context

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Paper Abstract:

The paper takes the example of the uses of national accounts data in the European Union (EU) – notably administrative, policy and academic - to illustrate the impact of these multiple user requirements on the compilation, dissemination and quality control of the data.

The paper gives an overview of the arrangements for national accounts in the EU, including the European System of Accounts (ESA 2010), and providing a background of the organisation of official statistics in Europe and the role of Eurostat.

The paper identifies the main administrative uses of national accounts data at the EU level – including for budgetary contributions, fiscal control, regional financing, and macroeconomic imbalance monitoring – and describes the implications that these have for the data in such areas revision policy, time series analysis, quality monitoring and allocation of resources. The paper explores what practical approaches have been found to reconcile administrative uses – often in relation to major budgetary sums or policy implications - with broader user needs.