



EUROPEAN
STATISTICAL
SYSTEM

PEER REVIEW REPORT

ON COMPLIANCE WITH THE EUROPEAN STATISTICS CODE OF
PRACTICE AND FURTHER IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF
THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

SLOVENIA

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Slovenian Statistical System is composed of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, the main producer of official statistics, and two authorised producers of national statistics – the Bank of Slovenia and the National Institute of Public Health. Only the latter also has the status of an Other National Authority developing, producing and disseminating European statistics in the European context. The National Statistics Act extends to all authorised producers and forms a strong basis for national statistics activities. There are two types of programmes for national statistics; a medium-term and an annual programme of statistical surveys. Both are prepared and reported on by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia in cooperation with the authorised producers. Statistical activities are coordinated through the close cooperation between the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia and the authorised producers.

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia has a long-established position as a strong, reliable and independent producer of official statistics, based on a clear and broad legal mandate to collect and disseminate European statistics. An important strength of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia is its ability to rely on a mature system of administrative data. It has a long tradition of good relations, a strong legal basis for access to administrative data sources and solid agreements with administrative data holders, enabling the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia not only to reuse administrative data for statistical purposes but also to contribute to establishing them.

The Director General of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia is a member of the Economic Committee of the Government. Membership in this Committee is an important strength, as it allows easy access to high-level government officials and keeps the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia informed about all governmental initiatives and legislative proposals.

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia is a relatively small statistical institute, with limited human resources available for the performance of its tasks. This notwithstanding, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia is committed to maintaining its staff's professional capacity and motivation at a high level through a comprehensive training programme designed and implemented in cooperation with universities.

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia ensures efficient resource management through performance management tools and uses a comprehensive system for measuring and managing the response burden. It uses advanced data processing systems, has a solid IT infrastructure and pays special attention to information security. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia provides extensive microdata services to researchers, including data linking and access to administrative data, free of charge.

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia values close cooperation with users, stakeholders and data providers. It has established 22 statistical advisory committees with around 400 members to provide expert advice and prioritise data needs. Statistical methodologies are regularly updated and confirmed via the Methodological Council, while the partnership with data providers is facilitated through the Advisory Committee on Cooperation with Data Providers. Additionally, the Statistical Council of the Republic of Slovenia is meant to serve as a professional advisory body for strategic questions and is composed of representatives from various user groups.

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia publishes statistics through various channels, including its website and the SiStat Database. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia maintains a strong social media presence and tailors its communication to different platforms. It offers microdata access to researchers, contributing to their high satisfaction levels.

The interviews carried out by the peer review team with various stakeholders offered broad confirmation that the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia is perceived as trustworthy and that the statistics it produces are well received by the media and society as a whole.

Overall, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia excels in its commitment to providing quality statistics, user satisfaction and efficient resource management, making it a reliable source of European statistics.

The National Institute of Public Health of Slovenia is responsible for producing statistics related to health in Slovenia. The Institute is ISO 9001 certified and has a clear awareness of the European Statistics Code of Practice. There is a clear separation of statistical and administrative duties within the National Institute of Public Health. The statistical head is responsible for the methodology of statistical surveys and also for the whole process of data collection and dissemination. There is no interference with the choice of methodology, processes or dissemination from outside the statistical department. The head of the statistical department is also a member of the Board of Directors and the Scientific Board of the National Institute of Public Health.

Overall, there is a high level of compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice (ES CoP) throughout the Slovenian Statistical System. However, the peer review team identified one compliance-relevant and fourteen improvement-related recommendations grouped under four headings, listed below with their related explanations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Strengthening the institutional environment

Statistical laws are laws that specifically provide, at national level, the necessary guarantees for the functioning of statistical authorities in a country, in particular with regard to the principle of professional independence. For these guarantees to remain effective, it should be clear that such legislation prevails over any possible contradicting provisions that may be found in other national legislation. However, the question of the articulation between the [National Statistics Act](#) and other national legislation in Slovenia remains unclear, notably concerning the issue of the dismissal of the Director General of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia. Clarification on the reasons for the dismissal of the Director General has become even more important in light of the events of 2020, when the Director General was dismissed without explanation, in accordance with the Public Employees Act, while the National Statistics Act foresees the possibility of dismissing the Director General only if the government establishes that “important disturbances in the operation of the office have occurred due to inadequate organisational solutions”.

To comply with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

1. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should clarify the legal status of the National Statistics Act as *lex specialis*, especially concerning the reasons for the dismissal of the Director General of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 1.8)

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia believes that the legal framework is strong, while recognising that improvements could be achieved in some key aspects. As opportunities to revise the statistical law should always be weighed against the risks that such a process entails, the peer review team recommends a deeper consideration of all the advantages and disadvantages of opening the process of amending the National Statistics Act. Special focus should be placed on provisions related to the reasons for the dismissal of the Director General (to ensure that a possible dismissal is based on reasons that do not compromise professional or scientific independence), access to new data sources, data privacy and the Statistical Council. Summarising these considerations and discussions could support the relevant decision-making process.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

2. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should prepare and discuss an internal document to consider the advantages and disadvantages of opening the process of modernising the National Statistics Act, and in particular consider reasons for the dismissal of the Director General that do not compromise professional or scientific independence, access to new data sources, data privacy and the Statistical Council. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1.8, 2.4, 5.1 and 11.2)

The head of the statistical department at the National Institute of Public Health is appointed by the Director General of the National Institute of Public Health for the same mandate as that of the Director General (4 years). While wishing to underline the current statistical head's high level of professional qualifications in the field of statistics, the peer review team feels that the procedure does not sufficiently ensure that the statistical head of the National Institute of Public Health is recruited and appointed in a way that is transparent and based on professional criteria only, and therefore needs to be strengthened.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

3. The National Institute of Public Health should strengthen the procedure for recruiting and appointing its statistical head, ensuring that it is transparent and based on professional criteria only. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1.8)

The Slovenian Statistical System has a long tradition of user consultations, organised through the Statistical Council and 22 advisory committees. Notwithstanding the strong interest of the communities involved, the peer review team noted that the current system can be considered siloed and that the composition of the advisory committees does not include some important user groups, such as the media, non-government organisations and others. To facilitate knowledge sharing, the peer review team recommends that the advisory committees' composition and membership structure be regularly reviewed. This should include steps to engage social groups beyond the traditional users. The peer review team also recommends strengthening relations between the advisory committees

and the Statistical Council, with the aim of increasing cooperation and the visibility of the advisory structures of the Slovenian Statistical System.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

4. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should review the governance of its advisory committees and continuously review their composition and membership structure, and should consider strengthening the relations between the advisory committees and the Statistical Council to fully realise the Statistical Council's potential within its current mandate. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 11.1)

II. Enhancing statistical processes and improving accessibility to statistical products

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia has reference metadata available for most of the statistical products it disseminates. However, the peer review team feels that there is room for improvement, because having two kinds of reference metadata - methodological explanations and quality reports – can be confusing and because these do not follow European standards. The metadata repository STATMIK is already mapped to the standard of the European Statistical System, the Single Integrated Metadata Structure, so any transformation is unlikely to be extensive. Metadata are not updated in all cases and the policy is to complete quality reports no later than three months after the publication of final figures. This policy should be changed to require all reference metadata to be updated at the same time as the data is published so that users can be informed about the quality of the data at any time. In this way, users should be able to decide whether the data meet the quality criteria for their use case, even if the data are preliminary.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

5. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should upgrade the templates for methodological explanations and quality reports based on the Single Integrated Metadata Structure (the standard of the European Statistical System). It should also consider combining its reporting on methodology and quality in one overarching concept, presenting it in a layered approach that reaches different groups of users. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.1)

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia uses an adapted version of the Generic Statistical Business Process Model as its process model. As this is a generic model for any type of statistics production and any organisational structure, its original version should also be suitable for the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia. The advantage of the Generic Statistics Business Process Model is the common terminology, shared both between statistical domains and between statistical organisations, and languages it provides. It covers any type of statistical process regardless of which or how many data sources go into the statistical production.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

6. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should update its statistical process model to the latest version of the Generic Statistical Business Process Model. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 7.2)

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia is planning to perform what it calls quality audits on its statistical products over the coming years. The idea is to involve large parts of the organisation in performing these audits to spread the quality commitment throughout the organisation, and not to develop the entire methodology at one go but in stages. The main source of information will be existing internal documentation and the goal is to issue between three and five recommendations and to select three to five good practices for each audited process/product, auditing 40 processes in 2024. This seems ambitious and time-consuming, given the number of processes and persons involved, with a low level of detail. While the peer review team recognises the usefulness of this type of exercise, which may produce valuable insights into the statistical processes investigated, the level of ambition could perhaps be reconsidered in light of the added value of involving this number of experts and the possible level of detail of the information obtained about the process.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

7. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should review, and eventually adjust or confirm, the objectives and the design of the planned internal quality audits. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 4.3, 4.4 and 8.3)

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia does not provide direct links from the disseminated data on its portal to methodological and quality information, and the search for relevant documentation can in some cases be difficult. To improve usability, this information should be available directly from the published data.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

8. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should provide direct links from published data to methodological and quality information and provide more user-friendly explanations and easy-to-understand methodological messages with all additional, readily available information. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.6)

III. Ensuring sufficient resources for the production of official statistics

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia is a relatively small statistical office, with limited human resources available for the performance of its tasks. As rental costs, IT investment and software maintenance were transferred to the Ministry of Public Administration in 2017, its financial control is limited to staff expenditure and characterised by efficiency gains, obtained by various means and especially by relying on administrative sources for most of its statistical production. However, repeated budget cuts will create the need to obtain additional financial resources and adequate human resources to support the adoption of new technologies, maintain and increase professional excellence in human resources and develop communication towards a wider range of users.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

9. The relevant authorities should ensure that the budgetary and human resource needs of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia are met to balance current and future increases in statistical needs and new policy priorities, which will involve using new data sources and technologies, bearing in mind the need to fulfil its mission independently and effectively. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 3.1)

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia has started the process of transferring its IT systems to the government cloud. The specifics of statistical production, data processing of various and constantly changing data sources, specific methods and tools of all categories hardly comply with the existing rules and procedures of use of the cloud environment. This could potentially cause additional costs and extra time and effort would be required to implement statistical information solutions, particularly those related to statistical confidentiality. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should examine the practices in this area applied by National Statistical Institutes in other countries and prepare a background document with the aim of ensuring efficiency gains in the future development of its specialised IT systems. The document should address the possible effects of using new data sources, methods and tools on data confidentiality, costs and storage availability.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

10. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should evaluate the long-term harms and benefits associated with the migration from its IT infrastructure to the government cloud and, drawing from the examples of other National Statistical Institutes in this area, analyse the effects on data confidentiality, costs and availability of storage for future use of new data sources, methods and tools. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 5.5 and 3.1)

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia provides extensive microdata services free of charge to researchers. The cost of this should be made public in order to improve the sustainability of microdata access. The peer review team believes that it would be useful for the government and all other users to gain full knowledge of the use of financial and human resources to support research, and for researchers to be aware of the material conditions for providing the microdata they request. The public at large might be interested as well.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

11. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should provide an overview of the resources used for microdata access service to researchers on an annual basis and include this information in its annual report. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 3.2, 5.6, 15.3 and 15.4)

In a context of increased competition and wage gaps between the private and public sector, and even within the public sector, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia faces growing difficulties in attracting highly qualified specialists. This challenge may not be balanced out by its good reputation and may compromise its capacity to conduct development projects and adopt new technologies. It has recently intensified its public communication, particularly on social media, to publicise how interesting it is to work in the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia. The peer review team

encourages the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia to step up its communication efforts in this area.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

12. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should step up its efforts to raise its profile as an attractive employer among the relevant professions and university graduates. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 7.5)

The National Institute of Public Health has a high level of commitment to the production of quality health statistics. It also has a clear separation between its administrative and statistical activities. It disseminates statistics on its website but with limited documentation and access for non-Slovenian speakers. The human resources appear adequate for current production, but the National Institute of Public Health is experiencing a lack of IT resources. The peer review team noted that improvements could be achieved with further process optimisation, the introduction of open-source statistical tools (accompanied by training on how to use them) and a dissemination policy that clearly states that pre-release access is not granted to outside users.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

13. The National Institute of Public Health should continue optimising its processes, increase efforts to improve dissemination and develop a dissemination policy that regulates quality-related documentation for users. These improvements should be supported by the necessary resources. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 8.3 and 15.5)

IV. Preparing the national statistical system for the future

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia is aware that public support is essential for gaining access to new data sources, especially for access to “sensitive” data, such as mobile phone data. Active communication with the public is crucial in this aspect. The peer review team encourages the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia to continue its efforts to actively communicate the value and benefits of official statistics related to new data sources and, in particular, related to the use of privately held data for the purpose of official statistics.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

14. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should further develop communication activities to promote the value and benefits expected from the use of new data sources, notably privately held data. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 2.4)

Supporting innovation is one of the values of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, and innovative and effective statistical production is a strategic objective identified in the medium-term programme of statistical surveys 2023–2027. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia is looking for innovative solutions and has launched ambitious actions from that perspective. Nevertheless, the peer review team encourages the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia to further develop and strengthen its innovation agenda, building on its previous successful projects.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

15. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should further develop and strengthen its innovation agenda, capitalise on the successful production of statistics based on innovative data sources and invest further in the use of new data sources in more statistical domains. This includes an enhanced focus on the development and dissemination of experimental statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 10.3 and 9.4)

In the spirit of continuous improvement integral to the European Statistical System (ESS), the NSI will interpret the recommendations formulated in this report into improvement actions for implementation within the national statistical system (NSS).

2. INTRODUCTION

It is recognised that quality is one of the European Statistical System's (ESS) comparative advantages in a world experiencing a growing trend of instant information and new challenges, driven by exceptional circumstances or the continuous need for faster, but quality-assured data. The European Statistics Code of Practice (ES CoP) is the cornerstone of the ESS common quality framework, and the ESS statistical authorities have committed themselves to adhere to it.

In this context, it is crucial for the ESS to be equipped with a review mechanism, the peer reviews, supporting with credible evidence this self-commitment to adhere to the ES CoP. The objective of this review mechanism is to enhance the integrity, professional independence and accountability of the ESS statistical authorities. The first round of peer reviews was carried out in 2006-2008, followed by a second round in 2013-2015.

In 2017, the ES CoP was reviewed and extended and now encompasses 16 principles. This revised version of the ES CoP triggered a third round of peer reviews, being carried out in the Member States of the European Union and of the European Free Trade Association, and Eurostat from 2021 to mid-2023. This round of peer reviews aims at improving the quality and trust in European statistics by assessing the compliance of the ESS with the principles of the revised ES CoP. The peer reviews cover the ESS statistical authorities (Eurostat, the National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) and selected Other National Authorities (ONAs)) developing, producing and disseminating European statistics. The peer reviews will be followed by a period of annual monitoring of the implementation of the improvement actions developed by the NSIs to address the recommendations laid down in the peer review reports.

The third round of peer reviews has the following two objectives:

- To review the compliance/alignment of the ESS with the ES CoP, in order to demonstrate to the ESS and to external stakeholders that the ESS is a system based on the principles of the ES CoP;
- To help NSIs, ONAs and Eurostat in their further improvement and development by indicating future-oriented recommendations; at the same time they should stimulate government authorities to support the implementation of these recommendations.

Each peer review is conducted by a team of four statistical experts (both from inside and outside the ESS). The peer review has four phases: completion of the Self-Assessment Questionnaires (SAQs) by a country; analysis of these SAQs by the peer review team; a country visit by the peer review team; and the preparation of the final report and ensuing recommendations by the peer review team. These recommendations are of two types:

- Compliance-relevant (ensuring compliance/alignment with the ES CoP);
- Improvement-related (less critical/technical supporting improvements).

A combination of an audit-like and a peer review approach is used when assessing the national statistical systems (NSS) in the countries to benefit from the positive aspects of both approaches. The audit-like approach requires the provision of documents as evidence, the ownership of the recommendations by the peer review expert team, and the right for the NSIs to express diverging views on the recommendations and to formulate the corresponding improvement actions. Whereas the peer review approach allows for common agreement within the ESS on the methodology, the

objectives, scope and implementation arrangements, the focus on improvements and a peer learning process.

Although all principles of the ES CoP will be reviewed for all countries through the SAQ, the peer review experts are free to customise the country visit to concentrate on those principles where more clarification/explanation is needed. However, certain principles such as those concerning professional independence and coordination and cooperation, as well as principles including elements of modernisation, will be assessed during the peer review visit for every member of the ESS.

In addition to the common principles to be addressed for every member of the ESS, the peer review team also placed an emphasis on Commitment to Quality, Impartiality and Objectivity, Relevance and Accessibility, and Adequacy of Resources.

The Commitment to Quality (ES CoP principle 4) was reviewed in detail as it was not entirely evident that statistical metadata and the quality of statistical output are adequately documented. The peer review team also reviewed the principles of objectivity and impartiality (ES CoP principle 6) as they have a profound influence on trust in official statistics. How to address emerging user needs and identify new users was also discussed (ES CoP principle 11). Possible improvements on Accessibility and Clarity (ES CoP principle 15) were discussed during the visit, as the peer review team identified that improvements to metadata should be implemented by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia. Finally, the peer review also focused on Adequacy of Resources (ES CoP principle 3), as the budgetary and human resource needs of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should be met to balance current and future increases in statistical needs and new policy priorities which will involve using new data sources and technologies.

Also, although the reports should not be used to compare one country to another, much effort has been made to ensure the harmonisation of the reports and the ensuing recommendations across the countries so that all countries are treated equitably.

The peer review of Eurostat was conducted by the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB).

3. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

Legislation

The main legal act regulating official statistics in Slovenia is the [National Statistics Act](#) adopted in 1995 and later amended in 2001. It lays down the organisation and status of performing national statistics activities and their functions, programmes of statistical surveys, the methodological bases for statistical surveys, registers, data collection, data processing and storage, protection, use and dissemination of data, international statistical cooperation and penalty provisions.

According to the National Statistics Act, activities of national statistics are implemented by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, with the assistance of the authorized producers determined by the medium-term programme of statistical surveys.

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia is a professionally independent government office. The Director General of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia is autonomous as regards professional and methodological issues. Article 11 of the National Statistics Act states that nobody shall be entitled to give to the Director-General of the Office binding instructions on professional and methodological issues related to the operations of national statistics, in particular in relation to the methodologies of statistical surveys, the extent and kind of data to be collected, processed and disseminated on the basis of the programme of statistical surveys, and preliminary dissemination of the results of the performed statistical surveys.

Organisation

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia is the main producer and coordinator of national statistics in Slovenia. Its headquarters are in Ljubljana and it is a process-oriented institution. Four subject-matter divisions (Macroeconomic Statistics, Business Statistics, Demography and Social Statistics, and Environmental Statistics) are responsible for the development of each field of statistics, whereas the other four divisions (Methodology and Standards, Data Publication and Communication, IT Solutions and Infrastructure, and Data Collection) support them through the entire statistical production process. In addition, there are two cross-cutting departments (the Legal and Human Resource Matters Department, and the Financial and Administrative Operation Department).

Appointment procedures for the head of the NSI

The appointment of high government officials can only take place after an open competition has been successfully carried out and concluded. The open competition for this post (director of a government office) and other similar positions is run by a special competition commission, appointed by the Officials Council. The role of the special competition commission is to prepare a list of suitable candidates for the position, in accordance with standards of professional qualifications. The standards are divided into four elements: the value of the vision for the development of the organisational unit or body, professional knowledge and understanding of the mission of the position being applied for, development of basic competencies and expression of leadership potential. The assessment of

leadership potential is based on psychological testing performed by an expert. After examining the applications and interviewing the candidates, the competition commission suggests one or more suitable candidates to the Prime Minister, based solely on professional criteria. The Prime Minister is not bound by the competition commission's suggestion, so if the proposed candidate is rejected, the competition has to be repeated.

The Director General of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia is appointed for a five-year period and can be reappointed to the same function. According to the National Statistics Act, the Director General may be prematurely discharged from office if the government establishes that important disturbances in the operation of the Office have occurred, due to inadequate organisational solutions.

Statistical programmes

There are two types of statistical programmes, namely the medium-term programme and the annual programme of statistical surveys. Both are prepared by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia in cooperation with authorised producers, and the same applies to reporting on the implementation of the programmes. During the preparation procedure, the programmes are submitted to the Statistical Council for consultation and undergo inter-ministerial consultation. The interested general public is also involved, as drafts are published on the E-democracy website. After adoption, all programmes are published in the Official Journal of the Republic of Slovenia and on website of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia.

The annual programme of statistical surveys gives a detailed overview of all regular and developmental statistical surveys. The medium-term programme of statistical surveys is a strategic document that determines adequate statistical coverage of national and international policies and the priorities, approaches, main fields and objectives of the statistical activities performed by the Slovenian Statistical System.

Resources

At the beginning of 2023, 312 people were employed at the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia. The staff composition is fairly stable, with a large majority (68%) of female employees and a slight increase (74 in 2020 to 89 in 2022) of staff under the age of 39. The adopted budget for 2023 amounts to approximately Euro 14 million. In 2017 a significant part of the costs was transferred to the Ministry of Public Administration, due to projects related to the reorganization of IT in the whole state administration and the centralization of the state's immovable property: IT investments and software (Euro 1.3 million in 2017), and rental, electricity and regular maintenance costs (Euro 0.33 million in 2017).

Coordination of the National Statistical System

The coordination role of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia and relevant tasks are not explicitly set out in the National Statistics Act, but they derive from the following provisions: Article 3 (describing the Slovenian Statistical System), Article 23b (the content of the medium-term programme), Article 23c (the adoption procedure and the content of the annual programme) and Article 25 (reporting on programmes).

In the current medium-term programme for the 2023–2027 period, two institutions have been designated as authorised producers of national statistics:

- Bank of Slovenia for statistics on economic relations with the rest of the world, financial intermediation and national accounts;
- National Institute of Public Health for health and healthcare statistics.

It is important that authorised producers also perform data processing and prepare statistics in addition to gathering the data. They should organise their statistical activities separately from other activities and fully take into account the fundamental principles of official statistics. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia has signed agreements with the authorised producers which, besides the programmes, describe the division of work between producers of statistics.

The ONA – National Institute of Public Health

The Other National Authority developing, producing and disseminating European statistics (ONA) involved in the peer review is the National Institute of Public Health, the central Slovenian institution for public health practice, research and education. It is one of two nationally authorised producers in the Slovenian Statistical System and the only Other National Authority in Slovenia. The main function of the National Institute of Public Health is to conduct research in the field of health, to protect and increase the population's level of health by raising awareness and to carry out other preventive measures. It is organised as a central unit with nine regional offices and employs over 600 staff members, 41 of whom work on health statistics. As an authorised producer, the National Institute of Public Health is responsible for the development, production and dissemination of health and healthcare statistics for national and European purposes.

There is a clear separation of statistical and administrative duties within the National Institute of Public Health. The Director General appoints the statistical head, who works with the strong support of and in cooperation with the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia as the coordinator of the Slovenian Statistical System. The statistical head is responsible for the methodology of statistical surveys and also for the whole process of data collection and dissemination. There is no interference with the methodology, process or dissemination from outside the statistical department. The statistical head is also a member of the Board of Directors and the Scientific Board of the National Institute of Public Health.

The ISO 9001 documents include a separate process for statistics which describes the whole process of statistical production including data collection, development of methodology and quality checks. This process definition is partly based on the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM). Supporting documents have been developed for this process and for the sub-processes. The National Institute of Public Health has received an electronic version of the Quality Guidelines prepared by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia. These guidelines are respected where applicable, and form the basis of internal guidelines with steps for the preparation of quality reports. As a result of the Quality Guidelines and the internal guidelines, quality reports for the most important statistical surveys have been prepared, although they do not cover all statistical products. Quality criteria for European Statistics are also adopted within this process and quality reports for European statistics are prepared whenever requested by Eurostat. Quality checks of statistical data are applied at several

stages: when data are collected, when compiling databases at national level and when simple statistics and cross-tabulations are prepared and checked by public health experts employed at the National Institute of Public Health. Plausibility checks are also performed at this level.

The National Institute of Public Health is experiencing deteriorating response rates. It has experimented with lotteries, with three cash prizes in the spring and more prizes, but lower, in the autumn. None of these measures actually helped improve the response rate. Nevertheless, the response rates achieved by the National Institute of Public Health are still fully comparable with response rates for similar surveys in other countries.

The National Institute of Public Health has just finished migration to a new website. All releases are published at noon, and the first releases – presenting some news - are brief. As a new feature, it provides a snapshot of health in municipalities with key information on health issues using maps.

The status as an ONA is defined in the medium-term programme of statistical surveys and hence evaluated every five years.

Data access

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia has a clear and broad legal mandate to collect information for the development, production and dissemination of European Statistics. In order to implement the programme of statistical surveys, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia has the right to collect data from all existing sources and has full legal cover to use administrative data for statistical purposes. For the rational implementation of national statistics activities, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (and authorised producers) may use identifiable individual data from various official and other administrative data collections in the public and private sectors (records, registers, databases, etc.) that are kept in accordance with the law or with the individual's written consent. In compliance with the National Statistics Act, register holders must provide any information requested by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia and the authorised producers, free of charge. Reporting units, bound to report in accordance with the National Statistics Act and the annual programme of statistical surveys, must transmit complete and correct data to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia and the authorised producers free of charge, at the proper time and in the prescribed manner.

Relations with users/dissemination of statistical products and services

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia publishes statistics in various formats, from tables, news releases and visuals to social media posts and media statements. The key channels for disseminating statistics are its website and the SiStat Database, where the largest amount of statistics is published. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia also offers additional services to users, such as user assistance when searching for statistics, the provision of statistics on demand and workshops at schools and governmental and other institutions. Authorised researchers can also access a wide range of microdata for research purposes, including all administrative data used for statistical purposes. Users can express their views about statistics at meetings of the statistical advisory committees, through regular monitoring of user needs, at various events and through bilateral contacts. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia regularly monitors user satisfaction and

needs and prepares a publicly available annual report. Since 2016, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia has regularly participated in the Open Data Inventory (ODIN) survey and ranks among the top 10 in the world in terms of data openness.

Statistical advisory committees for individual fields of national statistics have been established by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia as professional methodological advisory bodies. They were established in the 1980s and were formally introduced in 1995 with the Decree on the Establishment of Statistical Advisory Committees pursuant to Article 15 of the National Statistics Act. Statistical advisory committees have a significant impact on the development of national statistics in Slovenia. Their expert members, in cooperation with the institutions that they represent, provide valuable input related to quality, timely and relevant statistics. There are currently 22 statistical advisory committees with around 400 members (see list under [Statistical advisory committees](#)). Members are representatives of users, data providers, the academic community, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia and authorised producers. The advisory committees' tasks, organisation and working methods, as well as their decision-making process, are defined by the Rules of Procedure of Statistical Advisory Committees at the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia.

The Statistical Council of the Republic of Slovenia is a professional, methodological advisory body for strategic and development questions of national statistics, and the highest representative of users and the professional public. It was established by the National Statistics Act in 1995. Council members are representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, the Government, recognised experts in the field of statistics, the National Council of the Republic of Slovenia, the Bank of Slovenia, employers, employees, the judiciary and the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia. The members of the Council elect the President and the Deputy of the Council from among themselves. The Council members' mandate is for four years. The Council's tasks, organisation and working methods, as well as its decision-making process, are defined by the Rules of Procedure of the Statistical Council.

4. PROGRESS/ADVANCEMENT IN THE LAST 5 YEARS

Cooperation

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SURS) has confirmed and strengthened its fruitful cooperation with its counterparts, holding regular meetings of its different bodies (the 22 statistical advisory committees, the Statistical and the Methodological Councils, and various working groups), with the aim of identifying data needs and user expectations. SURS' relations with administrative data holders are implemented through bilateral agreements.

The cooperation with the scientific community has increased, providing valuable benefits for both parties. Researchers and teachers from various scientific fields are involved in SURS' activities, such as the definition of the programmes of statistical surveys or methodological issues, through their participation in thematic methodology advisory committees and the chair of the Methodological Council.

Resources and performance management

The previous peer review warned that the budget cuts imposed on SURS might jeopardise the fulfilment of its duties and its capacity to adopt new technologies. SURS considers that it barely has sufficient resources to meet all current national statistical needs and the needs of the current European Statistical Programme. Although the issue of sufficient human and financial resources remains pending, SURS has implemented an efficient use of its human and financial resources by optimising the processes of conducting statistical surveys. SURS has pursued its completely register-based census of population and dwellings, which was first conducted in 2011 and subsequently in 2015 and 2018; the census conducted in 2021 was the 4th population census in Slovenia that used register data.

SURS has implemented performance management tools to ensure an efficient and effective use of its resources. It designs a personnel and financial plan before starting a statistical activity, especially for the first implementation of each activity, major revisions, multiannual surveys and larger surveys in which there are constant changes. The plan is included in the preparation of the budget.

The decision to collect data is made on the basis of a thorough analysis of the needs and requests of a broad circle of users of statistical data. Statistical processes are monitored through management procedures allowing real-time comparison with planned resources, timely detection of changes and reallocation of resources.

Security

SURS adopted a security policy in 2011, based on the ISO 27001 recommendations, to ensure the availability and confidentiality of information and data. The position of Information Security Officer was defined in 2017 to regulate the information security system. SURS' IT security policy is published on the internal portal, where all documents related to security are gathered in one place. An ESS IT security assessment is conducted regularly (2018, 2022). Personal identifiers are deleted and replaced with statistical identifiers (SID), as early as possible and before further statistical processing.

Modernisation of statistical processes

Since the previous peer review, SURS has continued improving its already well-developed statistical processes. In 2018, a new methodology for computing inflation was introduced, where the price indices of food, beverages and tobacco are calculated exclusively from scanner data. Since 2019, SURS has regularly received pre-processed and partly aggregated monthly data on roaming based on pre-defined methodology from the four biggest mobile network operators, and uses this as a supplement for foreign tourism statistics.

The non-excessive burden on respondents

SURS developed a comprehensive system for the Measuring and Management of Response Burden (MOPS) in 2016. The response burden is assessed by individual questionnaires for all household and business surveys. The data collected allow SURS to calculate a wide range of indicators and analyse response burden from different aspects. The response burden is reported annually to the SURS Management Board and also reported in the quality reports.

SURS also contributes to the government's programme for the reduction of administrative burden by suggesting the establishment of new administrative data or merging reporting requirements. For instance, SURS played an active role in the simplification of the tourism guests reporting system which was concluded in 2018, by creating the Register of Tourist Accommodation Establishments (RTAE) based on electronic reporting.

SURS introduced an electronic reporting system solution for business statistics surveys (eSTAT) which allows electronic reporting in most surveys with a large number of reporting units. SURS also reduced the average interview duration for the Slovenian questionnaire for Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC): according to the EU ESQRS quality report, this duration was the 3rd lowest in Europe in 2020.

To strengthen cooperation with data providers, a new Statistical Advisory Committee on cooperation with data providers was established in 2021. SURS started collecting privately held data from various companies.

Statistical outputs

The Release calendar is publicly available and includes announcements by authorised producers. SURS always publishes statistics on its website at 10.30 a.m. on weekdays.

During the past few years, SURS has significantly increased its social media presence and, in addition to Twitter and Facebook, has become active on LinkedIn and Instagram. Social media presence was put in place alongside a strong and continuously improving communication strategy which also includes communication of traditional statistical output. SURS regularly produces infographics and has recently started using LinkedIn to attract potential employees.

SURS redesigned its website, which features a visually attractive and responsive design, in 2017. The website is supported by an internally developed Document System, where documents published on the website are stored and managed centrally. The Release Calendar was also upgraded and now

includes releases from all authorised producers. SURS places particular focus on the openness of its published data. According to the latest Open Data Inventory (ODIN) survey, SURS ranked 6th among 192 countries and 1st in the Southern Europe region.

5. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE AND FUTURE ORIENTATION

5.1 STRENGTHS OF THE NSI AND THE PARTICIPATING ONAs IN RELATION TO THEIR COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE

Strengths of the statistical system

A remarkable strength of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SURS) is its ability to rely on a mature system of administrative data. This is based on a long tradition of good relations and solid agreements with administrative data holders which allow SURS not only to reuse administrative sources for statistical purposes but also to contribute to establishing them. This is the case, for instance, for the Business Register of Slovenia, which contains a number of specific statistical variables with businesses' main activity being linked to the statistical classification of activities. More generally, statistical surveys are mostly register-based and SURS endeavours to influence the timely availability of administrative data through good, continuous cooperation with the managers of administrative data, which eventually enables a faster release of statistical information.

The Director General of SURS, together with the Director General of the Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development, is a member of the Economic Committee of the Government. The Committee is a working body of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia that coordinates, considers and proposes regulations, administrative provisions and measures adopted by the government. Membership in this Committee ensures senior-level access to policy authorities and administrative public bodies, and is seen by SURS as an important strength, as it allows easy access to high-level government officials and keeps SURS informed about all governmental initiatives and legislative proposals.

Statistical infrastructure

SURS uses advanced data processing systems and has a solid IT infrastructure. Special attention is paid to information security and the preservation of confidentiality of data. The IT security policy and technical and organisational measures are based on ISO 27001 recommendations. Statistical data are kept in a controlled server environment, while the level of auditing depends on the type of data. Access to statistical databases is strictly monitored and recorded through IT logs, which are regularly analysed to improve security and prevent misuse. SURS deletes personal identifiers and replaces them with statistical identifiers (SID) as early as possible, usually as soon as they are received, before any further statistical processing.

Quality assurance

SURS has a centralised quality assurance function that reviews all methodological explanations and quality reports managed and coordinated by the Methodology and Standards Division. Quality assurance of reference metadata ensures - through reading and providing comments for adjustments prior to dissemination - that the statistical production units provide relevant explanations to users, with methodological explanations and quality reports.

After SURS internally reviewed its compliance with the ES CoP, a detailed overview of internal rules and procedures related to the statistical process was prepared (review of internal rules - PIN) in 2022. A list was prepared on the intranet portal that enabled easier access to documentation and structured documents according to the statistical business process model. This overview includes all rules, including labelling those that are no longer valid, and presents an opportunity to review where certain documents are missing or should be updated.

Response burden

SURS has established a modern and comprehensive system for Measuring and Management of Response Burden (MOPS). The MOPS database is a basis for analysis, regular monitoring and introducing improvements to lower the response burden for businesses. Data in the MOPS database allow the calculation of a wide range of indicators and analyse the response burden from different aspects (e.g. by survey, by size, the activity of the business or by reporting mode). The MOPS system/database was constructed in a way that re-uses and integrates existing internal sources. Annual reports on the response burden of business entities are prepared and presented to the SURS Management Board.

Advisory committees

Another strength of the Slovenian Statistical System lies in the existence of statistical advisory committees. These statistical advisory committees are established by SURS in specific fields of national statistics and have a significant impact on the development of national statistics in Slovenia. Their expert members, in cooperation with the institutions that they represent, provide valuable input related to quality, timely and relevant statistics. They can affect the development of national statistics, express their needs for data and give certain fields or results higher priority. SURS takes all suggestions and proposals into consideration and provides feedback on the possibilities of including new indicators in existing surveys or advice for other possible sources of data. There are currently 22 statistical advisory committees for different fields of statistics.

Training of employees

SURS is committed to maintaining its staff's professional capacity and motivation at a high level through a comprehensive training programme designed and implemented in cooperation with universities. Managers have close relations with their employees and provide mentoring when necessary. The Director General is particularly involved in developing an institutional culture and ensuring professional development by holding meetings individually with all employees after they are hired and when they are promoted. Employees regularly attend international meetings and training courses on methodological issues. All participants prepare written reports, which are presented to the SURS Management Board and then published on the intranet site.

SURS arranges a half-hour internal meeting every Wednesday, called 'SURS hang out', where staff can discuss methodological issues. These meetings are hybrid, which allows wide participation, and the main objective is to learn about different areas of work or work processes and to share good practices.

User orientation

SURS fosters an open culture and encourages transparency in all its operations. It is approachable to its users and encourages them to ask questions and seek information, which helps in building positive user relations. The peer review team noticed in the meetings with ministries, business associations, media and the scientific community that SURS serves them exceptionally well, and they expressed high levels of satisfaction with the data and services provided.

A major strength of SURS is its social media presence, which was confirmed by many stakeholders and users. SURS tailors its messages according to each channel: Twitter is used for all releases, Facebook is used for selected releases such as infographics and releases that may spur conversations, Instagram is tailored for younger audiences, while LinkedIn is focused on interesting information about processes and working at SURS – aimed at improving its perception as an interesting place to work. Responses to individual social media posts are regularly monitored. SURS has excellent cooperation with Slovenian national television and regularly appears on its TV shows, such as the morning show “Dobro jutro”, and the children’s show “Firbcologi”. To ensure that its communication is easily recognisable and visually uniform, SURS has developed a dedicated website for its Style Guide. The Style Guide describes the language that should be used on each dissemination channel but also includes recommendations for chart and table creation, including formatting and colour usage. The aforementioned initiatives have influenced user satisfaction levels, measured through regular user satisfaction surveys, which have significantly improved after the Covid-19 pandemic.

Services to researchers

SURS has more than 20 years’ experience in providing microdata access to researchers. Registered researchers can access all data from the statistical surveys conducted within the current annual programme of statistical surveys (which includes all administrative data that are used for the production of official statistics). SURS regularly tests new methods and software for microdata and tabular protection, while microdata is prepared ad-hoc for each request and the microdata access services to researchers are provided free of charge. Interviews with stakeholders and increasing interest in microdata from researchers in Slovenia and abroad have confirmed that SURS' microdata services are highly valued.

National Institute of Public Health

The National Institute of Public Health operates with a clear distinction between statistical and other duties within the institute. It has a clear commitment to quality as it has had ISO 9001 certification since 2014. The head of the statistical department is responsible for the methodology of statistical surveys and also for the whole process of data collection and dissemination. There is no interference with the methodology, process or dissemination from outside the statistical department. Quality reports for the most important statistical surveys are prepared regularly based on Quality Guidelines from SURS and internal guidelines, and in accordance with European quality criteria.

Innovative practices

Methodological consulting system

The Slovenian Statistical System has an impressive methodological consulting system institutionalised in the Methodological Council. The Council was set up for external experts of the scientific community to review the statistical methods. The Methodological Council is composed of eight members appointed by SURS' Director General. Two members are from SURS and five are outside members – experts in the field of statistical methodology from different scientific disciplines - and one member is a representative of an authorised producer. The Council is headed by the head of the Methodology and Standards Division of SURS. The papers to be reviewed are comprehensive and are presented by the responsible units. It is often the methodology of new surveys that is discussed. The authorised producers are invited to participate as observers in the Council's sessions, and can present their own statistical survey and benefit from the experts' views.

User personas

Mindful of the need to get to know users better and bring SURS closer to them, SURS has developed personas based on quantitative and qualitative user research. Personas are fictional characters that help understand the emotional and behavioural triggers behind users (e.g. needs, pain points, characteristics). One type of persona was developed with a focus on data releases and this will enable subject-matter experts to prepare statistics and releases that are more in line with users' needs. Another type of persona was developed with a focus on data respondents. The results of this project will be used as a method for improving response rates by tweaking the collecting process according to each persona type.

Internal review of ES CoP compliance

In 2019, SURS carried out an internal review of compliance with the ES CoP, which resulted in the preparation of the Internal Handbook on the Implementation of the ES CoP at SURS. The handbook sets out in one place the meaning and practices behind each ES CoP indicator and is of great benefit for all employees, but particularly for newcomers.

Cooperation with Data Providers

SURS established an Advisory Committee on Cooperation with Data Providers in 2021. The purpose of the committee is to preserve the existing set of data for statistical purposes as much as possible, strengthen partnership relations with various data providers, establish new connections and cooperation, ensure easier access to new data sources and reduce the burden for data providers where possible.

To improve response rates, SURS performed an external review of its sampling practices and as a result of the exercise has introduced several concrete measures that are expected to improve response rates, such as optimisation of sample design, new stratification methods and partially coordinated sampling methods, alongside cognitive testing.

Annual public events

In cooperation with the Statistical Society, SURS organises an annual public event called the Statistical Day. The aim of the event is to promote the achievements of SURS and to provide outreach to users, respondents and other stakeholders. In addition, in 2021, a new annual event called Statistical Day with Researchers was launched, with the desire to encourage the use and development of statistics in the wider research community and to discuss the needs of researchers even more actively. The presentations at the conference focus on the use of microdata for research purposes and promote knowledge sharing.

Statistical geoportal as a shared service

SURS has developed an advanced statistical geoportal called STAGE that integrates with PxWeb – a statistical dissemination database system jointly developed and maintained by the Nordic countries. SURS has made STAGE open source and is offering it as a shared service to all interested NSIs.

5.2 ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.2.1 STRENGTHENING THE INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Statistical laws are meant to specifically provide the necessary guarantees for the functioning of statistical authorities in a country, with particular regard to the principle of professional independence. It is therefore important to ensure that such laws are not undermined by possible contradicting provisions in other legislation. However, the question of the articulation between the [National Statistics Act](#) and other national legislation in Slovenia remains unclear. The question notably arose in the context of the dismissal of the Director General of SURS in 2020. This dismissal was based on the Public Employees Act, which foresees the possibility of dismissing heads of government offices within one year of their appointment and without the need to provide any reasons (Article 83), while the National Statistics Act foresees the possibility of dismissing the Director General of SURS only if the government establishes that important disturbances in the operation of the office have occurred due to inadequate organisational solutions (Article 10). More generally, the remaining open question of whether the provisions laid down in the National Statistics Act prevail over contradicting provisions in national legislation casts potential doubt on the solidity of the guarantees that any statistical law is precisely supposed to offer. Clarification on the reasons for the dismissal of the Director General is therefore necessary to ensure SURS' professional and scientific independence. The reasons for the dismissal of the Director General should be clarified and specified in a single legal framework and cannot compromise SURS' professional or scientific independence.

To comply with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R1. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should clarify the legal status of the National Statistics Act as *lex specialis*, especially concerning the reasons for the dismissal of the Director General of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 1.8)

The National Statistics Act was introduced in 1995 and was last amended in 2001. The Act was quite modern at the time of its introduction and provides a solid legal foundation for most aspects of official statistics. While recognising that improvements could be achieved in some key aspects, SURS noted that it is content with its current legal framework. Acknowledging that the opportunities to revise a statistical law should always be weighed against the risks that such a process entails, the peer review team recommends a deeper consideration of all the advantages and disadvantages of opening the process of amending the National Statistics Act. SURS should prepare a document and discuss it internally (and possibly also with a selected external audience) with the aim of using the findings in the future. Special focus should be placed on provisions related to the reasons for the dismissal of the Director General (to ensure that a possible dismissal is based on reasons not compromising professional or scientific independence), access to new data sources, data privacy and the Statistical Council.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R2. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should prepare and discuss an internal document to consider the advantages and disadvantages of opening the process of modernising the National Statistics Act, and in particular consider reasons for the dismissal of the Director General that do not compromise professional or scientific independence, access to new data sources, data privacy and the Statistical Council. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1.8, 2.4, 5.1 and 11.2)

The statistical head of the National Institute of Public Health (NIJZ) is appointed by the Director General of the NIJZ for the same mandate as that of the Director General (4 years). The statistical head is one level below the Director General and is a member of the Board of Directors and of the Scientific Board of the NIJZ. He/she is responsible for the methodology of statistical surveys and also for the whole process of data collection and dissemination. The peer review team wishes to underline the high level of professional qualifications in the field of statistics of the current head of the statistical department. The NIJZ has also managed to clearly separate its administrative and statistical activities. At the same time, the procedure does not sufficiently ensure that the statistical head of the NIJZ is recruited and appointed in a way that is transparent and based on professional criteria only. This procedure therefore needs to be strengthened in that respect to ensure that future recruitments continue to be based on professional criteria only.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R3. The National Institute of Public Health should strengthen the procedure for recruiting and appointing its statistical head, ensuring that it is transparent and based on professional criteria only. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1.8)

The Slovenian Statistical System has a rich history of engaging with its users through the framework of the Statistical Council and 22 advisory committees. These user consultations have been characterised by a strong interest in the communities involved and a commendable level of cooperation. However, despite these positive aspects, the peer review team has identified some aspects that could be improved.

One of the key observations made by the peer review team is that the current system could be described as siloed. This means that the individual advisory committees operate independently and have limited interaction with one another. As a result, one committee's valuable insights, knowledge and experience might not be effectively shared with others, leading to missed opportunities for collaboration and synergies.

Another significant concern raised by the peer review team is the limited representation of certain important user groups in the composition of the advisory committees. Specifically, the media, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and other stakeholders have not been adequately included in these advisory bodies. As these groups often play a pivotal role in disseminating information and representing the interests of diverse segments of society, their absence can lead to a lack of diverse perspectives and potentially skew the outcomes of user consultations.

To address these challenges, the peer review team recommends implementing a regular review of the composition and membership structure of the advisory committees. By periodically assessing and updating user group representation, the Slovenian Statistical System can ensure that it remains relevant and responsive to the needs of all users. This includes actively seeking to engage and involve social groups beyond the traditional users. By doing so, the system can tap into a broader range of expertise and experience, enriching the quality and the relevance of statistical insights.

Furthermore, the peer review team emphasises the importance of strengthening the relations between the advisory committees and the Statistical Council. As the overarching governing body, the Statistical Council can provide the advisory committees with strategic guidance and support, ensuring that their efforts align with the broader objectives and priorities of the Slovenian Statistical System. Enhanced cooperation between these bodies would also facilitate the seamless exchange of information and expertise, leading to more informed decision-making processes.

The peer review team also highlights the need to improve the visibility of the advisory structures within the Slovenian Statistical System. A more visible and accessible system could foster a sense of ownership and inclusivity among all users, further strengthening the overall effectiveness and impact on the statistical consultations.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R4. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should review the governance of its advisory committees and continuously review their composition and membership structure, and should consider strengthening the relations between the advisory committees and the Statistical Council to fully realise the Statistical Council's potential within its current mandate. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 11.1)

5.2.2 ENHANCING STATISTICAL PROCESSES AND IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY TO STATISTICAL PRODUCTS

The statistical processes are well described and accessibility to statistical products is strong in Slovenia and no major concerns were raised with the peer review team with respect to the implementation of the principles related to statistical processes and accessibility. SURS has implemented guidelines

describing how statistical processes and statistics are disseminated and explained to users on the SURS website and on several social media platforms. Even so, the peer review team has identified multiple areas for improvement, such as the templates in the metadata system, the version of GSBPM that is applied and the linking of data to relevant metadata.

SURS has reference metadata available for most of the statistical products it disseminates. However, the peer review team has recognised room for improvement, as having two kinds of reference metadata - methodological explanations and quality reports – can be confusing, especially since these do not follow European standards. The methodological explanations are a short version of the reference metadata that accompany publications. In some cases, there is a link to the quality report, which is a more comprehensive version of the reference metadata, but not in all cases. When there is no link from the methodological explanation to the quality report of a statistical product, the user needs to search among all the quality reports to find the relevant one. From a user perspective, this metadata structure can be confusing – both because there are two different documents, which are not linked directly to the statistical product and also because the expressions used do not always follow the European standard. All reference metadata are stored in the internal metadata repository, STATMIK. STATMIK is already mapped to the Single Integrated Metadata Structure (SIMS), the European standard, so any transformation is unlikely to be extensive.

The reason for having two different types of reference metadata is to meet the needs of different groups of users. The needs of different user groups could also be met by combining the two types of reference metadata – methodological explanations and quality reports - into one product addressing different users by presenting the reference metadata in a layered approach, e.g. by making short summaries for the general public and journalists, and providing more details for more advanced users.

Metadata are not updated in all cases and the policy is to complete quality reports no later than three months after the publication of final figures. This policy should be changed to require all reference metadata to be updated at the same time as the data is published so that users can be informed about the quality of the data at any time. In this way, users should be able to decide whether the data meet the quality criteria for their use case, even if the data are preliminary.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R5. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should upgrade the templates for methodological explanations and quality reports based on the Single Integrated Metadata Structure (the standard of the European Statistical System). It should also consider combining its reporting on methodology and quality in one overarching concept, presenting it in a layered approach that reaches different groups of users. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.1)

SURS uses an adapted version of the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) as its process model in its Quality guidelines. This business process model was developed and implemented in 2012 and is now a mature system in SURS. An adapted version (with fewer phases and sub-processes) was chosen, as SURS felt the GSBPM version at the time was not entirely appropriate for its way of working and hence its need for a process model. The peer review team sees the existence of such a business process model as very positive and also sees the advantages of such a model that would align with the present original version of the GSBPM. As the GSBPM is a generic model for any type of statistics

production and any organisational structure, its original version should also be suitable for SURS. The advantage of the GSBPM is the common terminology, shared both between statistical domains and between statistical organisations, and languages it provides. The GSBPM covers any type of statistical process regardless of which or how many data sources go into the production. The model is not linear, so even if some tasks in the organisational structure are performed in a different order than foreseen in the GSBPM, or together with a task in another sub-process, the GSBPM can still embrace this.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R6. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should update its statistical process model to the latest version of the Generic Statistical Business Process Model. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 7.2)

SURS is planning to perform what it calls quality audits on its statistical products over the coming years. The idea is to involve large parts of the organisation in performing these audits to spread the quality commitment throughout the organisation. The plan is to train 20 teams within the organisation to be able to perform the audits, which will involve assessing user needs, the burden on SURS' staff, the burden on reporting units, etc. The entire methodology will not be developed at one go but in stages. The main sources of information will be STATDOK (SURS' internal documentation system) and STATMIK (SURS' internal application for reference metadata) and will include all available quality indicators. After evaluating the available documentation, the goal is to issue between three and five recommendations and to select three to five good practices for each audited process/product, in order to audit 40 processes in 2024. This appears ambitious and time-consuming as regards the number of processes and persons involved, with a low level of detail. While the peer review team recognises the usefulness of this type of exercise, which may produce valuable insights into the statistical processes subject to these quality audits, the level of ambition could perhaps be reconsidered in light of the added value of involving this number of experts and the possible level of detail of the information obtained about the processes. Actual in-depth quality reviews could instead be performed on central statistical products, or a management information system on statistical products could be set up with key performance indicators based on existing sources such as the STATDOK and the STATMIK.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R7. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should review, and eventually adjust or confirm, the objectives and the design of the planned internal quality audits. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 4.3, 4.4 and 8.3)

SURS provides reference metadata with its statistical products – methodological explanations and quality reports. On the portal, SURS does not provide direct links from the data disseminated in its press releases to methodological and quality information. In some cases, there is a direct link from the press release to the methodological explanation and in other cases there is a direct link from the methodological explanation to the more comprehensive quality report. From the SiStat Database, however, there are direct links to the methodological explanations. The search for relevant documentation can in some cases be difficult. To improve usability, this information should be available directly from the published data.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R8. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should provide direct links from published data to methodological and quality information and provide more user-friendly explanations and easy-to-understand methodological messages with all additional, readily available information. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.6)

5.2.3 ENSURING SUFFICIENT RESOURCES FOR THE PRODUCTION OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SURS considers its human, financial and technical resources sufficient for fulfilling its statistical obligations. This is achieved through management efforts and constant progress in efficiency. However, the challenge of maintaining and improving professional capacity, especially in IT skills, remains high, in a context of increased competition and wage gaps with private and even public sector bodies. Adopting new technologies and operating modes such as migrating to the government cloud requires particular attention to the costs and benefits of each option. Similarly, an increased awareness of users' expectations needs additional resources and an accurate measurement of the cost of the services delivered.

SURS is a relatively small statistical office, with limited human resources available for the performance of its tasks. It has focused on constantly improving efficiency and adapting its activities to the available resources. The peer review team believes that since most of the statistical production currently relies on administrative data, additional efficiency gains may prove difficult in the forthcoming period. Delivering high-quality statistics and providing reliable data to decision-makers, relevant stakeholders and the public at large requires adequate resources. Additional funding and adequate human resources are necessary to support the adoption of new technologies, maintaining and increasing professional excellence in human resources, and developing communication towards a wider range of users. Adequate budgetary funding will be necessary if SURS is to continue its rapid modernisation and fulfil its potential as an innovative statistics producer.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R9. The relevant authorities should ensure that the budgetary and human resource needs of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia are met to balance current and future increases in statistical needs and new policy priorities, which will involve using new data sources and technologies, bearing in mind the need to fulfil its mission independently and effectively. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 3.1)

In 2017, SURS started transferring its IT infrastructure and data processing systems to the government cloud. In accordance with the State Administration Act, the IT infrastructure is managed by the central IT service of the Ministry of Public Administration. The Ministry provides adequate infrastructure and competent system engineers but also provides the same to other state authorities, which, despite the signed Service Level Agreement between SURS and the Ministry of Public Administration, could cause issues related to timely responsiveness and prioritisation. Given the critical nature of official statistics, any disruption or delay in operations could have serious consequences for the organisation and its stakeholders.

In addition, the Ministry has established rules for the development, deployment, hosting and reuse of information solutions on the State Computer Cloud. Unfortunately, these rules do not take into account the specifics of statistical information solutions, which need to be developed based on scientific considerations and require methodological/IT procedures in place for the storage, flow and management of data and metadata. This could also bring the additional risk of higher costs and extra time and effort when implementing new and innovative statistical information solutions.

It is therefore important for SURS to carefully evaluate the potential risks and uncertainties associated with moving the remaining infrastructure to the government cloud and to devise a set of measures aimed at improving and optimising existing processes. SURS should seek advice from other NSIs that have previously experienced similar reforms and should explore solutions and prepare a background document with the aim of ensuring efficiency gains in the future development of its specialised IT systems.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R10. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should evaluate the long-term harms and benefits associated with the migration from its IT infrastructure to the government cloud and, drawing from the examples of other National Statistical Institutes in this area, analyse the effects on data confidentiality, costs and availability of storage for future use of new data sources, methods and tools. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 5.5 and 3.1)

SURS offers comprehensive microdata services to researchers, granting access to data collected through statistical surveys and from administrative data sources. Notably, these services are provided free of charge to registered researchers. The peer review team believes that SURS should provide information in its annual report on the total costs for providing this type of service, to increase the awareness of both the government and the public. By disclosing the total costs associated with these services, SURS can demonstrate their importance and the investment required to sustain them. This increased cost transparency may lead to improved financial support and ensure the long-term viability and effectiveness of its microdata access programme.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R11. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should provide an overview of the resources used for microdata access service to researchers on an annual basis and include this information in its annual report. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 3.2, 5.6, 15.3 and 15.4)

Although SURS is perceived as a respected institution, it reports difficulties in attracting highly qualified specialists, primarily due to uncompetitive wages. This weakness may jeopardise its capacity to conduct development projects and adopt new technologies. SURS has recently made efforts to enhance its public communication, with a particular focus on using social media platforms to highlight the appealing aspects of working in SURS. The peer review team encourages SURS to continue and further enhance its communication efforts in this area. By adopting such measures, SURS can better attract and retain the talented specialists that are vital for its continued growth and innovation.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R12. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should step up its efforts to raise its profile as an attractive employer among the relevant professions and university graduates. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 7.5)

The National Institute of Public Health (NIJZ) has a high level of commitment to the production of quality health statistics. Its commitment to quality is seen both with respect to the ES CoP and the fact that it is ISO 9001 certified (since 2014). NIJZ has a clear separation between its administrative and statistical activities. It uses standards and advanced statistical methods in producing statistics. It can implement changes to processes rapidly and perform methodological experiments to improve processes. The NIJZ disseminates statistics on its website but with limited documentation and access for non-Slovenian speakers. It does not publish quality reports related to its statistical products, but products sent to Eurostat are accompanied by the relevant metadata. It has its own process definition partly based on the GSBPM, and all processes and quality checks are well documented and add value to all processes.

The human resources appear adequate for current production, but the NIJZ is experiencing a lack of IT resources. The peer review team noted that improvements could be achieved with further process optimisation, the introduction of open-source statistical tools (accompanied by training on how to use them) and a dissemination policy that clearly states that pre-release access is not granted to outside users.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R13. The National Institute of Public Health should continue optimising its processes, increase efforts to improve dissemination and develop a dissemination policy that regulates quality-related documentation for users. These improvements should be supported by the necessary resources. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 8.3 and 15.5)

5.2.4 PREPARING THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM FOR THE FUTURE

SURS recognises the significance of public support when it comes to accessing and utilising new data sources, particularly those deemed "sensitive", such as mobile phone data. Understanding the public's concerns and perspectives, while also maintaining open and transparent communication is critical in building trust and ensuring acceptance for the use of such data in official statistics.

To this end, the peer review team encourages SURS to continue and further develop its proactive approach to communicating the value and benefits of official statistics derived from new data sources. By engaging in dialogue with the public, SURS can address any apprehensions or misconceptions that may exist regarding the use of privately held data for statistical purposes. Emphasising the positive impact and insights gained through these data sources will help highlight the importance of their use in the production of official statistics.

Furthermore, it is crucial to ensure that the public is well-informed about the strict safeguards and measures in place to protect individual privacy and data confidentiality. The peer review team believes

that active communication of the ethical guidelines and data protection protocols followed by SURS can strengthen public trust and dispel concerns about any possible misuse of sensitive data.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R14. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should further develop communication activities to promote the value and benefits expected from the use of new data sources, notably privately held data. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 2.4)

Supporting innovation is listed among SURS' values, and innovative and effective statistical production is one of the four strategic objectives identified in the medium-term programme of statistical surveys 2023–2027. The peer review team notes that SURS is looking for innovative solutions and has launched ambitious actions from that perspective. In particular, it carries out activities aimed at introducing the use of privately held data and new data sources into the regular statistical process. The results of these efforts are published as experimental statistics. SURS also regularly participates in measuring innovation maturity in state administration bodies and ranks highly among the other participating state bodies. However, particularly in view of increasing user demands, the peer review team encourages SURS to further develop and strengthen its innovation agenda, building on its previous successful projects.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R15. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia should further develop and strengthen its innovation agenda, capitalise on the successful production of statistics based on innovative data sources and invest further in the use of new data sources in more statistical domains. This includes an enhanced focus on the development and dissemination of experimental statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 10.3 and 9.4)

5.3 VIEWS OF THE NSI, AS THE NATIONAL COORDINATOR OF THE NSS AND THE PEER REVIEW, ON THOSE RECOMMENDATIONS WHERE THEY DIVERGE FROM THE PEER REVIEW EXPERTS' ASSESSMENT

None

ANNEX A – AGENDA OF THE VISIT

Timing	Topic	Participants
Day 1 –12 June 2023		
09:00 – 10:00	Preparatory meeting with the national coordination desk	<p>The peer review expert team All</p> <p>SURS: Director of Methodology and Standards Division Head of Standards Section Peer Review National Coordinator</p>
10:00-10:15	Welcome and introduction to the programme, adopting the agenda and organisational matters	<p>The peer review expert team All</p> <p>SURS: Director General Deputy Director General Director of Methodology and Standards Division Employee at Legal and Human Resources Matters Service Person responsible for Statistical Programmes and National Statistical System Head of Standards Section Peer Review National Coordinator</p>
10:15-11:15	Presentation of the National Statistical System	<p>The peer review expert team All</p> <p>SURS: Director General Deputy Director General Director of Methodology and Standards Division Employee at Legal and Human Resources Matters Service Person responsible for Statistical Programmes and National Statistical System Head of Standards Section Peer Review National Coordinator</p>
11:15-11:30	Coffee break	

11:30-12:30	Progress and plans for the future	<p>The peer review expert team All</p> <p>SURS: Director General Deputy Director General Director of Methodology and Standards Division Person responsible for Statistical Programmes and National Statistical System Head of Standards Section Peer Review National Coordinator</p>
12:30-13:30	Lunch	
13:30-15:30	Professional independence and the Law on Official Statistics and related legislation	<p>The peer review expert team All</p> <p>SURS: Director General Director of Methodology and Standards Division Employee at Legal and Human Resources Matters Service Director of Data Publication and Communication Division Head of Standards Section Peer Review National Coordinator</p>
15:30-15:45	Coffee break	
15:45 – 16:45	Coordination and cooperation	<p>The peer review expert team All</p> <p>SURS: Director General Director of Methodology and Standards Division Person responsible for Statistical Programmes and National Statistical System Director of Demography and Social Statistics Division Person responsible for International Cooperation and European Affairs Employee at Legal and Human Resources Matters Service Director of Financial and Administrative Operations Service Head of Standards Section Peer Review National Coordinator</p>

16:45-18:00	Peer review expert team discussion	
Timing	Topic	Participants
Day 2 – 13 June 2023		
09:00-11:00	Programming, planning and resources	The peer review expert team All SURS: Director General Director of Methodology and Standards Division Director of Financial and Administrative Operations Service Head of Data Reception Section Employee at Legal and Human Resources Matters Service Person responsible for Statistical Programmes and National Statistical System Director of IT Solutions and Infrastructure Division Head of Standards Section Peer Review National Coordinator
11:00-11:15	Coffee break	
11:15-12:45	Quality (organisational structure, tools, monitoring)	The peer review expert team All SURS: Director General Director of Methodology and Standards Division Head of Standards Section Head of Methodology Section Person responsible for Dissemination and Communication Director of Data Publication and Communication Division Peer Review National Coordinator
12:45-13:45	Lunch	
13:45-15:15	Methodology, data collection, data processing and administrative data	The peer review expert team All SURS: Director General Director of Methodology and Standards Division Director of Data Collection Division

		Director of Environmental Statistics Division Director of Business Statistics Division Director of Demography and Social Statistics Division Head of Data Reception Section Head of Standards Section Peer Review National Coordinator
15:15-15:30	Coffee break	
15:30-17:00	Dissemination and confidentiality	The peer review expert team All SURS: Director General Director of Methodology and Standards Division Employee at Legal and Human Resources Matters Service Director of IT Solutions and Infrastructure Division Person responsible for Dissemination and Communication Director of Data Publication and Communication Division Employee at User Relations Section Head of Standards Section Peer Review National Coordinator
17:00-18:00	Peer review expert team discussion	
Timing	Topic	Participants
Day 3 –14 June 2023		
09:00-10:30	Meeting with National Institute of Public Health (NIJZ)	The peer review expert team All National Institute of Public Health: Head of Health Data Centre, National Institute of Public Health Two representatives of National Institute of Public Health SURS: Director of Methodology and Standards Division Director of Demography and Social Statistics Division Head of Standards Section
10:30-11:00	Coffee break and team discussion	
11:00-11:30	Closing session with the ONA	The peer review expert team All

		<p>National Institute of Public Health: Head of Health Data Centre, National Institute of Public Health Two representatives of National Institute of Public Health</p> <p>SURS: Director of Methodology and Standards Division Director of Demography and Social Statistics Division Head of Standards Section</p>
11:30-12:45	Lunch	
12:45-14:15	Meeting with junior staff	<p>The peer review expert team All</p> <p>SURS: Employee at Structural Statistics and Statistical Business Register Section Employee at Labour Statistics Section Employee at Data Publication Section Employee at Transport, Tourism and Information Society Statistics Section Employee at Standards section Employee at National Accounts Section Employee at Interviewing of People and Households Section Employee at IT Solutions Development and Implementation Section Employee at Legal and Human Resource Matters</p>
14:15-14:30	Coffee break	
14:30-15:45	Meeting with the Statistical Council	<p>The peer review expert team All</p> <p>Statistical Council: President of the Council, Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development of the Republic of Slovenia Professor at University of Ljubljana – School of Economics and Business Representative of National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia</p> <p>SURS: Person responsible for Statistical Programmes and National Statistical System Director of Methodology and Standards Division</p>

		Head of Standards Section
15:45-16:45	Meeting with methodological council	<p>The peer review expert team All</p> <p>Methodological Council: Professor at University of Ljubljana – School of Economics and Business Representative of National Institute of Public Health</p> <p>SURS: Director of Methodology and Standards Division Head of Standards Section</p>
16:45-18:00	Peer review expert team discussion	
Timing	Topic	Participants
Day 4 – 15 June 2023		
09:00-10:00	Meeting with main administrative data providers	<p>The peer review expert team All</p> <p>Main data providers: Two representatives of Ministry of the Interior Representative of Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Public Legal Records and Related Services Representative of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Representative of Surveying and Mapping Authority Representative of Kolektor Ascom</p> <p>SURS: Director of Data Collection Division Director of Methodology and Standards Division Head of Standards Section</p>
10:00-10:15	Coffee break	
10:15-11:30	Meeting with main users – Ministries and other public/private institutions (including Central Bank as a user)	<p>The peer review expert team All</p> <p>Ministries and other public/private institutions: Representative of Bank of Slovenia Representative of Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development of the Republic of Slovenia</p>

		<p>Representative of Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Energy Representative of Ministry of Digital Transformation Representative of Slovenian Tourist Board Two representatives of Pension and Disability Insurance Institute of Slovenia</p> <p>SURS: Director of Macroeconomic Statistics Division Director of Methodology and Standards Division Head of Standards Section</p>
11:30-12:30	Meeting with providers of new data sources	<p>The peer review expert team All</p> <p>Providers of new data sources: Two representatives of Agency for Communication Networks and Services of the Republic of Slovenia Representative of SODO electricity distribution operator Two representatives of A1 Slovenia</p> <p>SURS: Director of Environmental Statistics Division Director of Methodology and Standards Division Head of Standards Section</p>
12:30-13:30	Lunch	
13:30-14:30	Meeting with main users – business associations and federations and trade unions, as well as representatives of a committee of users	<p>The peer review expert team All</p> <p>Main users – business associations and trade unions: Representative of Association of Employers of Slovenia Representative of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia Representative of Slovenian Federation of Pensioners Associations Representative of Association of free trade unions of Slovenia</p> <p>SURS: Director of Demography and Social Statistics Division</p>

		Director of Methodology and Standards Division Head of Standards Section
14:30-14:45	Coffee break	
14:45-15:45	Meeting with main users – Media	The peer review expert team All Users – media: Journalist at Newspaper Delo Journalist at RTV Slovenia Journalist at POP TV SURS: Director of Data Publication and Communication Division Director of Methodology and Standards Division Head of Standards Section
15:45-16:45	Meeting with main users – Scientific community	The peer review expert team All Scientific community: Professor at University of Ljubljana – School of Economics and Business Professor at University of Ljubljana – Faculty of Social Sciences Researcher at Institute for Economic Research Professor at University of Primorska – Faculty of Management Representative of Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development of the Republic of Slovenia SURS: Director General Director of Methodology and Standards Division Head of Standards Section
16:45-18:00	Peer review expert team discussion	
Timing	Topic	Participants
Day 5 – 16 June 2023		
09.00-11.00	Clarifications, remaining or additional issues and focus areas	The peer review expert team All
11:00-11:15	Coffee break	

11:15-13:00	<p>Meeting with the senior management of SURS: conclusions and recommendations</p>	<p>The peer review expert team All</p> <p>SURS: Director General Deputy Director General Director of Methodology and Standards Division Director of Macroeconomic Statistics Division Director of Data Publication and Communication Division Director of Demography and Social Statistics Division Director of Environmental Statistics Division Director of IT Solutions and Infrastructure Division Director of Data Collection Division Director of Financial and Administrative Operations Service Person responsible for Statistical Programmes and National Statistical System Person responsible for International Cooperation and European Affairs Person responsible for Dissemination and Communication Employee at Legal and Human Resources Matters Service Head of Standards Section Peer Review National Coordinator</p> <p>ONA: Head of Health Data Centre, National Institute of Public Health</p>
13:00- 14.00	Lunch	

ANNEX B – LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

SURS:

Director General
Deputy Director General
Peer Review National Coordinator
Director of Methodology and Standards Division
Head of Standards Section
Employee at Legal and Human Resources Matters Service
Director of Data Publication and Communication Division
Director of Demography and Social Statistics Division
Person responsible for International Cooperation and European Affairs
Director of Financial and Administrative Operations Service
Director of IT Solutions and Infrastructure Division
Head of Methodology Section
Person responsible for Dissemination and Communication
Director of Environmental Statistics Division
Director of Business Statistics Division
Head of Data Reception Section
Employee at User Relations Section
Junior staff, Structural Statistics and Statistical Business Register Section
Junior staff, Labour Statistics Section
Junior staff, Data Publication Section
Junior staff, Transport, Tourism and Information Society Statistics Section
Junior staff, Standards section
Junior staff, National Accounts Section
Junior staff, Interviewing of People and Households Section
Junior staff, IT Solutions Development and Implementation Section
Junior staff, Legal and Human Resource Matters
Director of Macroeconomic Statistics Division
Director of Data Collection Division
Person responsible for Statistical Programmes and National Statistical System

National Institute of Public Health as ONA:

Head of Health Data Centre National Institute of Public Health
Two representative of National Institute of Public Health

Statistical council:

President of the Council, Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development of the Republic of Slovenia
Professor at University of Ljubljana – School of Economics and Business
Representative of National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia

Methodological council:

Professor at University of Ljubljana – School of Economics and Business
Representative of National Institute of Public Health

Admin data providers:

Two representatives of Ministry of the Interior
Representative of Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Public Legal Records and Related Services
Representative of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food
Representative of Surveying and Mapping Authority
Representative of Kolektor Ascom

Users:

Representative of Bank of Slovenia
Representative of Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development of the Republic of Slovenia
Representative of Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Energy
Representative of Ministry of Digital Transformation
Representative of Slovenian Tourist Board
Two representatives of Pension and Disability Insurance Institute of Slovenia

Providers of new data sources:

Two representatives of Agency for Communication Networks and Services of the Republic of Slovenia
Representative of SODO electricity distribution operator
Two representatives of A1 Slovenia

Trade unions and business associations:

Representative of Association of Employers of Slovenia
Representative of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia
Representative of Slovenian Federation of Pensioners Associations
Representative of Association of free trade unions of Slovenia

Media:

Journalist at Newspaper Delo
Journalist at RTV Slovenia
Journalist at POP TV

Scientific community:

Professor at University of Ljubljana – School of Economics and Business
Professor at University of Ljubljana – Faculty of Social Sciences
Researcher at Institute for Economic Research
Professor at University of Primorska – Faculty of Management
Representative of Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development of the Republic of Slovenia