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DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
REGIONAL AND URBAN POLICY

Deputy Director-General for Programme Implementation

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Ulla Saar
Deputy Secretary General for
Labour and Equality Policies
Ministry of Economic Affairs and
Communication
Suur-Ameerika 1
10122 Tallinn
Estonia

Subject: Request for support in the Cross-Border Data Collection Project

Dear Ms Saar,

The European Commission is strongly committed to improving the evidence base for policies that strengthen economic, social and territorial cohesion across the Union. Reliable data on cross-border workers is essential to understand the functioning of our labour markets and to design effective national and EU policies in this field.

To address this need, the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, in cooperation with Eurostat, has launched a dedicated study on cross-border data collection. The project, implemented by ÖIR GmbH together with Statistics Netherlands, INSEE and Statistics Denmark, aims to establish a sustainable and standardised methodology for collecting and analysing data on cross-border workers. Achieving this objective requires the active participation of all National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) or authorities in charge of collecting/processing the data concerned.

We understand that Statistics Estonia has already been contacted but has not yet been able to cooperate in the project. We would like to encourage your kind support in facilitating its involvement. At present, 20 out of the 26 countries covered by the study have already submitted data or are actively preparing their contribution. Moreover, representatives from 22 EU countries participated in the workshop organised in Brussels on 11–12 September 2025, confirming both the interest in and feasibility of data provision.

Allow us to emphasise a few key points regarding this initiative. First, its relevance for the entire EU: cross-border commuter data is vital for shaping economic and labour market policies at national and EU level. A coordinated effort from all Member States will ensure the development of a robust methodology, serving the long-term goal of continuous production of official EU statistics in this area.

Regarding the current status of the project, the majority of countries are already contributing, demonstrating that the task is feasible and of shared interest. Your support at a higher level can make the difference in enabling Statistics Estonia to join this collective effort.

Finally, the data collection activity should be completed by the end of this year in order to allow sufficient time for analysis. However, the exact timing of activities can be discussed on bilateral basis to allow all NSI to take part in the project. To ease the process, the project team provides a ready-to-use data template, methodological guidance based on previous experience, and direct support to NSIs throughout the data production process. Importantly, financial compensation is available to cover the additional effort required.

We would greatly value your assistance in ensuring the active participation of Statistics Estonia in this important initiative. A coordinated and comprehensive contribution from all Member States is essential to achieving results that are both meaningful and sustainable serving the interest and benefit of all.

I thank you in advance for your support and remain at your disposal for any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Hugo SOBRAL

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