

Distributional National Accounts

Understanding the economic well-being of household groups in the EU

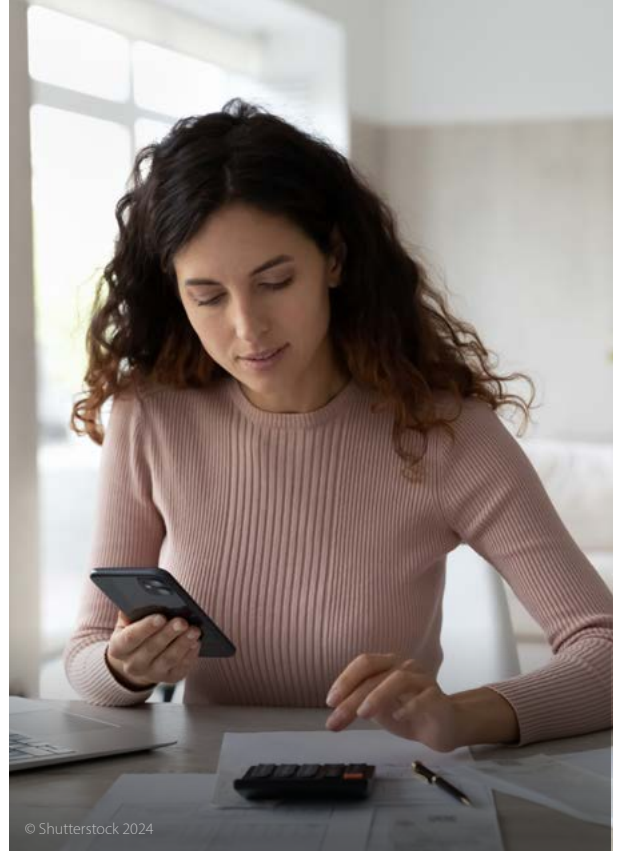
The project

Innovation is at the heart of European Statistical System (ESS) projects, and Eurostat has worked innovatively, successfully implementing new statistical solutions and business ideas, and creating genuine value for their partners and users. The rapidly changing data ecosystem of today is fast paced and competitive, which means innovation is not just an option for the ESS but a necessity.

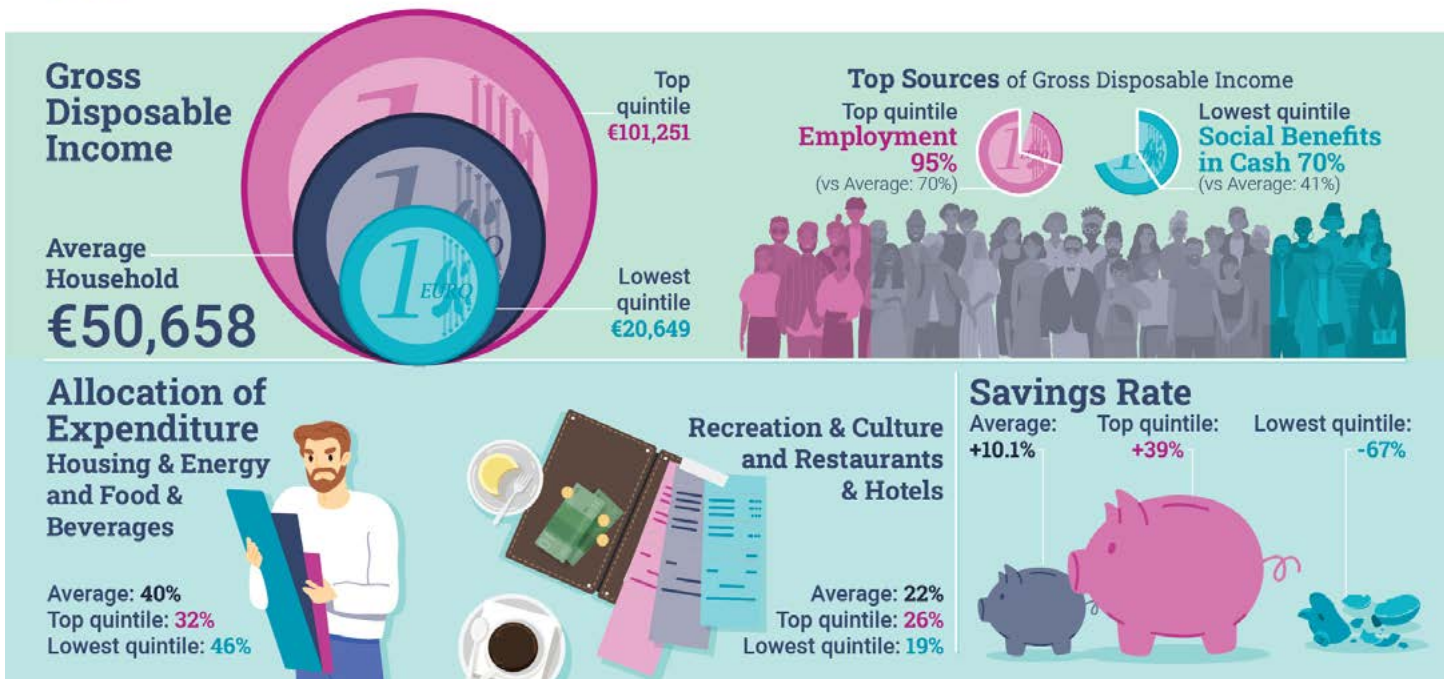
The ESS Innovation Agenda addresses the urgent need for new, timelier and more detailed statistics by expanding the use of digital technologies, widening the use of data sources, applying new technologies and fostering innovative practices.

The 'Distributional National Accounts' project is a joint initiative between macro-economic statistics and social statistics aimed at structuring various ongoing and planned activities in the statistical domain of Household Distributional Accounts (HDA) compiling distributional estimates on household income, consumption and saving consistent with national account totals.

This project aligns with the ESS Innovation Agenda by focusing on the development of a statistical process for the regular production and dissemination of HDA, in line with the System of National Accounts (SNA) update based on data transmitted by countries.



Household Distributional Accounts 2010–2015



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The infographic above is illustrative - the data relate only to Ireland

The motivation

National accounts statistics:

- ensure comprehensiveness, coherence and international comparability;
- describe the economic situation of an average household;
- do not show the living standards and economic well-being of different groups of households.

Data on the distribution of household income and consumption are highly demanded by policymakers and other users. Economic inequality is a top concern for policymakers and citizens, with crises like the 2008 financial crisis and COVID-19 highlighting the need for detailed insights into the economic well-being of different household groups. Such data are essential for understanding how different household groups are affected by these crises and for crafting policies that promote inclusive growth and address inequality. The 'Distributional National Accounts' project was launched to meet this demand, making it possible to analyse inequalities in income, consumption and saving, within the framework of national accounts.

Through its key activities, the project aims to enhance the quality and availability of household distributional data and contribute to the broader goals of the ESS Innovation Agenda. This initiative not only supports the production of more detailed and timely statistics, but also ensures that the ESS remains at the forefront of statistical innovation.

The methodology

The 'Distributional National Accounts' project aims to structure several ongoing and future activities to develop a statistical process for the regular production and dissemination of HDA.

These activities include the work of the Task Force on Household Distributional Accounts (TF HDA) as well as other promotional activities. The TF HDA aims to facilitate the sharing of experiences and best practices in HDA. Additionally, it supports countries in estimating their own distributional accounts and enhancing the quality of their results.

Key activities include:

- **TF HDA:** Coordinating efforts, developing methodology and improving quality.
- **Development of statistical processes:** Establishing a regular production and dissemination process for HDA.
- **Supporting activities:** Engaging in related activities such as grants, dissemination, and promotional efforts.



The team

The project team is under the guidance of Eurostat.

- Member States involved: All Member States.
- External partners / researchers involved: Task Force on Household Distributional Accounts, the OECD and the ECB.

Contact:

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More information

Eurostat experimental statistics:

- [Income and consumption: social surveys and national accounts](#)

Methodologies:

- [A report 'Distributional national account estimates for household income and consumption: methodological issues and experimental results, 2022 edition](#)
- [OECD Handbook on the Compilation of Household Distributional Results on Income, Consumption and Saving in Line with National Accounts Totals](#)
- [Guidance note on Distribution of household income, consumption and wealth](#)