

Since June 2023, a new retention policy is in place in Eurostat to ensure the long-term availability of data- and metadata files collected from data providers. The policy is supported by the centrally maintained Network Attached Storage (NAS) solution.

As per the retention policy, data and metadata transmitted to Eurostat is retained in the centralised archive for a period of **5 years by default**, with a possibility for individual domains to request a retention period of up to 15 years.

The data retention policy covers:

- **Data transmitted to Eurostat by any national, international or private provider**

Includes Member States, candidate Member States and potential candidate Member States, and private or public partner organizations.

- **Both voluntary and mandatory data collections**

Validation reports, logs and converted data associated to transmissions. All validation steps and resource use (e.g. DSDs and validation rulesets) are logged. Keeping these additional data may prove useful in case of auditing of past data transmissions or in case transmissions must be reprocessed.

- **Metadata transmitted to Eurostat via the ESS Metadata Handler**

Any metadata transmission made via the ESS Metadata Handler is registered in EDAMIS and is covered by the policy.

The policy does not cover:

- **Transmissions made for pre-validation only**

Data sent for pre-validation are not forwarded to Eurostat's production systems and are not taken into consideration when assessing compliance with regulations.

- **Data exchanged between Member States via EDAMIS**

In such cases (e.g. exchange of micro-data on intra-union exports), even though the Eurostat infrastructure is used for the exchange, Eurostat is not the recipient of the transmissions.

- **Data collected directly by Eurostat outside the corporate systems**

Eurostat directly collects data via surveys (e.g. remuneration surveys, LUCAS). As these data are not transmitted to Eurostat by partners, they fall outside of the scope of this policy.

- **Data stored in or generated by the production or dissemination systems**

Production and dissemination systems store and process data to produce European aggregates, and may maintain revision / vintage databases. This policy only applies to the raw data transmitted to Eurostat, not subsequent storage or processing practices.

Extension of the default 5 year retention period

Extensions are introduced on a domain by domain basis. In case of a request for extension, a justification must be provided. Justifications may include specific legal obligations, or practical reasons (e.g. when the data collection occurs every 5 to 10 years). In case you would like to ask for an extension of the default retention period, please send the request with a justification to:

ESTAT-DATA-METADATA-SERVICES@ec.europa.eu