

ESSNet S D C

**A Network of Excellence in the European Statistical System in the field of
Statistical Disclosure Control**

Evaluation report for the Training Course on Statistical Disclosure Control in Vilnius, 29 September – 2 October 2009

This was the second course of the ESSNet project. One of the leading ideas of the ESSNet concept is the promotion of the cooperation between NSIs. The more advanced NSIs should take the lead in spreading the knowledge and together bring the European Statistical system at a higher level. Teaching practical courses is one of the instruments. Statistics Netherlands together with IStat and Destatis have a longer tradition in teaching SDC-courses.

For the ESSNet courses we have taken a slightly different approach. Instead of teaching 1 or max. 2 participants from each Member State, we now invited 3 or 4 participants from a smaller group of countries. This proved already to be successful in the first ESSNet course and we used the same formula this time. We think that a larger group per Member State could spread the knowledge, when they return home. We concentrated this time on the North–Eastern part of Europe and invited participants from Estonia(4), Latvia(3), Poland(4), Czech Republic(2), Slovakia(1) and the hosting country Lithuania(6). The list of participants is an annex to this report.

In the first ESSNet course we introduced a new element. Participants were encouraged to bring their own datasets. The idea behind this is that if participants can use the ARGUS software on their own data the effect and the impact of the training sessions would be much higher.

Organisation

The local organisation of this course was done by the Lithuanian Statistical Office. We are grateful for the kind hospitality in Vilnius. The ESSNet has supported financially the participants of the course. But the ESSNet can only fund up to 70% of the costs. Therefore a grant for the remaining 30% from the Unesco Chair in Data Privacy (Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Tarragona) was gratefully acknowledged. This has certainly contributed to the success of the course.

Conclusions

The course has been very successful. The new element of working with the own data sets was again a great success. Also the evaluation forms give a very positive outcome.

Annex 1: Results of the evaluation forms

The tables show the frequencies of the answers given by the participants. The additional remarks have added as well..

	Far too much	Too much	About right	Too little	Far too little
The <i>length</i> of the course in days was		4	15		
The <i>intensity</i> of the learning process was		3	15	1	
The amount of <i>theoretical</i> content of the course was		1	15	3	
The amount of <i>practical</i> content of the course was		1	16	2	
The amount of <i>free time</i> during the course was		3	15	1	

Additional remarks on the course structure

- It was rather difficult to absorb the theoretical background in given time. More time for exercises would have helped. Work with ARGUS was organised well
- Two hours lunch time was too long (in Vilnius city centre anyway)

	Agree strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree strongly
The theme of the course is <i>relevant to my work</i>	5	7	6	1	
The course provided me with <i>useful information</i>	7	11	1		
The course provided me with <i>useful tools and techniques</i>	7	9	3		
The course met <i>my own expectations</i>	6	8	5		
The course addressed <i>my specific areas of interest</i>	4	6	8	1	
It will be possible to <i>apply the new knowledge at my work</i>	5	11	2	2	

Additional remarks on the content of the course

- It was a good introduction to the methods of hiding datasets
- Not everyone had the opportunity to practise on computer – the number of participants was more than the number of computers
- Big strong element: exercises on Statistical Disclosure Control (thanks to Eric Schulte Nordholt) and their solutions 😊

Anco Hundepool

	Agree strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree strongly
The lecturer had <i>good knowledge of the subject</i>	12	6	1		
The lecturer was <i>responsive to questions</i>	9	10			
The lecturer's verbal delivery was <i>easy to follow</i>	7	8	3	1	
The lecturer provided <i>good course notes</i>	11	8			
The lecturer made <i>good use of visual aids</i> (sheets etc.)	10	8	1		

Eric Schulte Nordholt

	Agree strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree strongly
The lecturer had <i>good knowledge of the subject</i>	14	5			
The lecturer was <i>responsive to questions</i>	11	7	1		
The lecturer's verbal delivery was <i>easy to follow</i>	9	8	1	1	
The lecturer provided <i>good course notes</i>	11	8			
The lecturer made <i>good use of visual aids</i> (sheets etc.)	10	8	1		

Luisa Franconi

	Agree strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree strongly
The lecturer had <i>good knowledge of the subject</i>	13	6			
The lecturer was <i>responsive to questions</i>	12	5	2		
The lecturer's verbal delivery was <i>easy to follow</i>	10	8	1		
The lecturer provided <i>good course notes</i>	9	7	3		
The lecturer made <i>good use of visual aids</i> (sheets etc.)	9	9	1		

Sarah Giessing

	Agree strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree strongly
The lecturer had <i>good knowledge of the subject</i>	11	8			
The lecturer was <i>responsive to questions</i>	12	6	1		
The lecturer's verbal delivery was <i>easy to follow</i>	7	7	5		
The lecturer provided <i>good course notes</i>	10	7	2		
The lecturer made <i>good use of visual aids</i> (sheets etc.)	10	9			

Additional remarks on the lecturers

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper presentations can be better

What is the most important thing you learnt from this course?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The whole range of different aspects to statistical confidentiality, hidden risks and possible approached to protection of the data New skills and knowledge Tabular data protection, τ-ARGUS Practical use of the software μ-ARGUS and τ-ARGUS How to use τ-ARGUS It is not so easy to use τ-ARGUS for tables. We should use that for microdata. Methods of suppression tabular data Techniques of solving hidden information (Thanks for prepared exercises to Eric) Methods of suppression microdata How to deal with microdata (Statistical Disclosure Control of microdata) It helped me to realize that there are dangerous situations possible even when the data seem to be suppressed. It gave an idea of different methods that could be used to suppress data

Additional *general remarks*

- Very good materials, I will use them in my work that will be connected with tabular data protection in Structural Business Statistics
- The course could be planned for 3 days
- All lectures were very helpful. Thank you very much
- Thank you for the invitation for course SDC. I am very glad that I could take part in the course
- I would suggest reading the two ARGUS manuals before the course.
ARGUS needs some improvements f.i. messages in Dutch are difficult to understand.
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Annex 2. List of participants

1	Mr Sigitas Leskauskas	LT	Chief Security Specialist, Information Systems Maintenance Division
2	Mr Ignas Miskinis	LT	Acting Chief Specialist, Methodology and Quality Division
3	Ms Janina Salkauskaite	LT	Chief Specialist, Enterprise Statistics Division
4	Ms Ivona Liachovic	LT	Chief Specialist, Foreign Trade Statistics Division
5	Mr Valerij Zavoronok	LT	Deputy Head, Information Systems Maintenance Division
6	Mr Icikas Laurinavicius	LT	Chief Specialist (programmer) Information Systems Maintenance Division.
7	Ms. Baiba Buceniece	LV	Senior Officer, Mathematical Support Division
8	Sandra Ceriņa	LV	Senior Officer, Employment Statistics Section, Social Statistics Department
9	Ms. Inga Malasenko	LV	Senior Officer, Enterprise Finance and Structural Statistics Section, Business Statistics Department
10	Ms Kai KAARNA	EE	Methodologist-Mathematician, Methodology Department
11	Ms Kristel TUISK	EE	Methodologist-Mathematician, Methodology Department
12	Ms Olga SMIRNOVA	EE	Leading Data Manager, Social Surveys Service, Population and Social Statistics Department
13	Mr Arvo VALTIN	EE	Leading Data Manager, Social Surveys Service, Population and Social Statistics Department
14	Ms. Katarzyna Walkowska	PL	
15	Mr. Mirosław Stepień	PL	
16	Mr. Marcin Kepka	PL	
17	Ms. Teresa Szczepaniak	PL	
18	Mr. Vallo	SK	Director of Department of Statistical & Mathematical Methods
19	Ms Pavlina Habartova	CZ	Demography Dept.
20	Ms Lenka Sigutova	CZ	Demography Dept.

Annex 3: Course program

ESSNet SDC training course 29 September- 2 October 2009 Vilnius

Lecturers: Anco Hundepool and Eric Schulte Nordholt (Statistics Netherlands)
Luisa Franconi (IStat)
Sarah Giessing (Destatis)

Date day 1

Time	Title/Topic	Lecturers	Room
9:30- 10:00	Introduction to course, lecturers and participants	Anco Hundepool	Conf.
10:00- 10:45	General introduction to Statistical Disclosure Control	Anco Hundepool/ Eric Schulte Nordholt	Conf.
<i>10:45-11:00</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>		
11:00-12:00	Theory/methods of SDC concerning micro data (General)	Luisa Franconi	Conf.
<i>12:00-14:00</i>	<i>Lunch break</i>		
14:00-15:00	Risk assessment, microdata protection and data utility	Luisa Franconi	Conf.
15:00-15:30	Exercises microdata (1)	Eric Schulte Nordholt	Conf.
<i>15:30-15:45</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>		
15:45-17:00	Legal issues; Onsite facilities and remote access/execution	Eric Schulte Nordholt	Conf.

Date day 2

Time	Title/Topic	Lecturers	Room
9:30- 10:45	Demonstration and exercises with μ -ARGUS	Anco Hundepool	Compu.
<i>10:45-11:00</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>		
11:00-12:00	Exercises microdata (2)	Eric Schulte Nordholt	Conf.
<i>12:00-14:00</i>	Lunch		
14:00-16:00	Work with own data and μ -ARGUS	Anco Hundepool/ Eric Schulte Nordholt/	Compu.
<i>16:00-16:15</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>		
16:15-17:15	Theory/methods concerning tabular data (General)	Eric Schulte Nordholt	Conf.

Date day 3

Time	Title/Topic	Lecturers	Room
9:30- 11:00	Theory/methods of SDC concerning tabular data (Methods)	Sarah Giessing	Conf.
<i>11:00-11:15</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>		
11:15-12:00	Exercises tabular data (1)	Eric Schulte Nordholt	Conf.
<i>12:00-14:00</i>	<i>Lunch</i>		
14:00-15:30	Demonstration and exercises with τ -ARGUS	Anco Hundepool	Compu.
<i>15:30-15:45</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>		
15:45-16:30	Exercises tabular data (2)	Eric Schulte Nordholt	Conf.

Date day 4

Time	Title/Topic	Lecturers	Room
9:30- 11:15	Work with own data and τ -ARGUS	Anco Hundepool/ Eric Schulte Nordholt/ Sarah Giessing	Compu.
<i>11:15-11:30</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>		
11:30-12:00	Special topics in tabular SDC	Sarah Giessing	Conf.
<i>12:00-14:00</i>	<i>Lunch</i>		
14:00-14:45	User Case studies and remaining questions	Anco Hundepool/ Eric Schulte Nordholt/ Sarah Giessing	Conf.
14:45-15:15	Evaluation and conclusion	Anco Hundepool/ Eric Schulte Nordholt/ Sarah Giessing	Conf.