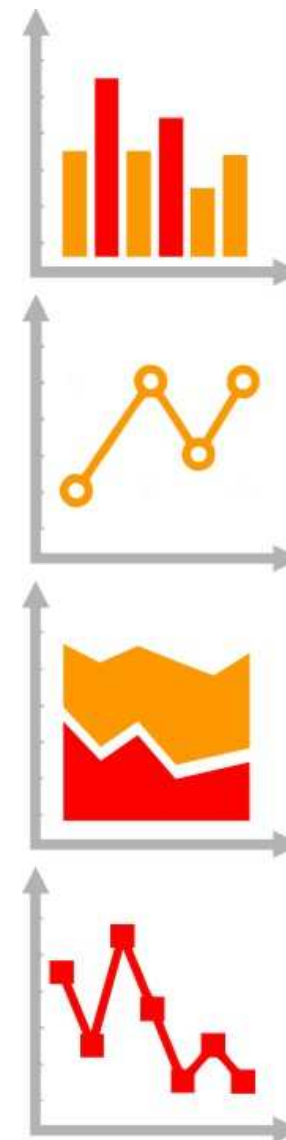


Center of Excellence on Statistical Disclosure Control

User support for and
maintenance of SDC tools



Centre of Excellence (CoE) on Statistical Disclosure Control (SDC) (1)

- ◆ **The CoE on SDC was created in October 2014 for 4 years with 7 countries**
 - Netherlands, Austria, Germany, Finland, France, Hungary and Slovenia.
- ◆ **It has five main objectives :**
 - **Methods** : Develop methodological solutions to SDC issues common in the whole European Statistical System (ESS) and for different statistical domains;
 - **Tools** : Improve and develop SDC tools;
 - **Guidelines** : Develop guidelines and requirements that are compatible with the current legal frameworks and practices;
 - **Support** : Support and/or guide National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) to set up and adapt their infrastructure in order to comply with minimum requirements for protection of confidential data;
 - **Training** : Provide training and courses on particular SDC issues.

◆ Three projects launched so far :

- **Public use files (PUFs) for ESS micro data**
 - In 2015 → publication of PUFs for *LFS Labour Force Survey* and *SILC Statistics on Income and Living Conditions*
- **User support for and maintenance of SDC tools**
 - Apr. 2016 – Mar. 2018
- **Harmonised protection of Census data**
 - Sept. 2016 – Aug. 2017 → recommendations to help census experts tackle the issue of disclosure control for Census 2021

User support for and maintenance of SDC tools

- ◆ **Partners of the project : Netherlands, Austria, Germany, France and Slovenia.**
- ◆ **Main aim is to ensure support, testing, maintenance and development of SDC software of interest to the NSIs in the ESS :**
 - **ARGUS (μ -ARGUS, τ -ARGUS)**
 - **R-packages (sdcMicro, sdcTable, SimPop)**

User interface (UI) and underlying methods

- ◆ **Argus and R-packages are different UIs to integrate the underlying methods (modular, optimal, CTA, local suppression, PRAM ...). They coexist because they are in different environments :**
 - Integrating SDC in R is a strong feature for users familiar of R,
 - whereas Argus is already in use in several NSIs and has been integrated in the statistical processes.
- ◆ **In these interfaces the underlying methods are sometimes similar but not exactly identical.**
 - Another aim of the project : identify such cases of parallelism and treat the important ones.

Questionnaires and inventories of supported features

- ◆ **A first inventory of functionalities was completed with two questionnaires to identify the functionalities to be supported in the SGA.**
 - One on microdata, the other on tabulated data.
 - Sent to the members of the Working Group on Methodology
- ◆ **Important core functionalities were defined with the questionnaires and sorted in three groups :**
 - **A-functionality: each UI should provide it and the results should be identical with each UI**
 - **B-functionality: can be supported by one UI (rare)**
 - **C-functionality: less relevant, not to be supported but may remain in the UIs**

User group (1)

- ◆ **Informal : no official representatives of the different Member States.**
 - Anybody using SDC tools can join by registering on <https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/software/sdctools/home>
 - A mailing list provide information on workshops, meetings, new releases.
- ◆ **A first meeting with ~20 participants was held in Luxembourg on 2 December 2016. The developers presented the inventory of supported features.**

User group (2)

- ◆ **The main goals of the user group are to:**
 - **test the software.** This is done indirectly by using the SDC tools in daily practice.
 - **report bugs.** Users may encounter strange or unexpected behaviour and are encouraged to report those at the Help desk portal so that developers can assess the issue.
 - **exchange information and good practices between users.** Making use of the Help desk portal, users can interact and provide answers to issues raised when they already found a work around.
 - **suggest improvements and desired new functionalities.** A real production environment may yield different ideas of improvements than the developers environment. Users can suggest improvements and new features.

Help desk portal (1)

- ◆ **Key aspect of the user group. Set up on github :**
 - <https://github.com/sdcTools/UserSupport/issues>
- ◆ **Users can report bugs or anything strange they encounter while using software.**
- ◆ **Users can also suggest improvements and new features.**

Help desk portal (2)

The screenshot shows the GitHub interface for the repository `sdcTools / UserSupport`. The top navigation bar includes links for Features, Business, Explore, Marketplace, Pricing, and a search bar. The repository name is displayed with statistics: 19 Watchers, 4 Stars, and 1 Fork. Below this, there are tabs for Code, Issues (19), Pull requests (0), Projects (0), Wiki, and Insights. A search bar contains the query `is:open is:issue`, with filters for Labels and Milestones, and a **New issue** button. A clear search button is also present. The main content area shows a list of 19 open issues, with 47 closed issues. The issues are sorted by Author, Labels, Projects, Milestones, Assignee, and Sort. The visible issues are:

- 19 Open** ✓ 47 Closed. Author, Labels, Projects, Milestones, Assignee, Sort.
- 1** Detecting inconsistent status `enhancement` `feature` `tau-Argus`
#67 opened on 29 Jun by ppdewolf
- 1** SAS2ARGUS: provide example inputs `enhancement` `help-wanted`
#56 opened on 12 May by bernhard-da
- 1** High dimensional table gives strange error message `enhancement` `tau-Argus` 1
#52 opened on 11 Apr by ppdewolf
- 1** Skipping complete table `enhancement` `tau-Argus` 2
#51 opened on 11 Apr by ppdewolf
- 1** Do not deselect the cell after setting to protected/unsafe or setting its cost `enhancement` `feature` `low-priority` `tau-Argus` `UI`
#50 opened on 22 Mar by junoslukan

Development

- ◆ **Official releases on the Eurostat's JoinUp website :**
<https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/software/sdctools/home>
 - intended to be as backward compatible as possible
- ◆ **The code repositories for the different UIs and the underlying methods were put on Github at the following link :**
<https://github.com/sdcTools>.
- ◆ **The major part of the actual development is done by CBS (Argus) and Statistics Austria (R-packages).**
- ◆ **Developers set up unit testing with a collection of automated tests defined to check the software at each release and guarantee stable versions.**

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Thanks for your attention



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