



Closing data gaps with privately held data

The Eurostat short-term rentals project

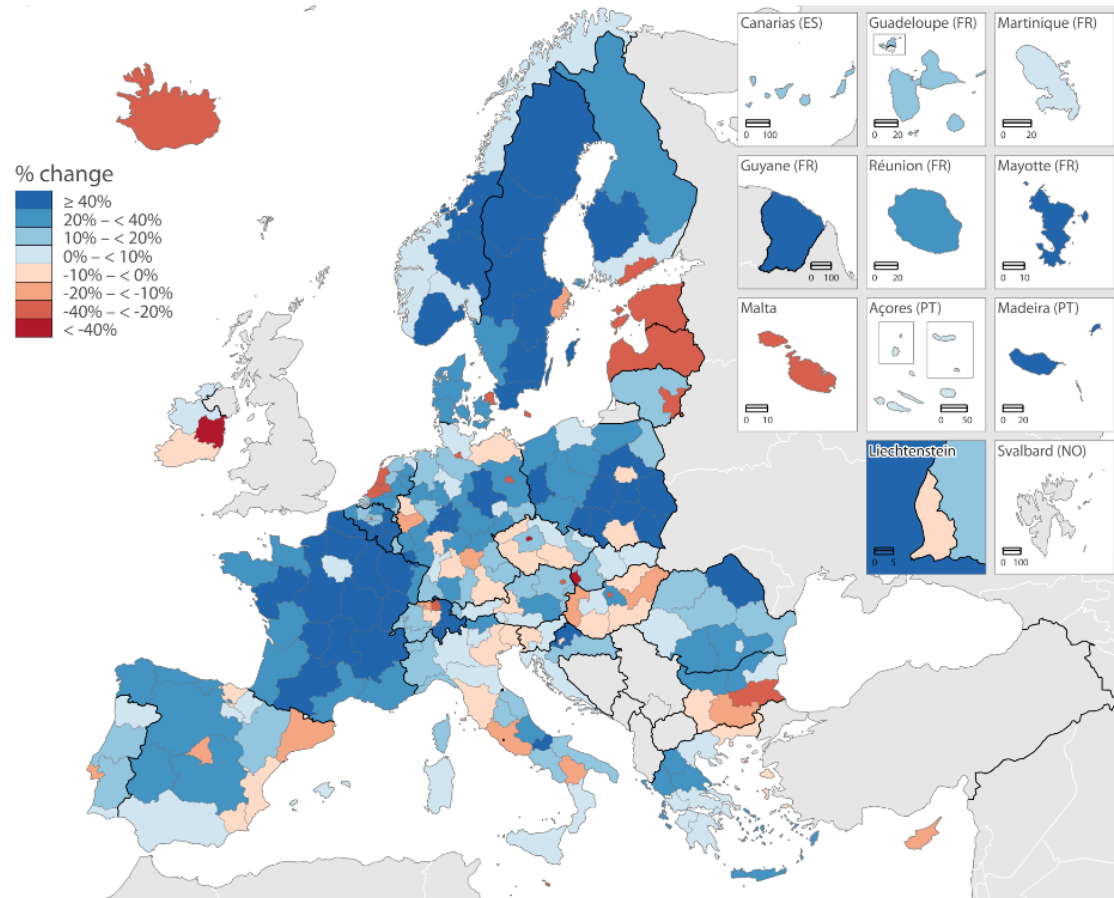
Simon Bley, Eurostat Unit G2



How can new data sources close data gaps in tourism statistics? – The Eurostat short-term rentals data project as a concrete example of a successful public-private partnership.

2022 data

Guest nights spent at short-stay accommodation booked via online platforms
(NUTS2, % change between 2019 and 2022)



The online platforms are Airbnb, Booking, Tripadvisor and Expedia.
(experimental statistics)

Administrative boundaries: © EuroGeographics © UN-FAO © Turkstat
Cartography: Eurostat – IMAGE, 06/2023

- Occupancy data down to NUTS3
- Data for around 200 EU cities
- Breakdowns by origin of guest, accommodation characteristics
- Covering NACE 55.2 for EU+EFTA
- 1st data released 3 months after reference quarter

Usage examples

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Hébergements proposés par des particuliers via des plateformes

En 2019, Paris et Nice dans le top 10 des villes les plus fréquentées de l'Union européenne

Amendement Ulrich (Député)

En plein essor dans les années 2010, les hébergements proposés par des particuliers via les principales plateformes internationales représentent désormais un segment incontournable de l'économie touristique. Avec 109 millions de nuitées en 2019, soit un cinquième des nuitées de l'Union européenne, la France est particulièrement concernée par ce mode de réservation et d'hébergement. Particulièrement française, la proportion de résidents parmi les hébergés est toutefois élevée sur ce marché, bien plus qu'en Espagne ou en Italie, pays davantage tributaires de la clientèle internationale.

Les zones littorales et de montagne participent pour beaucoup au succès de l'hébergement proposé par les plateformes. De fait, les réservations sont très saisonnières.

Au classement des villes européennes, Paris est la première destination devant Barcelone, Lisbonne et Rome. Comme la plupart des capitales, elle est plébiscitée toute l'année par une clientèle internationale. Avec plus de 5 millions de nuitées, Nice se hisse à la neuvième place et rivalise ainsi avec Porto et Vienne.

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Données des plateformes dans le secteur du tourisme résidentiel

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Actuel Chiffres Documentation

Les plateformes en ligne ont représenté 6.520.000 nuitées particuliers en 2021

DATALAB 1 février 2023



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IW-Kurzbericht 53/2023

Die Bedeutung großer Onlineplattformen für den Tourismus in deutschen Kreisen und Städten

Vera Demary / Christian Rusche · IW-Kurzbericht Nr. 53 · 21. August 2023

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Verónica Acosta, Skift

May 10th, 2022 at 10:30 AM EDT

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Eurostat: Greece Leading in Short-Term Rentals

New data reveals that Greece's rental numbers are by far the highest in comparison to its Southern European counterparts.

TAGESSPIEGEL

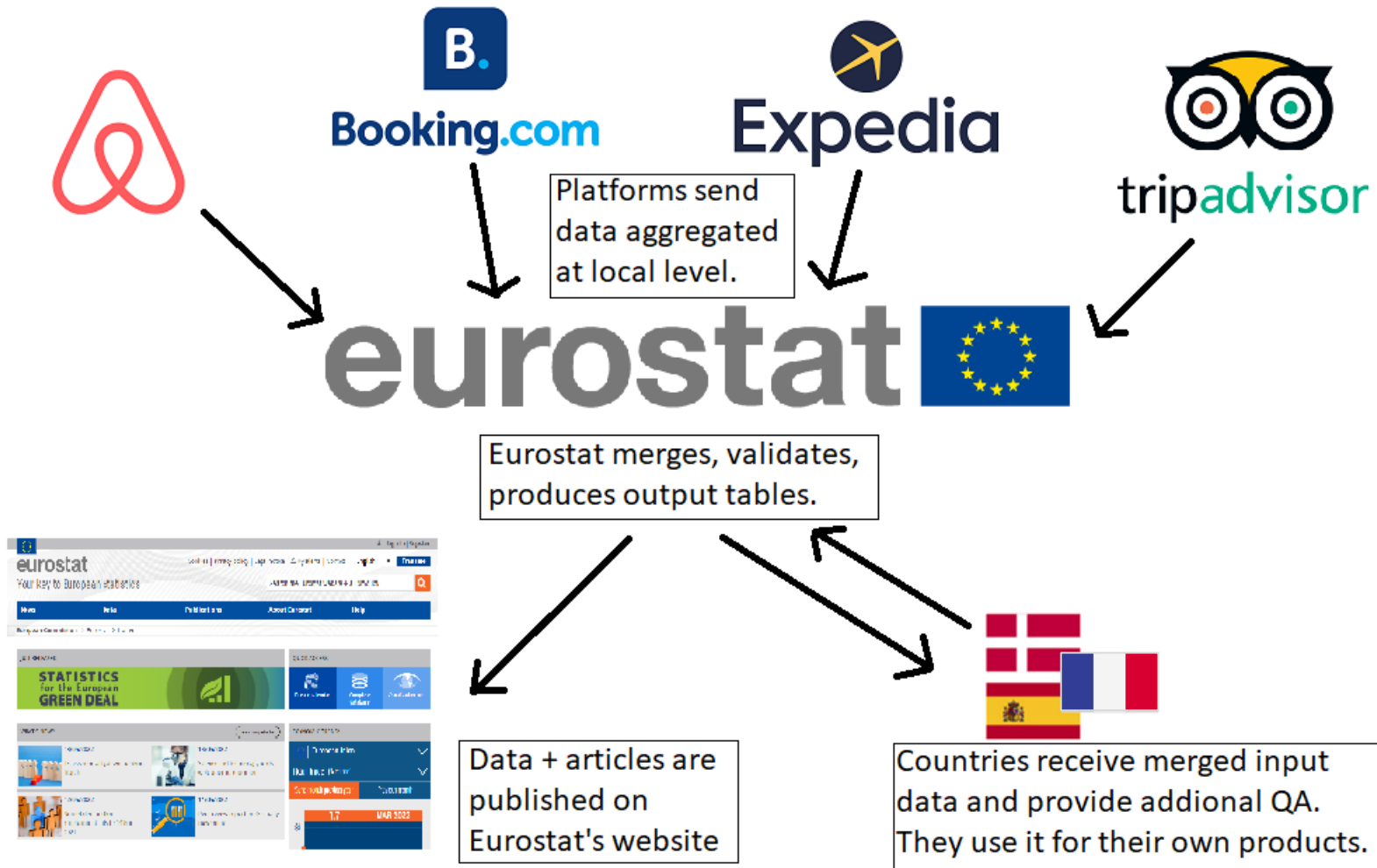
Mehr Rollkoffer in Berlins Außenbezirken? Airbnb beansprucht Beitrag zur Entzerrung der Touristenströme

Ziel der Berliner Politik ist es, Touristen zu Besuch und Übernachtung in den Randbezirken zu motivieren. Der Ferienwohnungsvermittler Airbnb behauptet, er sei dabei behilflich. Aber stimmt das auch?

Why? “Raison d’être” of the project

- Data needs in tourism statistics
 - ⇒ Better coverage of short-stay accommodation
 - ⇒ Lack of coverage of smaller establishments in tourism surveys and registers
 - ⇒ Users need information on this ‘new’ segment of the tourist accommodation sector
- Explore sharing of privately held data for statistical purposes
 - ⇒ Expensive or infeasible to collect data from many households/small enterprises
 - ⇒ Most information available with relatively few platforms
- Part of a wider Eurostat initiative on measuring the collaborative economy

How? Brief overview



Structure of the agreement with the platforms

- **Airbnb, Booking, Expedia Group and Tripadvisor** send data, aggregated at local level, to Eurostat each quarter (and submit metadata)
 - Capacity and occupancy data, similar to the reporting obligations of accommodation service providers as laid down in the tourism statistics Regulation
- **Eurostat merges and validates the data and produces:**
 - Output data for various geographical aggregates (EU, Member States, regions, cities)
 - Merged “raw” files for NSIs for additional validation at national level and national data releases/articles/etc.
- **NSIs and Eurostat disseminate the data and produce various articles, news releases, etc. based on it.**

Timeliness & granularity

- Timeliness: Data is currently released after ~90 days
- Flexible granularity: Data is provided at LAU level, meaning that additional geographical aggregates can be produced on the fly. This is done by several NSIs that publish data on touristic regions and/or additional cities.
- Disclosure control: Eurostat only received aggregate data, therefore, private information is secure. Statistical disclosure control is applied on top of that.

Project governance: our little revolution (1)

- A practical example of applying the **subsidiarity principle**
- **Centralised** approach
- **single entry, coordinated effort** by Eurostat, in close cooperation with the NSIs



Project governance: our little revolution (2)

- Key elements of the cooperation in the ESS regarding this project:

- **Transparency**

Eurostat coordinates the project, but this is *on behalf* of the producer needs of all NSIs and the user needs in all countries. Transparency and cooperation is a key success factor for the relevance of the project!

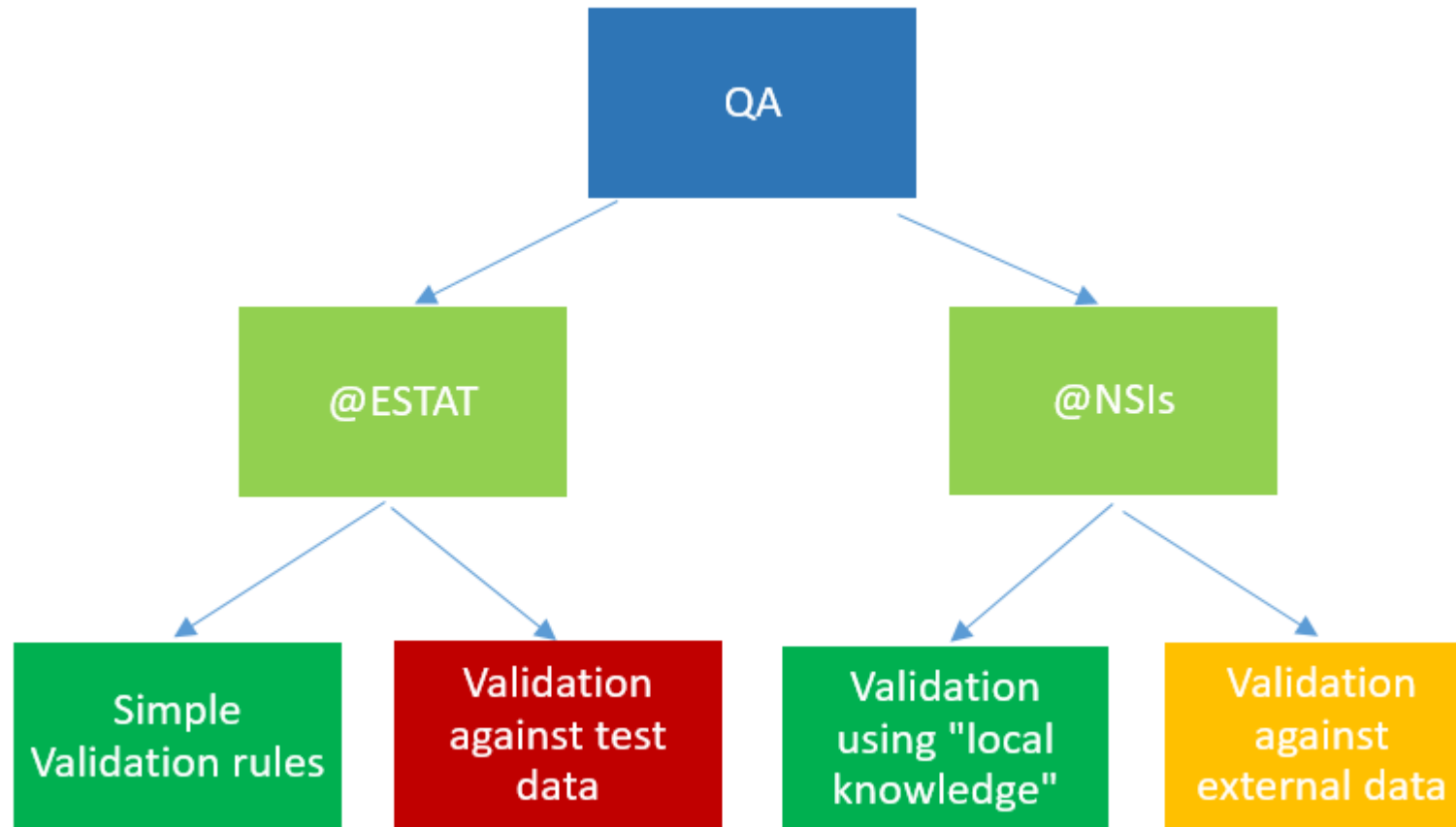
- **Data exchange**

Eurostat centrally receives deeply granular data from the 4 platforms on a quarterly basis; merged datasets with the same granularity and periodicity are shared with the NSIs

- **Methodological and technical collaboration**

Eurostat complements the data validation with national expertise of the accommodation sector, and jointly undertakes initiatives to deal with methodological issues

Quality assurance



Some takeaways (1)

- The platforms project is a **proof-of-concept that privately held data is a valid source** for official statistics ... but ...
 - ⇒ **Sustainability of the data flows remains a key bottleneck** (because long time series are a unique selling proposition of official statistics...) : voluntary agreements vs. legal initiatives?
 - ⇒ **Dealing with a limited number of players (“oligopolistic markets”) induces a higher risk of volatility in the data** (and it may be difficult to control for this effect)
 - ⇒ **Integration** with existing official statistics remains a challenge
 - ⇒ **Concepts and definitions**: privately held data was not originally conceived to produce statistics
 - ⇒ **Need for new skills and mentality**: negotiating with companies holding the data requires a specific approach, and statisticians have to accept they can no longer control the production process from A to Z (or from questionnaire design to output tables)

Some takeaways (2)

- The **‘inversed’ governance** of data collection flows proves to work in practice
 - ⇒ Importance of **transparency and open coordination (trust)**
 - ⇒ Be careful that **procedures & processes** are not too heavy
 - Timeliness of “traditional” monthly accommodation statistics :
 - typically released with 50 to 70 days after the reference month
 - transmission after T+42 days ⇒ validation and publication by Eurostat ⇒ Eurobase
 - Timeliness of platforms data:
 - will be released after >> 70 days (once regular production is introduced)
 - transmission after 45-50 days (after the quarter) ⇒ validation by Eurostat 10-20 days ⇒ transmission to NSIs and 2nd layer validation 10-20 days ⇒ Eurobase

Thank you



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Slide 2: Picture by Roberto Nickson via Unsplash.com