

Summary

9th EMOS workshop, 26 – 27 October 2023, Prague, Czechia

The 9th European Master in Official Statistics (EMOS) workshop was held on 26 and 27 October 2023 on the premises of the Prague University of Economics and Business in Prague, Czechia. The workshop was organised by Prague University of Economics and Business, Czech Statistical Office and Eurostat.

Almost 90 participants came together at the workshop, including representatives of EMOS-labelled master's programmes, national and international organisations producing official statistics, EMOS Board members, EMOS students and graduates, Eurostat, and other partners who gathered at the workshop to share their experiences and ideas for the future development of EMOS.

The first part of the programme was dedicated to sharing information on the latest developments in two key areas forming the future development of EMOS: official statistics and higher education policy in Europe. A representative of Eurostat spoke about innovation activities in the European Statistical System (ESS) – he presented the European Data Strategy and its key elements such as European data spaces and new roles for official statistics producers in the new data ecosystem, the amendment to the Regulation on European statistics, the ESS innovation agenda and other relevant initiatives.

Developments in learning and higher education also have an important role in determining how EMOS, its objectives, activities, and network will function in the future. The close cooperation with 33 universities across Europe is a way for statistics producers to stay abreast with the trends in the educational landscape. A presentation on the policy experimentation of a joint European degree label by a representative of the Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture of the European Commission informed the discussion on how EMOS could be further strengthened through closer cooperation among EMOS-labelled programmes.

Representatives of the EMOS partners organisations – current and potential – and EMOS students and graduates shared their experiences and perspectives as part of two panel discussions, focusing on the employability of EMOS graduates and on expanding collaboration and strengthening cohesion in the EMOS network. This discussion on key challenges and showcases of implemented solutions and good practices prepared the field for the second day of the workshop.

The second day organisers leveraged the diverse experiences and collective knowledge of the participants in the co-creation workshop, where the participants worked in small groups to brainstorm concrete solutions for real challenges that the organisations participating in the implementation of EMOS face.

A number of crucial questions were raised and discussed, such as: has EMOS fulfilled its promise as a training programme for highly qualified official statisticians for the ESS? Is EMOS offering its students a state-of-the-art education in terms of content and learning techniques? Does the EMOS curriculum currently include opportunities for students to learn about the different roles that official statistics offices need to fill nowadays, such as public communication, stakeholder and project management, ethics, legislation? Are there other roles that EMOS could take on in the global statistical community? Is EMOS leveraging its key strengths – quality, European character, and links with practitioners – to a full extent? The discussions and the results of the co-creation workshop will be used to shape and finalize the final tasks and results of the study on the future of EMOS.

The overall conclusion from the workshop is clear: in today's rapidly evolving data landscape, the case for EMOS has grown more compelling. Official statistics producers must have access to a skilled and adaptable workforce of statisticians. For potential employers, EMOS offers the opportunity to collaborate with academia to keep statistical curricula relevant and up to date. Nevertheless, the members of the EMOS Board and the European Statistical System Committee acknowledge the necessity to reassess the EMOS program, ensuring its alignment to a new era in official statistics and higher education and that it caters to a new generation of learners. The findings of the study on the future of EMOS and the ensuing strategy for the program's development will be available in early 2024.

The 9th EMOS workshop offered plenty of opportunities for EMOS Network and its partners to informally exchange their views, experiences, ideas, as well as to strengthen the relationships among partners. During breaks throughout the day, participants could familiarise themselves with specific EMOS study programmes, students' thesis and traineeship projects by viewing the posters prepared and presented by programme representatives and students.