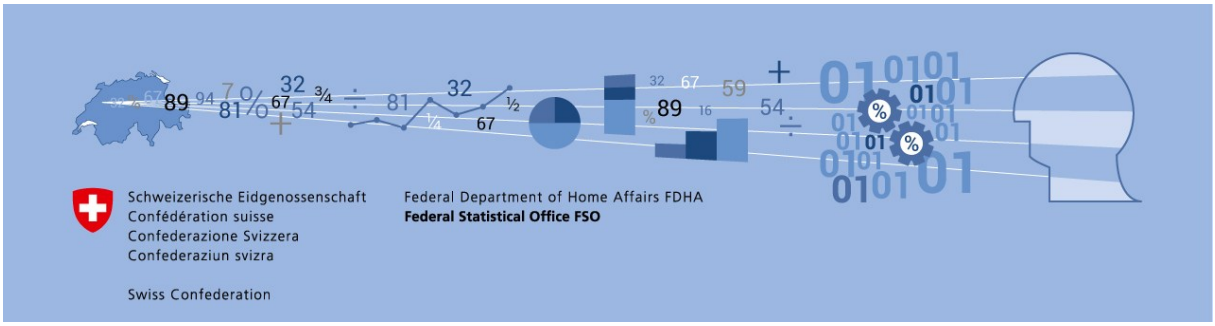

Press release

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What does the future hold for data and AI in official statistics: European conference kicks off in Bern

On 28 and 29 October 2026, Switzerland hosts the Conference of Directors General of National Statistical Institutes (DGINS). Held annually in a different country within the European statistical system (ESS), the conference brings together 40 national statistical institutes, the heads of Eurostat, and international experts in Bern. The event is organised by the Federal Statistical Office (FSO) in close collaboration with Eurostat.

This collaboration between Switzerland and the European Union is based on a bilateral agreement in the field of statistics that came into force in 2007. Since then, Switzerland has been a member of the European statistical system (ESS), a network of partners which aims to develop, produce, and disseminate European statistics. DGINS 2026, a key event in the ESS calendar, is dedicated to a question of vital importance for the future of official statistics: *how can we ensure their visibility, reliability and relevance in a society shaped by digital platforms and artificial intelligence?*

In a rapidly changing digital environment, AI-readiness is a strategic challenge for national statistical institutes. It aims to ensure that official statistics remain accessible, visible and appropriately used within new information ecosystems, whilst upholding the fundamental principles of quality, independence and trust that underpin official statistics.

Discussions focus on developing a common vision for AI-readiness within European statistical institutes, on current practices regarding the dissemination, governance and multiple use of official data, as well as on the challenges and opportunities associated with the rapid evolution of artificial intelligence technologies. The conference also features contributions from representatives of technology companies, who shed light on the transformations currently taking place in the field of artificial intelligence.

Mariana Kotzeva - Director General of Eurostat explains: *"For official statistics, AI readiness is not simply about using AI within our organisations. It is about ensuring that our statistics can be found, understood, reused responsibly, and cited correctly in an AI-mediated world. If we get this right, anyone who can ask an AI-based system a question in their own language could access European official statistics that are correctly sourced, properly explained, and presented with the necessary context. This would give our statistics a greater reach than ever before."*

Approximately 130 participants from the EU, EFTA and EU candidate countries are discussing ways to ensure the visibility, accessibility and continued relevance of official statistics in the age of artificial intelligence. Discussions focus on current practices, the challenges to be addressed and the common approaches to be developed within the European Statistical System.

By hosting DGINS 2026, Switzerland is contributing to European discussions on the future of official statistics, helping shape a future in which official data is “consumable by AI systems” as highlighted by Georges-Simon Ulrich, Director General of the FSO.

Information

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