



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

## SWITZERLAND

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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Federal Statistical Office, located in Neuchâtel, is Switzerland's central statistical agency. It performs statistical services for the Confederation's administrative units, other users of federal statistics and the public, and forms part of the Federal Department of Home Affairs.

The main legal acts that support the activities of the Swiss statistical system and constitute a strong legal framework, are the Federal Constitution of the Swiss Confederation (Art. 65) (SR 101), the Federal Statistics Act (FStatA, SR 431.01), the Ordinance on the Conduct of Federal Statistical Surveys (SR 431.012.1) and the Ordinance on the Organisation of Federal Statistics (SR 431.011).

The Federal Statistical Office has the mandate to coordinate the decentralised Swiss statistical system in accordance with the Federal Statistics Act. The main instruments underpinning the coordination of the Swiss statistical system are (i) the Fedestat and Regiostat committees and (ii) the multi-annual and annual statistical work programmes.

Fedestat is a committee comprising the producers of statistics in the Confederation and other statistical organisations and bodies subject to the Federal Statistics Act. The Regiostat committee comprises the statistical producers of the regions (cantons and municipalities). The purpose of both committees is to foster cooperation and facilitate the planning and coordination of statistics between all bodies involved in official statistics at the respective levels. The Federal Statistical Office chairs both the Fedestat and Regiostat and provides their secretariats.

In addition to the coordination instruments of the Swiss statistical system, the Federal Statistical Office also relies on advisory bodies such as the Federal Statistics Committee, which is an extra-parliamentary committee created by the Federal Council, and the statistical expert groups which advise the federal statistics producers on issues related to their subject areas.

The Swiss statistical system has a unique set-up, with an Ethics Council which was established as an independent body by the Official Statistics Section of the Swiss Statistical Society. The Ethics Council ensures that the basic principles of the Charter of Swiss Official Statistics, which complements the legal framework, are implemented. The Charter is quite aligned with the European statistics Code of Practice (ES CoP).

The Federal Statistical Office leads the planning process for the statistical activities of the Swiss Confederation, together with the other statistical producers including the cantons and other important stakeholders. This results in the multi-annual statistical work programme which spans a period of four years, coinciding with the legislative cycle, and comprises an important instrument for identifying strategic and operational objectives as well as ensuring a coordinated plan across the many producers of statistics at federal level. The programme is approved by the Federal Council.

In recent years, new tasks were assigned to the Federal Statistical Office. According to Article 10 of the Ordinance on the Organisation of the Federal Department of the Interior (in 2000, last updated in 2023), the Federal Statistical Office is the competent authority for Swiss official statistics and is responsible for coordinating federal data management, data science and artificial intelligence. The fact that the Federal Statistical Office has been entrusted with these new and challenging tasks provides evidence of its high credibility and its staff's high level of skills and competencies, which are also recognised by society at large in Switzerland.

The recruitment of the Head of the Federal Statistical Office is based on the Federal Personnel Act and its Ordinances, and is conducted in accordance with a standard procedure and regulations governing the responsibilities for the decision to appoint the Head of the Federal Statistical Office, based on a

publicly announced job vacancy including a description of the tasks. The reasons for which the incumbency can be terminated never compromise professional or scientific independence.

The Federal Statistical Office is perceived as a trustworthy organisation, as are the three Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics selected for the peer review. The Federal Statistical Office is recognised for the central and crucial role it plays at different regional levels within the Swiss Confederation, in spite of the intricate structure of the Swiss statistical system.

There is a high awareness of quality management and quality assurance issues at all levels in the Federal Statistical Office, which results in a strong quality culture present also in the reviewed Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics. The peer review team also found very clear technical documentation about the activities, quality-related topics and output of the Other National Authorities on their websites. These examples constitute very good practices and could be used as a benchmark for other organisations in the Swiss statistical system.

The high competence and expertise of the staff at the Federal Statistical Office – around two thirds of the staff are university graduates - has contributed to the high quality of statistical products and the strong trust of users.

There is a strong focus on user needs and expectations, and a robust communication strategy. The Federal Statistical Office makes statistics accessible and communicates them clearly in several ways. Noteworthy examples are the dissemination of experimental statistics and the provision of Fact Sheets with a short summary of the basic information concerning each set of statistics. A large portion of information on the website is also available in up to five languages.

One of many innovation practices worth mentioning is that the Federal Statistical Office has set up a platform to support public sector data exchange and reuse: the interoperability platform (I14Y).

Generally, the peer review team considers that the Federal Statistical Office and the three selected Other National Authorities demonstrate a high level of compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice (ES CoP). Despite the high level of compliance with the ES CoP, some challenges were identified and translated into 15 improvement-related recommendations, grouped under five headings below.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **I. Enhancing quality management and tools**

The Federal Statistical Office documents the quality in statistics using the European Standard, the Single Integrated Metadata Structure, and also briefly in the Federal Statistics Office's Fact Sheets, which are accessible to users. More detailed and in-depth methodological documentation, aimed at more qualified users, is however, only available for some of the statistics at the Federal Statistical Office.

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

***1. The Federal Statistical Office should strengthen its documentation on methodology and quality to cover more statistical domains and include the Single Integrated Metadata Structure Reports in the Metadata system (Statistical Information System) to facilitate the intended use of statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 6.4 and 15.1)***

The Federal Statistical Office's Quality Assurance Handbook provides important guidance regarding statistical standards and methods, mainly for traditional surveys. It is also a vital part of the Quality Management System at the Federal Statistical Office. However, the Quality Assurance Handbook lacks sufficient quality assurance guidelines when it comes to administrative data and other non-survey data. With the increased usage of administrative data and data from other emerging sources, the Quality Assurance Handbook needs to be updated to promote a broader use.

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

**2. The Federal Statistical Office should update the Quality Assurance Handbook to include more recommendations on administrative data and other non-survey data, with the aim of better guiding the official statistics producers in the Swiss statistical system. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1bis.2, 4.2 and 8.1)**

The Federal Statistical Office's Quality, Process and Risk Management Policy and Handbook – which describe the processes and principles related to quality, the production process and risk management – aim for an integrated approach across these three areas. Nonetheless, a clear linkage remains to be developed between them, as originally foreseen and planned by the Federal Statistical Office.

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

**3. The Federal Statistical Office should integrate the three areas – Quality, Processes and Risk Management - as indicated in the Federal Statistical Office's Quality, Process and Risk Management Policy and Handbook. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 4.2)**

The peer review team found that the Federal Statistical Office has a potentially good approach to quality reviews, which needs to be more systematically implemented and enhanced. The approach, led by the Quality and Processing Unit, should also be extended to the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics, to foster continuous quality improvements throughout the Swiss statistical system.

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

**4. The Federal Statistical Office should systematically implement its programme of quality reviews to include the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics in participation in the reviews and their facilitation. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1bis.2, 4.3 and 4.4)**

## **II. Strengthening process standardisation, automation and innovation**

The peer review team observed that the Federal Statistical Office has built a new statistical production system based on the Generic Statistics Business Process Model, the implementation of which is progressing for the various statistical domains. Completing the transition to the new platform is key to achieve cost efficiencies and reduce risks of potential errors from non-automated processing.

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

**5. The Federal Statistical Office should implement the new statistical production platform across statistical domains and consider the reuse of the platform's components in the wider context of the Swiss statistical system. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 10.4 and 8.4)**

A major development noted by the peer review team is the establishment of the metadata catalogue supported by the interoperability portal, which enables public sector data reuse in line with the "once

only” principle. The initiative is supported by a dedicated governance structure facilitating collaboration among different public administrations which are data owners. While progress has been made, not all datasets are as yet included in the catalogue and important information on quality is still missing. The completion of the metadata catalogue platform will critically benefit from further efforts in metadata harmonisation and quality assessment.

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

**6. The Federal Statistical Office should enhance metadata harmonisation to support quality improvements in administrative data used for statistical production. The Federal Statistical Office should continue working with key stakeholders under the current governance of data management networks, in order to complete metadata harmonisation in a cooperative way. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 8.4, 9.5 and 10.4)**

The new Data Science Competence Centre established in 2021 promotes the use of data science methods in official statistics in the Federal Statistical Office and in the Swiss statistical system. Their rapid deployment in production will enhance the use of digital data sources in published official statistics and increase the ability to respond rapidly to user needs, including during crises and emergencies. In particular, regular and sustainable access to privately held data is critical to the development and implementation of data science for statistics and cooperation with data holders is necessary to ensure the good quality of the data and their metadata.

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

**7. The Federal Statistical Office should accelerate the cooperation with private data holders with the aim of exploring new data sources for statistical production purposes, making use of modern technology for data processing and data science methodologies for the dissemination of experimental statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 2.4, 8.6 and 8.7)**

### **III. Strengthening the coordination function with the Swiss statistical system**

There is a clear need to modernise the Charter of Swiss Official Statistics so that a broader group of organisations, at different levels and of different types, find it relevant and up-to-date. This would raise the status of the Charter for the benefit of the quality of official statistics. It would also be advantageous to harmonise with the ES CoP those parts of the Charter where the principles are similar in content and purpose, to promote further clarity and efficiency and avoid misunderstandings.

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

**8. The relevant authorities should revise and strengthen the Charter of Swiss Official Statistics, as a complement to the legal framework for official statistics in the Swiss statistical system, with the aim of developing a document that is applicable for all types of organisations in the Swiss statistical system and maximises coherence with the ES CoP. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1.1, 1bis.2 and 4.1)**

In the meetings with the Federal Statistical Office and the reviewed Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics, it became clear that the practice of privileged pre-release access and embargo is interpreted in different ways. Both the Federal Statistical Office and the Other National Authorities reviewed demonstrate transparency in the communication on their websites regarding interactions with users. However, the peer review team felt that some of the exchanges that occur between different parties relate to specific stages of the production process, for example, concerning data processing before the final statistics/data are disseminated and are therefore not to be regarded as privileged pre-release access.

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

**9. The Federal Statistical Office, together with all Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics, should establish standard practices for privileged pre-release access and distinguish this type of access from data sharing, whose purpose is to assure quality in the production of statistics before dissemination. The external communication of any pre-release should be uniform within the Swiss statistical system. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 6.7 and 1bis.1)**

The Federal Statistical Office and the reviewed Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics felt that the Federal Statistical Office has a good relationship with the latter within its coordination role, which the Federal Statistical Office carries out in an appropriate way. The statistical expert groups that advise the producers of federal statistics play an important role, as they assess the statistical processes in greater depth. However, during the discussions with the Other National Authorities it became clear that more support, over and above the statistical expert groups, could be provided, especially when it comes to innovation in statistical methodology, standardisation and reuse of statistical services.

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

**10. The Federal Statistical Office should strengthen its support to the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics with a focus on methodological services and establishing standards and definitions, in order to raise the quality of official statistics in the Swiss statistical system. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1bis.2, 1bis.1 and 7.2)**

#### **IV. Further improving accessibility and communication of official statistics**

The Federal Statistical Office's Revision Policy advocates, among other things, the analysis of routine revisions, which is in line with the ES CoP. The peer review team was presented with different analyses performed for revisions involving methodological changes, but did not find evidence of analysis of routine revisions. In the absence of this type of analysis, users are not provided with sufficient information on what they can expect regarding the size of upcoming revisions when the final statistics will be made available later. Nor does the producer gain the appropriate knowledge to improve the preliminary statistics.

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

**11. The Federal Statistical Office, together with all Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics, should devise a common revision policy which comprises revision analysis, particularly for planned revisions including those made on a routine basis. The practice of performing revision analyses for routine revisions should be strengthened. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 12.3 and 8.5)**

The peer review team noted a very good relationship between the Federal Statistical Office and the scientific community. The Federal Statistical Office is aware of the needs of the scientific community regarding the access to microdata and the representatives of the scientific community respect the legal requirements for their provision. However, a remote data access solution for researchers is currently not available, as it is still under development at the Federal Statistical Office. Such a solution should provide better accessibility and an alternative and easier way to access data, provided that secure solutions for confidentiality and data protection are maintained.

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

**12. The Federal Statistical Office should prioritise the provision of remote access to microdata for scientific purposes while safeguarding confidentiality and data protection. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 5.6 and 15.4)**

The reviewed Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics are responsible for both statistical and administrative activities, which are clearly separated. However, the presentation of Other National Authorities' statistics on their respective web pages should be more clearly delineated from their other administrative activities. It should also be made clearer for the users of these web pages that the statistics are produced within the Swiss statistical system. This will contribute to raising awareness about official statistics.

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

**13. The reviewed Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics (the Federal Finance Administration, the Federal Office for Customs and Border Security and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs) should clearly indicate on their dedicated official statistics web pages that their organisation belongs to the Swiss statistical system. Relevant documentation on the Swiss statistical system regarding official statistics should be clearly visible on these pages. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1.6, 1bis.1 and 1bis.2)**

## **V. Ensuring sustainability of resources**

With the adoption of the Federal Statistical Office's new role (in the areas of data management, open data dissemination and data science), the sustainability of the current financial framework is exposed to potential challenges that need to be addressed. The focus should be on ensuring the long-term sustainability of the activities of the Federal Statistical Office, taking its new role into account.

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

**14. The Federal Statistical Office should develop a sustainable funding framework that can provide adequate resources for the Federal Statistical Office's new responsibilities and engage with the relevant governance bodies to secure such resources. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 3.1 and 3.2)**

The peer review team found that the Federal Statistical Office has a competent and dynamic workforce, which has supported its operations well and contributed to the high quality of statistical products and the strong trust of users. In order to further support the modernisation of statistical production and strengthen the capacity to implement the new tasks assigned to the Federal Statistical Office, an adequate level of staff and composition of skills will be needed.

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

**15. The Federal Statistical Office should assess the need for future human resources and competencies, identify potential gaps and implement appropriate actions to address these gaps, particularly in the area of methodology. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 3.1 and 7.5)**

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 placed particular emphasis on aspects related to the Mandate for Data Collection and Access to Data, Adequacy of Resources, Commitment to Quality, Impartiality and Objectivity, Sound Methodology, Appropriate Statistical Procedures, Cost effectiveness, Accuracy and Reliability as well as Accessibility and Clarity.

Careful attention was given to the funding framework in place in the Federal Statistical Office as well as to the allocation of adequate specialised human resources, particularly regarding the number of methodologists (ES CoP, Principle 3 on Adequacy of Resources). The main motivation was concern over the sustainability of the funding framework and adequate people skills, in view of the Federal Statistical Office's new responsibilities and role within its innovation strategy.

Quality Management and practices, and quality documentation in general, was given particular attention (ES CoP, Principle 4). Even though quality awareness and culture are well embedded in the Federal Statistical Office and the reviewed Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics, the peer review team did a thorough analysis of the implementation approaches, particularly concerning the scope of quality documentation and quality review activities.

The Mandate for Data Collection and Access to Data (ES CoP, Principle 2), as well as Appropriate Statistical Procedures (ES CoP, Principle 8) and Cost Effectiveness (ES CoP, Principle 10) were particularly relevant principles to analyse. The main motivation was to look closer at process standardisation and harmonisation, including the integration of metadata, also in the context of the integration of new data sources for the production of official statistics.

Even though the Federal Statistical Office has a publicly available Revision Policy, the peer review team found it important to further analyse the practice of analysing routine revisions. Therefore, Impartiality and Objectivity (ES CoP, Principle 6) and Accuracy and Reliability (ES CoP, Principle 12) were also analysed.

Finally, the relationship with the scientific community was given special attention, particularly regarding the adequacy of the provision of data for research purposes. Therefore, Accessibility and clarity (ES CoP, Principle 15) was also a principle given special attention by the peer review team.

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 purpose of the Swiss statistical system is enshrined in Article 65 of the Federal Constitution of the Swiss Confederation. Various laws and ordinances further supplement the constitutional provision with more specific legal provisions on official statistics in Switzerland. The main legal acts in this regard are the Federal Statistics Act (FStatA, SR 431.01), the Ordinance on the Conduct of Federal Statistical Surveys (SR 431.012.1) and the Ordinance on the Organisation of Federal Statistics (SR 431.011).

These legal acts regulate the tasks and organisation of federal statistics as well as fundamental principles for data procurement, publications and services. They also regulate the organisation and coordination function of the Federal Statistical Office (FSO) in its capacity as Switzerland's central statistical agency, the establishment of a multi-annual statistical work programme for the overall planning of Swiss official statistics and the institution of the Federal Statistics Committee as an advisory body to the Federal Council. Data protection principles and data security, publication of services, linking modalities, the list of statistical surveys, etc. are also regulated in these legal acts.

In addition, another important piece of legislation in the field of statistics is the Bilateral Statistical Agreement with the EU. The Agreement has been in force between Switzerland and the EU since 2007, with the aim of fostering the harmonisation of Swiss official statistics with those of the EU. The Agreement forms the basis of cooperation on EU legislation in the field of statistics between Switzerland and the EU, with adaptations and derogations as necessary. The EU legislation in the field of statistics that is binding for Switzerland is mentioned in Annex A to the Agreement. The Agreement is the basis for Switzerland's participation in the ESS and as a consequence also in the ESS peer reviews. The ES CoP is mentioned in Annex A to the Agreement as an act of which Switzerland should take note but that has no binding force.

The Swiss statistical system is decentralised and its operations are mainly based on a mix of statistical surveys, administrative data and registers with a limited use of privately held data. Approximately 40 federal agencies and independent institutions, such as the Swiss National Bank, collect, analyse and disseminate important statistical data on 21 topics. Public authorities also base their planning on these topics. Of the 40 organisations, 10 deliver data to Eurostat in accordance with the Bilateral Statistical Agreement with the EU. In addition, most cantons and some large cities also have their own regional statistical offices or services.

The FSO performs statistical services for the Confederation's administrative units, other users of federal statistics and the public. In addition to the FSO's abovementioned legal framework, new tasks were assigned to the FSO in early 2023.

According to Article 1039 of the Ordinance on the Organisation of the Federal Department of the Interior of 28 June 2000 (as at 1 January 2023), the FSO is the competent authority for Swiss official statistics. It is responsible for coordinating federal data management, data science and artificial intelligence. Furthermore, in close collaboration with the other federal offices, the FSO assumes the following institutional roles: a. Swiss data steward and statistics data steward; b. Federal Data Science Competence Centre (DSCC); c. Secretariat of the Confederation's Artificial Intelligence Competence Network (CNAI); d. Secretariat for Open Government Data of the central federal administration.

## Organisation

The FSO is a part of the Federal Department of Home Affairs and is located in Neuchâtel. The current FSO organisation is rather horizontal. It is organised into nine divisions under the Director General: staff; resources; population and education; economy; health and social affairs; territory and environment; interoperability and registers; data science, artificial intelligence (AI) and statistical methods; communication and publishing. Under all divisions there are a total of 42 domain-specific units.

The Swiss statistical system has a unique set-up, with an **Ethics Council** which was established as an independent body by the Official Statistics Section of the Swiss Statistical Society. The Ethics Council ensures that the basic principles of the Charter of Swiss Official Statistics, which complements the legal framework, are implemented. The Ethics Council may monitor compliance with the basic principles through national peer reviews commissioned by the Council itself or by third parties. The Ethics Council can act as a mediator and is also authorised to note, recommend and inform, but does not have the power to impose sanctions.

## Appointment Procedure for the Head of the NSI

The recruitment of the FSO's Head of Office is based on the Federal Personnel Act (SR 172.220.1) and its Ordinances, and is conducted by the Head of the Federal Department of Home Affairs or the Federal Council as a whole, in accordance with a standard procedure. There are transparent regulations governing the responsibilities for this procedure as well as the decision to appoint the Head of the FSO, based on a publicly announced job vacancy including a description of the tasks. The job description refers to the functions and objectives of the FSO according to the respective Ordinances, namely professional independence, which is also legally stated in Article 3a of the Federal Statistics Act. The Federal Personnel Act does not include a time limit for the appointment of a Director General, and this is applicable to FSO's Head of Office, meaning that the Head of Office is appointed for an unlimited duration. Either party may terminate the contract of employment; the employer may terminate it with sufficient grounds pursuant to Article 10 paragraph 3 of the Federal Personnel Act. The reasons for which the incumbency can be terminated never compromise professional or scientific independence. This aspect is taken into account in the legal basis to exclude the possibility of liability.

## Statistical Programmes

**The multi-annual statistical work programme** is established for a period of four years, coinciding with the legislative cycle. It is an important planning instrument that identifies strategic and operational objectives. It ensures coordinated overall planning of the Confederation's statistical activity across the various statistics producers at federal level. The drafting of the multi-annual statistical work programme is carried out under FSO's leadership in close cooperation with the other statistical producers of the Confederation and the cantons, and with various important user groups from politics, administration and the economy, social partners and institutions. The programme is approved by the Federal Council. The adopted multi-annual statistical work programme is then translated into annual statistical work programmes to foster its operationalisation over the legislative period.

The Appendix of the Ordinance on the Conduct of Federal Statistical Surveys, where all the current federal surveys are listed, is revised annually. All federal statistical producers are consulted about the revision. It is easily and swiftly revised in order to adapt the statistics and surveys to changed requirements and framework conditions. This is to ensure that the legal basis will quickly reflect any changes. Three types of changes are made in the Appendix of the Ordinance on the Conduct of Federal Statistical Surveys:

- corrections or amendments of survey characteristics, interested parties, the respondents participating in the survey, its periodicity, etc.;
- the discontinuation of surveys;
- the addition of surveys.

These changes are then included in the annual statistical work programme. This process is very relevant to ensure proper coordination within the complex structure of the Swiss statistical system.

## Resources

In 2022 there were 873 employees at the FSO which, in terms of full-time equivalents, translates into 728, as the FSO has a relatively large proportion of part-time workers. Approximately 69 per cent of the staff are university graduates. The annual budget in 2022 was CHF 177 million (approximately EUR 185 million).

## Coordination of the National Statistical System

The FSO has the mandate to coordinate the decentralised statistical system (FStatA, Articles 10 and 12).

The main instruments at the FSO's disposal to coordinate the Swiss statistical system are (i) the Fedestat and Regiostat committees, and (ii) the multi-annual and annual statistical work programmes.

**Fedestat** is a committee comprising the producers of statistics in the Confederation. It has approximately 40 members representing federal offices and other statistical organisations and services subject to the Federal Statistics Act. The purpose of Fedestat is to encourage the cooperation, planning and coordination of statistics at federal level between all bodies and services involved in federal statistics, in order to avoid discrepancies and to improve the quality of federal statistical activities. The FSO chairs Fedestat and provides its secretariat.

**Regiostat** is a committee of regional producers of statistics (cantons and municipalities – mainly large cities). It comprises approximately 30 members, which are the cantonal statistical offices, the statistical services of the cantons that do not have a proper statistical office and the statistical services of a few cities. The purpose of Regiostat is to foster the cooperation, planning and coordination of statistics between the Confederation, the cantons and the cities. It enables consultations and ensures good coordination between the FSO and the statistical services in the regional entities concerning projects and activities that are of interest to both the Confederation and the regions. The FSO chairs Regiostat and provides its secretariat.

Furthermore, **statistical expert groups advise the federal statistics producers** on issues regarding their subject areas. They bring added value to the work and projects of the statistical producers by drawing on their members' extensive specialist knowledge. They are established based on the needs of the FSO or of other statistical producers. They are composed of representatives from the Confederation, the cantons and municipalities, scientific circles, private business, social partners and the Swiss National Bank. To ensure better coordination, the Federal Statistics Committee, as well as the Fedestat and Regiostat committees, delegate one of their members to the various expert groups.

## Other National Authorities (ONAs)

Altogether there are nine ONAs in Switzerland including the Swiss National Bank. Three of them were selected for the peer review and are described below.

The **Federal Finance Administration (FFA)** is responsible for the budget estimate, the financial plan and accounting. The FFA evaluates all departments' projects involving expenditures, develops financial policy concepts (such as the financial model, the reorganisation of fiscal equalisation, the division of responsibilities between the Federal Government and the cantons, and the debt brake), is responsible for the statistics on Switzerland's public budget and administers federal fiscal equalisation. The FFA ensures the Federal Government's permanent liquidity and is responsible for raising funds and investing on the money and capital markets. The FFA produces public finance statistics in the framework of the European System of National and Regional Accounts (ESA). In 2022, the FFA had 16 employees involved in statistical operations.

The **Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (FOCBS)** performs tasks in the area of security and migration, in border areas, the railways and at airports, together with domestic and foreign partner authorities. The FOCBS also checks the correctness of the declaration of goods, determines the applicable taxes and duties, and ensures compliance with numerous provisions aimed at protecting people and the economy. The FOCBS further produces foreign trade statistics in the framework of European business statistics. In 2022, the FOCBS had 26 employees involved in statistical operations.

The **State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)** is the federal government's centre of expertise for core issues relating to economic policy. The aim of the SECO is to ensure sustainable economic growth, high employment and fair working conditions by providing a stable environment for regulatory, economic and foreign trade policy. The SECO produces quarterly accounts in the framework of the European System of National and Regional Accounts (ESA). In 2022, the SECO had 11 employees involved in statistical operations related to the Quarterly National Accounts (QNA).

### **Data Access**

The main legal acts provide the basic functions and rights for the FSO to carry out data collection. The Federal Statistics Act (Article 4 paragraph 1, Articles 7 and 8) gives the FSO a clear mandate to access administrative data for statistical purposes, i.e., to obtain data regarding third parties from data collections among cantons, communes or organisations. At present there is no legal basis for the FSO to access privately held data.

### **Relations with Users/Dissemination of Statistical Products and Services**

The FSO provides statistical information for the permanent observation of key areas of life. In particular, and to an increasing extent, this also covers customised information processing and advice on information use. The Federal Statistics Act states that statistics must be easily accessible to the general public, for instance in the mass media, via the internet or in the FSO library. Consequently, many services are provided for free or for a small charge. In contrast, market prices are charged for customised analyses prepared for individual clients, making the FSO part of the fast-developing information market. In general, surveys and statistics are described in summary form in fact sheets published on the FSO's website. Questionnaires are usually disseminated as well.

The FSO's website serves as the central hub for accessing the FSO's published information. Modern communication channels are in place (e.g., website, Social Media channels – Twitter, being the most relevant, LinkedIn, Facebook - data visualisation, data explorer) and the FSO is constantly expanding them with input from users and exchanges with its partners. This is part of an overall strategy to make greater use of modern trends in communication and technology as a source of information and to publish user-specific documents. In accordance with this strategy, the new website presents information in a clearly structured and user-oriented manner, achieved by means of a user-friendly website navigation system. The FSO is also developing its monitoring capacities regarding social media,

and in 2022 one person was assigned the specific responsibility of creating social media content and special posts, and expanding the community on the various social media channels.

The processing and provision of anonymised personal data is statutorily regulated. To simplify access to personal data for the scientific and research community, the FSO has worked closely with the Swiss Foundation for Research in Social Sciences (FORS). Data are provided for a limited period of five years and for the purpose of specific projects. Data protection agreements must be renewed upon the expiry of the fixed period, after which the data must be returned to the FSO or destroyed. The data is relayed to researchers on data storage devices or via Secure FTP, allowing them to download and evaluate the data using their own systems and software, in compliance with confidentiality principles and the provisions of a data protection agreement.

In order to consult users, the **Federal Statistics Committee** was established. It is an extra-parliamentary committee created by the Federal Council. It is an advisory committee that is not instruction-bound. Its aim is to advise the Federal Council, the FSO and the Confederation's other statistical producers on all matters relating to federal statistics. The Committee includes representatives from the cantons and cities, from scientific circles, private business, social partners and other administrative bodies of the Confederation as well as the Swiss National Bank. Overall, the Committee's role is to ensure that official statistics meet the demands of a democratic society.

## 4. PROGRESS/ADVANCEMENT IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS

### **New Business Strategy**

The FSO has been assigned the role and associated tasks as the Swiss Data Steward with the aim to coordinate standardisation and harmonisation enabling the multiple use of data. Further to the introduction of this new role, the FSO has developed a new business strategy and undertaken a reorganisation. Five newly created internal committees of the management board accompany these developments at all hierarchical levels. Its new tasks enable the FSO to offer services with high added value to the entire Swiss public administration, although its core business remains the production of official statistics.

### **Multi-annual statistical work programme**

The federal multi-annual statistical work programme 2020-2023 was prepared in 2019 and has so far been implemented with a focus on the specific use of the opportunities offered by the digital transformation to further develop statistical production and the provision of information and services. The overriding goal has been to further develop the system of federal statistics and the respective production processes in such a way that the statistical information and services are geared even more efficiently to the needs of the users.

### **New Tasks within Data Management and Data Science**

In recent years, many of the FSO's activities have been dominated by new tasks in the areas of data management and data science, which the office has started to perform on behalf of the Federal Council. In addition to traditional official statistics production, the new system comprises three tasks: the production of statistics, data management and data science. The “once-only” principle was an important factor for the government in setting up the system.

Following the assignment of the new tasks, the Interoperability and Registers Division (IOR) and the Data Science Competence for Data Science Division (DSCC) were established in January 2021. In the same period, the government entrusted the FSO with the management of the Competence Network for Artificial Intelligence (CNAI) and the Open Government Data (OGD) unit (in 2019). The OGD unit now coordinates the implementation of the Swiss OGD strategy 2019-2023 in close cooperation with the Federal Department of Home Affairs (FDHA). Implementation of the strategy entails an open set of public administration data freely available to the public on the [opendata.swiss](https://opendata.swiss) portal. Both the visibility of data and institutional learning from data within the existing legal framework have been improved.

### **The SIS Portal**

A new statistical information portal was further developed and is part of the Statistical Information System (SIS), version 2.0. The new system includes the first harmonised statistical data sets documented by metadata which are the backbone of SIS 2.0. The metadata describe the datasets in a structured way and can be accessed in full using the search function of the SIS portal, which has an interface to the interoperability platform I14Y. The interoperability platform has become the central directory of data, electronic interfaces and government services of Switzerland's public administration offices. The platform now makes it possible to find data and shows how data can be obtained. Based on this development, the SIS portal will continue to evolve and be expanded with new functionalities.



## **Data Protection and Disclosure Control**

Methodological aspects and recommendations for standards have been developed to provide a data protection and disclosure control framework which is essential for ethical, legal, good practice, trust and image reasons. This control framework was accepted as part of the work carried out by the Data Science Competence Centre (DSSM) division within the framework of the "Privacy Preserving Data Science" domain.

## **Career planning**

The FSO has started career planning activities by first defining role profiles for statisticians. These role profiles were also benchmarked with similar profiles in different federal government units. A function grid is being reviewed and will be adapted to new needs and roles by the end of 2023. Career paths and succession management were considered together for strategic resource planning.

## **Stakeholder management**

Systematic stakeholder management has been implemented, including the creation of a list of appearances of the members of the management board, an analysis of the stakeholders and the establishment of a list of priority stakeholders. The management also allows for more intensive cooperation with the Fedestat and Regiostat committees, including a new high-level annual management meeting and a roadshow to meet the representatives of the cantons.

## **Dissemination**

Following a situation analysis and a reorganisation of its Communication & Publishing Division, the FSO introduced a weekly Newsroom in August 2022, which brings together specialists from the business and communication divisions, not only to review future production, but also to listen to the demands of the public, the media, etc. This "seismograph of society" ensures that the FSO's communication on its statistical outputs is constantly optimised and developed.

A centralised call centre is open daily for requests and a skilled media service answers to inquiries from the media. Inquiries from the public or the media are also received through social media platforms. Mini-call centres have also been set up at the statistical production units. The intention is to use the synergies between these different services to swiftly alert the FSO on critical subjects and to promote more knowledge sharing within the services on how to best respond to certain topics.

Re-dissemination was made possible and facilitated on a large scale with the digital asset management system established in 2016 which, separate from the actual website for statistics, enables all the information articles of the FSO and its partners to be disseminated and displayed worldwide and at any time via web services. A sophisticated versioning system also enables the display of language versions and historical documents.

Experimental statistics have been produced using new methods and/or new data sources. This is in line with the FSO's data innovation strategy and the Confederation's multi-annual programme for federal statistics. Publication of experimental statistics was subject to strict control criteria to avoid the caveats with piloting new methods and products. Experimental statistics are now accessible to the public via a dedicated webpage.

## **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**

#### **The Charter of Swiss Official Statistics and the Ethics Council**

The peer review team took note of the significant role that the Charter of Swiss Official Statistics (hereinafter called the Charter) plays in the Swiss statistical system, specifically for the FSO, the ONAs and the Ethics Council for Official Statistics (hereinafter called the Ethics Council).

The Charter complements the legal framework that governs the statistical authorities and is based on a set of basic principles and indicators, similar to the ES CoP. The Charter fosters cooperation among the statistical authorities, as it sets out common objectives to be pursued and complied with, thus providing an effective coordination tool for the FSO. The basic principles are binding for the entities which agree to comply with the Charter. Principles are further elaborated and specified in indicators. On the one hand, the indicators provide the statistical authorities with assistance in monitoring the degree to which they are applying the principles and, on the other hand, the indicators support national peer reviews. The peer review team shares the view of the FSO, the reviewed ONAs and other governance bodies that the Charter plays a crucial role in the Swiss Statistical System. The peer review team also supports the plan to enhance the Charter to, among other objectives, better align it to the ES CoP.

The Ethics Council is a useful resource and one of the strengths of the Swiss statistical system as it promotes and monitors adherence to the Charter of Swiss Official Statistics and also provides recommendations for improvements. The Council can also act as a mediator, if needed.

#### **High Credibility of Statistics**

The peer review team noted that the FSO and the ONAs have high credibility in Swiss society at large. The FSO is perceived as a trustworthy organisation, as are the reviewed ONAs. All external stakeholders agreed about the central and crucial role the FSO plays in the country, and at different regional levels.

Although the Swiss statistical system has an intricate structure, it was evident that there are good relations between the FSO and the various governance bodies. At the top level is the Federal Statistics Committee, which acknowledges the professional independence and autonomy of the FSO and strives to support its production of official statistics of good quality as well as the use of innovative practices.

Staff also have a high level of skills and competencies, especially the methodologists' group. The good level of knowledge and understanding of the principle of confidentiality, along with the related procedures and practices regarding data protection, was also noted.

#### **Data Management and Data Science – New Assignments**

The National Data Management for public administration and the Data Science Competence Centre, making use of machine learning techniques and artificial intelligence (AI), comprise the most recent tasks allocated to the FSO by the Swiss government, motivated by the implementation of the “once

only” principle. Therefore, together with its responsibility for the production of official statistics, the FSO has added three tasks to its current strategy (statistics production, national data management and data science competence centre). The fact that the FSO has been entrusted with these new and challenging assignments is a clear strength and provides evidence of its high credibility.

The peer review team noticed that certain strengths identified for the FSO support it in the implementation of the two new tasks within its strategy, i.e., the tasks related to Data Management and Data Science. Firstly, the FSO’s “metadata driven approach”, which will benefit its first task, the production of official statistics. Secondly, the establishment of the new Committee on data management interoperability in 2023, an example of a good internal governance structure, to support the FSO in its task related to data management. This Committee will also ensure an integrated approach of the FSO. Thirdly, the FSO is building a real community of official statistics within the Swiss statistical system, promoting joint work with the motivation to ensure that the intricacy of the Swiss statistical system will not be an impediment to modernisation, standardisation and automation.

The FSO's new tasks are also expected to have a positive impact on the ONAs and there is an openness to maintain dialogue and interact within the Swiss statistical system to gain more efficiency and effectiveness.

### **Quality Management and Revision Policy**

There is a high awareness of quality management and quality assurance issues at the FSO’s various management levels and among its staff, as well as in the reviewed ONAs.

The FSO’s Revision Policy is a resource document with a clear user focus. In the context of routine revisions, it communicates the FSO’s awareness that a balance needs to be struck with users between the information gain, on the one hand, and the burden of having to repeat an analysis on the other hand. The policy includes four guiding principles for revisions which are helpful to the FSO and users alike and are also in line with the standards for European Statistics. A revisions calendar is also produced on the FSO website.

### **Communication and Dissemination**

The FSO’s Fact Sheets are considered a good approach, providing users with an easily accessible summary of the basic information concerning each statistics, for example, a short description of the survey and the methodology used, its specific pre-release practice, its revision policy and its legal basis.

In 2022, the FSO introduced a weekly Newsroom which brings together specialists from the Business Statistics Division and the Communication and Dissemination Division to review future production and also to listen to the demands of the public and the media. This is seen as a "seismograph of society" and ensures that FSO's communication is constantly optimised and developed, often in response to crises or other unforeseen events. The peer review team experienced the Newsroom in practice, as a large banking incident arose during the peer review visit. In less than 24 hours, a totally new web page was created on the FSO website, with contextual information and relevant statistics regarding the banking sector.

The peer review team was impressed to see the amount of information on the website, which is translated in up to five languages – German, French, Italian, Romansh as well as English – the first four being the national languages of Switzerland. This benefits the accessibility of the statistics but it also takes up the FSO's time and resources.

## **The ONAs and the Swiss statistical system**

The peer review team noted the intricacy of the Swiss statistical system's organisation and that it poses challenges to the functioning of the system but also the FSO's coordination function. However, the team also noted that all the reviewed ONAs seemed to understand the ES CoP and are highly committed to the implementation of its principles and indicators. During the discussions it became clear that the ONAs make a distinction between their administrative role and their responsibility for official statistics, which is crucial to guarantee the principles of professional independence as well as impartiality and objectivity.

The three reviewed ONAs have a very good relationship with the FSO and acknowledge the FSO's role as the national coordinator of the Swiss statistical system, which is enshrined in law. The ONAs demonstrated a good awareness of the Swiss statistical system and its functionality. They also have very good relations with other entities within the system. The peer review team also noted their involvement within their statistical domains in European and International cooperation initiatives. The ONAs also seem well equipped with resources, capabilities and skills required to produce their statistics.

The peer review team found very clear technical documentation about the activities and output of the ONAs on their websites. The FOCBS has a quality policy, the FFA has produced a quality assurance policy and the SECO has a very good revision policy. These examples constitute very good practices and could be used as a benchmark for others in the Swiss statistical system.

All of the reviewed ONAs have a high awareness of quality issues within their activities and are very open to introducing innovative methods that may lead to more standardisation, automation and efficiency.

### **Innovative Practices**

The FSO has developed several practices of a particularly innovative nature for the development, production and dissemination of official statistics, in response to growing user needs. These include the following:

The interoperability platform (I14Y) provides a single repository for information about public sector data assets in a harmonised way. It is fully integrated with other metadata platforms and allows machine-to-machine interoperability with metadata systems. It will enable documentation of government data assets and harness their potential for their use in the production of official statistics by fostering further data harmonisation and facilitating data integration.

The Data Science Competence Centre (DSCC) provides advice, training, services and project support to help deploy AI-based solutions in support of public sector bodies including for official statistics. Its aim is to accelerate the take up of data science technologies to produce official statistics by cooperation with domain-specific teams on the development of statistical information. Through the DSCC, the FSO has also started several projects to harness new data sources, from scanner data for price statistics to geospatial data for land use and land cover statistics. The results of these innovation projects are published as experimental statistics and envisage collaboration with research organisations.

The establishment of a comprehensive framework for the development and dissemination of experimental statistics and their transition to official statistics provides a decision-oriented process based on a set of established criteria to assess whether results from experimental projects are fit for publication as experimental statistics on the dedicated section of the FSO website. The framework also includes additional principles, supported by a checklist, to help decide whether experimental statistics are sufficiently mature for dissemination as official statistics.

## 5.2 ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.2.1 Enhancing quality management and tools

The FSO has demonstrated its ability and capacity to document the quality of its statistics using the European Standard, the Single Integrated Metadata Structure (SIMS). Another useful documentation form at the FSO that is readily accessible and convenient for users are the Fact Sheets that accompany each statistic on the website.

However, more qualified users need more detailed and in-depth methodological documentation, which is only available for some of the statistics produced by the FSO. The peer review team noted that there is a plan to compile a shorter version of the methodological documentation aimed at products lacking this form of documentation, to speed up the process for full coverage of all statistical domains. The peer review team supports this effort but recommends the FSO devise a plan for a fuller version of the methodological documentation to be in place in the near future.

In addition, the peer review team sees advantages for user accessibility and clarity if the SIMS reports were made available in the FSO's central metadata system (SIS).

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

**R1. The Federal Statistical Office should strengthen its documentation on methodology and quality to cover more statistical domains and include the Single Integrated Metadata Structure Reports in the Metadata system (Statistical Information System) to facilitate the intended use of statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 6.4 and 15.1)**

The FSO's Quality Assurance Handbook provides important guidance regarding statistical standards and methods, mainly for traditional surveys. It is also a vital part of the Quality Management System at the FSO. In addition, the Quality Assurance Handbook is also available to the ONAs which can obtain guidance for the quality assurance of their statistical production. However, in light of the current situation with more administrative data and other non-survey data becoming available, the Quality Assurance Handbook could be made more relevant if it were updated to include guidelines for working with and ensuring the quality of these types of data. Another reason for updating is the fact that many of the ONAs rely quite intensively on administrative data. This limits a broader use of the Quality Assurance Handbook by the ONAs.

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

**R2. The Federal Statistical Office should update the Quality Assurance Handbook to include more recommendations on administrative data and other non-survey data, with the aim of better guiding the official statistics producers in the Swiss statistical system. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1bis.2, 4.2 and 8.1)**

The FSO's Quality, Process and Risk Management Policy and Handbook (available on its website), describe the processes and principles related to quality, processes and risk management. The very comprehensive documentation has been enhanced over the years and relies on good practices of quality management and processes. However, in practice there is still no real linkage with risk management, as originally foreseen. The peer review team is of the opinion that this would be a very good way forward to enhance the general quality management framework, with possible extension and applicability to ONAs.

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

**R3. The Federal Statistical Office should integrate the three areas – Quality, Processes and Risk Management - as indicated in the Federal Statistical Office's Quality, Process and Risk Management Policy and Handbook. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 4.2)**

The FSO has an annual Quality, Processes and Risk programme that specifies which statistical processes undergo a quality review. These quality reviews help to identify potential improvements and lead to an action plan for these. There is also a monitoring process headed by the Quality and Processes Unit to ensure a follow-up of the action plans. Once a year, the status of the current improvement actions is presented to the FSO's top management. The Quality and Processes Unit performs about five quality reviews annually.

The peer review team found that the FSO has a potentially good approach to quality reviews, with an extensive self-assessment template that the responsible statistical process owner completes with a focus on the process' strengths and weaknesses. However, the quality reviews need to be further enhanced and more systematically implemented. The team also recommends that this approach be extended to cover ONA activities in order to foster continuous quality improvements. The benefit of the quality reviews could also be further enhanced if the ONAs themselves were involved in the process.

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

**R4. The Federal Statistical Office should systematically implement its programme of quality reviews to include the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics in participation in the reviews and their facilitation. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1bis.2, 4.3 and 4.4)**

## **5.2.2 Strengthening process standardisation, automation and innovation**

The FSO has been working on a new statistical production system based on the Generic Statistics Business Process Model (GSBPM) since 2020. The new system aims at the full automation and harmonisation of work processes, and is designed to be metadata driven. Once fully implemented, it will generate important quality improvements and efficiency gains. It will also support statistical product portfolio development through data integration and the use of modern statistical methods. The technical platform is advanced and its implementation in statistical domains is progressing. Completing the transition to the new statistical production platform is key to fully harness FSO data. The new production platform will do this through integration and will also provide cost efficiency, while reducing the risk of errors from non-automated processing.

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

**R5. The Federal Statistics Office should implement the new statistical production platform across statistical domains and consider the re-use of the platform's components in the wider context of the Swiss statistical system. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 10.4 and 8.4)**

In the context of the new public sector data management function assigned to the FSO, a metadata catalogue and an interoperability portal (I14YP) have been developed and are supported by dedicated resources, as established by the government. The new platform aims to document relevant information regarding public data assets and their quality, supporting their reuse in line with the “once only” principle. The initiative is supported by a dedicated governance structure facilitating collaboration among different public administrations which are data owners. While progress has been made, not all datasets are as yet included in the catalogue and important information on quality is still missing. The completion of the metadata catalogue platform will critically benefit from further efforts in metadata harmonisation and quality assessment.

At the same time, the data management project will also increase the ability of the FSO (and the Swiss statistical system) to fully harness administrative data for statistical production. The metadata catalogue platform is planned to be completed by 2026, in line with available dedicated funding assigned to the FSO.

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

**R6. The Federal Statistical Office should enhance metadata harmonisation to support quality improvements in administrative data used for statistical production. The Federal Statistical Office should continue working with key stakeholders under the current governance of data management networks, in order to complete metadata harmonisation in a cooperative way (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 8.4, 9.5 and 10.4)**

The new Data Science Competence Centre (DSCC) established in 2021 aims to provide technical competencies and support services to government bodies to promote the use of artificial intelligence. The DSCC also supports the use of data science methods in statistics in the FSO and in the Swiss statistical system. It has so far led to the implementation of experimental statistics projects in areas such as the use of images for land use and land cover statistics, and scanner data for price statistics. The use of AI supported by the DSCC could further accelerate the use of digital data sources for the production of statistical indicators and increase the ability to respond rapidly to user needs, including during crises and emergencies. In particular, regular and sustainable access to privately held data is critical for the development and implementation of data science for statistics, and cooperation with data holders is necessary to ensure good data and metadata quality.

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

**R7. *The Federal Statistical Office should accelerate the cooperation with private data holders with the aim of exploring new data sources for statistical production purposes, making use of modern technology for data processing and data science methodologies for the dissemination of experimental statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 2.4, 8.6 and 8.7)***

### **5.2.3 Strengthening the coordination function within the NSS**

The Swiss statistical system is quite intricate and comprises actors at different levels. The FSO has a clear coordination mandate with the help of two coordination committees – Fedestat and Regiostat. However, based on an agreement between the FSO and the Conference of Regional Statistical Offices (CORSTAT), the general guidelines for quality in statistics have been entrusted to the Ethics Council,

which has also developed the Charter of Swiss Official Statistics (adopted in 2012). The peer review team was informed that a decision has been taken to update the Charter, which the peer review team welcomes. There is a clear need to modernise this important document for different types of organisations to find it relevant and up-to-date, resulting in a broader acceptance of the Charter within the Swiss statistical system. Moreover, as the Swiss statistical system promotes adherence to both the Charter and the ES CoP, it would be an advantage to harmonise the principles of the Charter that are similar to the content and purpose of the ES CoP, to avoid confusion and misunderstandings.

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

**R8. The relevant authorities should revise and strengthen the Charter of Swiss Official Statistics, as a complement to the legal framework for official statistics in the Swiss statistical system, with the aim of developing a document that is applicable for all types of organisations in the Swiss statistical system and maximises coherence with the ES CoP. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1.1, 1bis.2 and 4.1)**

In the meetings with the FSO and the reviewed Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics, it became clear that the practice of privileged pre-release access and embargo is interpreted in different ways. Both the FSO and the reviewed Other National Authorities demonstrate transparency in the communication on their websites regarding interactions with users. However, the opinion of the peer review team is that some of the exchanges that occur between different parties relate to specific stages of the production process, for example, concerning data processing before the final statistics/data are disseminated and are therefore not to be regarded as privileged pre-release access.

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

**R9. The Federal Statistical Office, together with all Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics, should establish standard practices for privileged pre-release access and distinguish this type of access from data sharing, whose purpose is to assure quality in the production of statistics before dissemination. The external communication of any pre-release should be uniform within the Swiss statistical system. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 6.7 and 1bis.1)**

The FSO and the reviewed ONAs agreed that the FSO is carrying out its coordination role well and has good relations with the ONAs and the Swiss statistical system as a whole. In this respect, the statistical expert groups have an important role as they study the statistical processes in depth. However, during the discussions with the ONAs it became obvious that even more support should be provided, especially when it comes to innovations in statistical and other methodology, standardisation and the reuse of statistical services.

For example, the FSO has specific competencies including long experience within areas such as sampling, registers, analysis, metadata management and data science that could be made available to and shared with ONAs to deepen their knowledge and understanding for the production of official statistics and to continuously improve.

There is also a clear need for the FSO to take the lead regarding decisions on standards, i.e., on certain common concepts, methodologies and nomenclatures shared by producers of official statistics. In addition, there is a need and also the scope for the FSO to enhance its coordination.

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



**R10. The Federal Statistical Office should strengthen its support to the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics with a focus on methodological services and establishing standards and definitions, in order to raise the quality of statistics in the Swiss statistical system. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1bis.2, 1bis.1 and 7.2)**

#### **5.2.4 Further improving accessibility and communication of official statistics**

The FSO has published a Revision Policy which, among other things, advocates the practice of doing revision analyses. This is in line with the ES CoP and the European Statistical System (ESS) Handbook for Quality and Metadata Reports — 2021 edition. Revision analysis is relevant and important for several kinds of planned revisions: benchmark revisions, revisions that arise from a change in methodology or classifications, and revisions relating to statistics that are routinely published first with an early, preliminary estimate which is later revised.

The peer review team saw examples of revision analyses done by the FSO for the first two categories, but there was little or no evidence of any analysis regarding the latter category concerning routine revisions. The peer review team did however see some very good and comprehensive work done by The State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) regarding Quarterly National Accounts.

This type of revision analysis is an important quality assurance activity providing knowledge and understanding for users and producers alike, regarding the quality of preliminary data compared with final data. It also gives users an indication, at the time of publication of the preliminary statistics, of what they can reasonably expect regarding the later revisions of the estimates. The peer review team is of the view that this area should be strengthened within the Swiss statistical system by way of a common revision policy coordinated by the FSO. Practices for performing this type of analysis should also be developed and shared within the Swiss statistical system. The State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) can be a resource for the FSO in this respect.

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

**R11. The Federal Statistical Office, together with all Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics, should devise a common revision policy which comprises revision analysis, particularly for planned revisions including those made on a routine basis. The practice of performing revisions analyses for routine revisions should be strengthened. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 12.3 and 8.5)**

The peer review team witnessed the very good relationship that exists between the FSO and the scientific community. The FSO has a clear understanding of the need for access to microdata by the scientific community while the scientific community respects the legal provisions in this regard. The handling and provision of anonymised individual data are statutorily regulated. In order to simplify access to the individual data from the FSO's surveys for members of the scientific and research community, the FSO has worked closely with the Swiss foundation for research in social sciences (FORS).

Due to the regulation of personal data, data for researchers are provided for a limited period of five years and for the specific purpose of an individual project. Data protection agreements must be replaced with new agreements on the expiry of the fixed period, after which the data must be returned to the FSO or destroyed. In technical and operational terms, it is easier for both parties if the FSO provides the personal data to researchers on data storage devices or via Secure FTP. The researchers can then, in compliance with confidentiality principles and with the provisions of the data protection agreement, install and evaluate the data using their own systems and programmes. However, remote

access is also envisaged in order to facilitate accessibility and an alternative way to have access to these data.

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

**R12. The Federal Statistical Office should prioritise the provision of remote access to microdata for scientific purposes while safeguarding confidentiality and data protection. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 5.6 and 15.4)**

The reviewed ONAs are responsible for both statistical and administrative activities, which are clearly separated from each other. However, the presentation of the official statistics for which the ONAs are responsible on their respective web pages should be more clearly delineated from their other, more administrative activities.

Furthermore, it is not very clear to the users of these web pages that the statistics are produced within the Swiss statistical system. The Charter for Swiss Official Statistics, the links to the FSO, the multi-annual statistical work programme and references to documents governing Swiss official statistics should be more easily accessible. Links to the FSO website from the ONAs' websites should be provided, which could potentially raise awareness of official statistics within the community of statistical authorities, key users and the general public. Official statistics should be easily accessible and recognised within the context they are produced.

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

**R13. The reviewed Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics (the Federal Finance Administration, the Federal Office for Customs and Border Security and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs) should clearly indicate on their dedicated official statistics web pages that their organisation belongs to the Swiss statistical system. Relevant documentation on the Swiss statistical system regarding official statistics should be clearly visible on these pages. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1.6, 1bis.1 and 1bis.2)**

## 5.2.5 Ensuring sustainability of resources

The FSO funding model has been working effectively over time to ensure adequate financial resources for the operation of statistical production processes and to provide resources for investment in innovation. With the adoption of the FSO's new tasks (in the areas of data management, open data dissemination and data science), the sustainability of this financial framework should be re-assessed to identify potential challenges to be addressed. This should ensure the long-term sustainability of the FSO's activities, taking its new role into account.

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

**R14. The Federal Statistical Office should develop a sustainable funding framework that can provide adequate resources for the Federal Statistical Office's new responsibilities and engage with the relevant governance bodies to secure such resources. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 3.1 and 3.2)**

The FSO has a competent and dynamic workforce, which has supported its operations well in the past years and contributed to high-quality statistical products and users' strong trust in statistics produced by the FSO. Based on the human resource policies in place, the FSO has been able to attract talent with adequate skills to carry out statistical tasks and to support investment in innovative projects. This

has been helped by close cooperation with the scientific community on concrete projects. However, an adequate level of staff and composition of skills will be needed to support the modernisation of statistical production in line with the FSO's strategic goals and to further strengthen its capacity, including with the methodological sector, to implement the new tasks assigned to the FSO in the areas of data management and data science.

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

**R15. The Federal Statistical Office should assess the need for future human resources and competencies, identify potential gaps and implement appropriate actions to address these gaps, particularly in the area of methodology. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 3.1 and 7.5)**

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

None

## ANNEX A – AGENDA OF THE VISIT

Timing	Topic	Participants
<b>Day 1 – 20 March 2023</b>		
09:00 - 09:45	<b>Preparatory Meeting with the National Coordination team</b>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>Federal Statistical Office (FSO):</b> Georges-Simon Ulrich, Director General Markus Schwyn, Deputy Director General Petra Keller Guéguen, Head of Division STAB Markus Baumann, Peer Review National Coordinator, Head of Section Quality and Processes Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p>
09:45 – 10:00	<b>Welcome and introduction to the programme, adopting the agenda and organisational matters</b>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b> Georges-Simon Ulrich, Director General Markus Schwyn, Deputy Director General, Head of Division Population and Education Livio Lugano, Director, Head of Division Economy Marco D’Angelo, Director, Head of Division Health and Social Affairs Marc Gindraux, Director, Head of Division Territory and Environment Manuela Lenk, Director, Head of Division Interoperability and Registers Bertrand Loison, Director, Head of Division Data Science, AI and Statistical Methods Urs Frei, Head of Division Communication, Publishing Petra Keller Guéguens, Head of Staff Division Patrick Grossen, Head of Division Resources Jean-Pierre Renfer, Head of Section Statistical Methods Eric Buser, Head of Section Finance and Controlling Nedim Muratbegovic, Head of Section Information Technology Benjamin Rothen, Head of Section International and National Affairs Anne Balzli Pysi, Head of Section Legal Service Sebastian Jaquiéry, Head of Section Strategy and Political Affairs Thomas Schulz, Head of Section Publishing and Dissemination Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p>

10:00 – 11:00	<b>Presentation of the National Statistical System</b>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b> Georges-Simon Ulrich, Director General Markus Schwyn, Deputy Director General, Head of Division Population and Education Livio Lugano, Director, Head of Division Economy Marco D’Angelo, Director, Head of Division Health and Social Affairs Marc Gindraux, Director, Head of Division Territory and Environment Manuela Lenk, Director, Head of Division Interoperability and Registers Bertrand Loison, Director, Head of Division Data Science, AI and Statistical Methods Urs Frei, Head of Division Communication, Publishing Petra Keller Guégens, Head of Staff Division Patrick Grossen, Head of Division Resources Jean-Pierre Renfer, Head of Section Statistical Methods Eric Buser, Head of Section Finance and Controlling Nedim Muratbegovic, Head of Section Information Technology Benjamin Rothen Head of Section International and National Affairs Anne Balzli Prysi, Head of Section Legal Service Sebastian Jaquiéry, Head of Section Strategy and Political Affairs Thomas, Schulz, Head of Section Publishing and Dissemination Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p>
11:00 – 11:15	Coffee break	
11:15 – 12:45	<b>Coordination and cooperation</b>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b> Petra Keller Guégens, Head of Staff Division Markus Schwyn, Deputy Director General Marc Gindraux, Director, Head of Division Territory and Environment Manuela Lenk, Director, Head of Division Interoperability and Registers Benjamin Rothen, Head of Section International and National Affairs Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review</p>

		Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk
12:45-13:45	Lunch	
13:45– 15:15	<b>Professional independence and the Law on Official Statistics and related legislation</b>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b> Petra Keller Guéguen, Head of Staff Division Markus Schwyn, Deputy Director General Urs Frei, Head of Division Communication, Publishing Manuela Lenk, Director, Head of Division Interoperability and Registers Anne Balzli Prysi, Head of Section Legal Service Sebastian Jaquiéry, Head of Section Strategy and Political Affairs Thomas Schulz, Head of Section Publishing and Dissemination Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p>
15:15 – 15:30	Coffee break	
15:30 – 17:00	<b>Programming, planning and resources</b>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b> Petra Keller Guéguen, Head of Staff Division Markus Schwyn, Deputy Director General Marc Gindraux, Director, Head of Division Territory and Environment Patrick Grossen, Head of Division Resources Manuela Lenk, Director, Head of Division Interoperability and Registers Livio Lugano, Director, Head of Division Economy Eric Buser, Head of Section Finance and Controlling Sebastian Jaquiéry, Head of Section Strategy and Political Affairs Jean-Pierre Renfer, Head of Section Statistical Methods Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p>
17:00 – 17:30	<b>Meeting with the Federal Statistical Committee</b>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b> Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p>

		<b>Federal Statistical Committee:</b> Nadja Braun-Binder, Chair of the Federal Statistical Committee - Professor of the University of Basel
17:30 – 18:30	Peer review expert team discussion	
<b>Timing</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Participants</b>
<b>Day 2 – 21 March 2023</b>		
09:00 – 10:15	<b>Quality Management System</b>	<b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All  <b>FSO:</b> Markus Schwyn, Deputy Director General Petra Keller Guéguen, Head of Staff Division Urs Frei, Head of Division Communication, Publishing Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review Jean-Pierre Renfer, Head of Section Statistical Methods Thomas Schulz, Head of Section Publishing and Dissemination Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk
10:15 – 10:30	Coffee break	
10:30 – 12:00	<b>Dissemination and confidentiality</b>	<b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All  <b>FSO:</b> Urs Frei, Head of Division Communication, Publishing Marco D'Angelo, Director, Head of Division Health and Social Affairs Petra Keller Guéguen, Head of Staff Division Livio Lugano, Director, Head of Division Economy Anne Balzli Pysi, Head of Section Legal Service Jean-Pierre Renfer, Head of Section Statistical Methods Thomas Schulz, Head of Section Publishing and Dissemination Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch	
13:00 – 14:45	<b>Methodology, data collection, data processing and administrative data</b>	<b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All  <b>FSO:</b>



		<p>Manuela Lenz, Director, Head of Division Interoperability and Registers</p> <p>Bertrand Loison, Director, Head of Division Data Science, AI and Statistical Methods</p> <p>Jean-Pierre Renfer, Head of Section Statistical Methods</p> <p>Anne Balzli Pysi, Head of Section Legal Service</p> <p>Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review</p> <p>Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p>
14:45 – 15:45	<b>Progress and plans for the future</b>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b> Georges-Simon Ulrich, Director General Markus Schwyn, Deputy Director General, Head of Division Population and Education Marco D’Angelo, Director, Head of Division Health and Social Affairs Urs Frei, Head of Division Communication, Publishing Marc Gindraux, Director, Head of Division Territory and Environment Patrick Gossen, Head of Division Resources Petra Keller Guéguen, Head of Staff Division Manuela Lenk, Director, Head of Division Interoperability and Registers Bertrand Loison, Director, Head of Division Data Science, AI and Statistical Methods Livio Lugano, Director, Head of Division Economy Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p>
15:45 – 16:00	Coffee break	
16:00 – 17:00	<b>Meeting with junior staff</b>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b> Junior Staff: Jenny Yin Audries Rochat Djalel Meskaldji Dominique Oehrli Michèle Gillard Virginie Debons Ludivine Stofer Fabian Schrey</p>
17:00 – 18:00	Peer review expert team discussion	

Timing	Topic	Participants
<b>Day 3 – 22 March 2023</b>		
09:00 – 09:30	<b>Opening meeting with all Other National Authorities (ONAs) selected for the Peer Review</b>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b> Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p> <p><b>Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (FOCBS):</b> Jean-Claude Wagnon, Head of Division Data Services Sébastien Dupré, Head of Section Statistical Information</p> <p><b>Federal Finance Administration (FFA):</b> Florian Chatagny, Head of Section Financial Statistics</p> <p><b>State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO):</b> Felicitas Kemeny, Head of Section Short Term Economic Analysis Philipp Wegmüller, Deputy Head of Section Short Term Economic Analysis</p>
09:30 – 11:00	<b>Meeting with ONA Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (FOCBS)</b>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b> Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p> <p><b>Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (FOCBS):</b> Jean-Claude Wagnon, Head of Division Data Services Sébastien Dupré, Head of Section Statistical Information</p>
11:00 – 11:15	Coffee break	
11:15 – 12:45	<b>Meeting with ONA Federal Finance Administration (FFA)</b>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b> Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p>

		<b>Federal Finance Administration (FFA):</b> Florian Chatagny, Head of Section Financial Statistics
12:45 – 13:45	Lunch	
13:45 – 15:15	<b>Meeting with ONA State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)</b>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b> Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p> <p><b>State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO):</b> Felicitas Kemeny, Head of Section Short Term Economic Analysis Philipp Wegmüller, Deputy Head of Section Short Term Economic Analysis</p>
15:15 – 15:30	Coffee break	
15:30 – 16:45	<b>Meeting with the Ethics Council</b>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b> Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p> <p><b>Ethics Council:</b> Peter Lauber, Chair of the Ethics Council Mr. Jean-Pierre Renfer, Vice-Chair of the Ethics Council (FSO) Other members of the Ethics Council: Alexandre Oettli, Statistics Vaud Martina Tresch, Statistics Schwyz Markus Wüest, Federal Office for the Environment</p>
16:45 – 17:45	Peer review expert team discussion	
<b>Timing</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Participants</b>
<b>Day 4 – 23 March 2023</b>		
09:00 – 09:30	<b>Closing meeting with all Other National Authorities (ONAs) selected for the Peer Review</b>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b> Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p>

		<p><b>Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (FOCBS):</b> Jean-Claude Wagnon, Head of Division Data Services Sébastien Dupré, Head of Section Statistical Information</p> <p><b>Federal Finance Administration (FFA):</b> Florian Chatagny, Head of Section Financial Statistics</p> <p><b>State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO):</b> Felicitas Kemeny, Head of Section Short Term Economic Analysis Philipp Wegmüller, Deputy Head of Section Short Term Economic Analysis</p>
09:30 -11:00	<b>Meeting with main data providers</b>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b> Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p> <p><b>Main data providers:</b> <b>Association of the Small and Medium Enterprises:</b> Hènriques Schneider, Deputy Director</p> <p><b>Central Compensation Office:</b> Stéphane Bossel, Head of Division, Finances und central register Pierre-Antoine Rey, Head of Section Statistics and Central Registers</p> <p><b>Swiss National Bank:</b> Matthias Lutz, Deputy Director, Head Forecasts and Analysis</p> <p><b>Economiesuisse:</b> Roger Wehrli, Deputy Head Economy &amp; Education</p> <p><b>Swiss Employers' Association:</b> Simon Wey, Chief Economist</p>
11:00 – 11:15	Coffee break	
11:15 - 12:00	<b>Meeting with providers of new data sources</b>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b> Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p>

		<p><b>Providers of new data sources:</b>  <b>Migros-Genossenschafts-Bund:</b>  Lionel Galley, Customer &amp; Market Intelligence Expert</p>
12:00 - 13:00	<p><b>Meeting with main users - Media</b></p>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b>  All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b>  Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review  Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p> <p><b>Media:</b>  <b>SRF - Swiss Radio and Television:</b>  Jonas Glatthard, Journalist</p> <p><b>Tamedia:</b>  Titus Plattner, Data Journalist</p>
13.00 - 14.00	Lunch	
14.00 - 15:00	<p><b>Meeting with Ministries and public/private institutions</b></p>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b>  All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b>  Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review  Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p> <p><b>Ministries and public/private institutions:</b>  <b>Statistics Basel City:</b>  Madeleine Imhof, Head Statistical Office</p> <p><b>State Secretariat for Economic Affairs:</b>  Stefan Leist, Head of Section Labour Market Analysis and Social Policy</p> <p><b>Swiss National Bank:</b>  Guido Boller, Director Statistics</p>
15.00 – 16:00	<p><b>Meeting with business associations, trade unions and committee of users</b></p>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b>  All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b>  Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review  Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p>

		<p><b>Business associations, trade unions and committee of users:</b>  <b>Economiesuisse:</b>  Roger Wehrli, Deputy Head Economy &amp; Education</p> <p><b>Swiss Employers' Association:</b>  Simon Wey, Chief Economist</p>
16:00 - 16:15	Coffee break	
16:15 - 17:15	<p><b>Meeting with scientific community</b></p>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b>  All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b>  Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review  Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p> <p><b>Scientific community:</b>  <b>University of Neuchatel:</b>  Yves Tillé, Professor</p> <p><b>University of Geneva:</b>  Diego Kuonen, Professor</p> <p><b>University of Berne:</b>  Stefan Wolter, Professor</p> <p><b>Winterthur Institute of Health Economics, School for Management and Law of Zurich:</b>  Michael Stuck, PhD Student</p> <p><b>KOF Swiss Economic Institute at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich:</b>  Yngve Abrahamsen, Professor</p> <p><b>ETHZ Swiss Federal Institute of Technology:</b>  Lothar Thiele, Professor</p>
17:15 - 18:15	Peer review expert team discussion	
<b>Timing</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Participants</b>
<b>Day 5 – 24 March 2023</b>		
09:00 - 10:30	Peer review expert team discussion	
10:30 - 10:45	Coffee break	
10:45 - 12:45	<p><b>Clarifications, remaining or additional issues and focus areas</b></p>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b>  All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b></p>

		<p>Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review</p> <p>Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p>
12:45 -13:45	Lunch with all FSO management	
14:15-16:15	<p><b>Meeting with FSO senior management - conclusions and recommendations</b></p>	<p><b>The Peer Review Expert Team:</b> All</p> <p><b>FSO:</b>          Georges-Simon Ulrich, Director General          Markus Schwyn, Deputy Director General, Head of Division Population and Education          Urs Frei, Head of Division Communication, Publishing          Marc Gindraux, Director, Head of Division Territory and Environment          Patrick Gossen, Head of Division Resources          Petra Keller Guéguen, Head of Staff Division          Manuela Lenk, Director, Head of Division Interoperability and Registers          Bertrand Loison, Director, Head of Division Data Science, AI and Statistical Methods          Livio Lugano, Director, Head of Division Economy          Markus Baumann, Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review          Rolf Escher, Senior Advisor, Peer Review Desk</p>

## **ANNEX B – LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

### **Federal Statistical Office**

Mr. Georges-Simon Ulrich (Director General)  
Mr. Markus Schwyn (Deputy Director General, Head of Division Population and Education)  
Mr. Livio Lugano (Head of Division Economy)  
Mr. Marco D'Angelo (Head of Division Health and Social Affairs)  
Mr. Marc Gindraux (Head of Division Territory and Environment)  
Ms. Manuela Lenk (Head of Division Interoperability and Registers)  
Mr. Bertrand Loison (Head of Division Data Science, AI and Statistical Methods)  
Mr. Urs Frei (Head of Division Communication, Publishing)  
Ms. Petra Keller Guéguen (Head of Staff Division)  
Mr. Patrick Grossen (Head of Division Resources)  
Mr. Jean-Pierre Renfer (Head of Section Statistical Methods)  
Mr. Eric Buser (Head of Section Finance and Controlling)  
Mr. Nedim Muratbegovic (Head of Section Information Technology)  
Mr. Benjamin Rothen (Head of Section International and National Affairs)  
Ms. Anne Balzli Prysi (Head of Section Legal Service)  
Mr. Sebastian Jaquiéry (Head of Section Strategy and Political Affairs)  
Mr. Thomas Schulz (Head of Section Publishing and Dissemination)  
Mr. Markus Baumann (Head of Section Quality and Processes, National Coordinator of the Swiss peer review)  
Mr. Rolf Escher (Senior Advisor, Peer review Desk)  
Ms. Muriel Meister-Gampert (Scientific collaborator)  
Ms. Jenny Yin (Junior Staff)  
Ms. Audrie Rochat (Junior Staff)  
Mr. Djalel Meskaldji (Junior Staff)  
Ms. Dominique Oehrli (Junior Staff)  
Ms. Michèle Gillard (Junior Staff)  
Ms. Virginie Debons (Junior Staff)  
Ms. Ludivine Stofer (Junior Staff)  
Mr. Fabian Schrey (Junior Staff)

### **Federal Statistical Committee**

Ms. Nadja Braun Binder (University of Basel Professor, Chair of the Federal Statistical Committee)

### **Other National Authorities (ONAs)**

Mr. Jean-Claude Wagnon (Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (FOCBS), Head of Division Data Services)  
Mr. Sébastien Dupré (Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (FOCBS), Head of Section Statistical Information)  
Mr. Florian Chatagny (Federal Finance Administration (FFA), Head of Section Financial Statistics)  
Ms. Felicitas Kemeny (State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), Head of Section Short Term Economic Analysis)  
Mr. Philipp Wegmüller (State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), Deputy Head of Section Short Term Economic Analysis)



## **Ethics Council**

Mr. Peter Laube (Chair)  
Mr. Jean-Pierre Renfer (FSO, Vice-Chair)  
Mr. Alexandre Oettli (Statistics Vaud, Member)  
Ms. Martina Tresch (Statistics Schwyz, Member)  
Mr. Markus Wüest (Federal Office for the Environment, Member)

## **Data Providers and Providers of New Data Sources - Business Associations**

Mr. Roger Wehrli (Economiesuisse, Deputy Head Economy & Education)  
Mr. Simon Wey (Swiss Employers' Association, Chief Economist)  
Mr. Henrique Schneider (Association of the Small and Medium Enterprises, Deputy Director)  
Mr. Stéphane Bossel (Central Compensation Office, Head of Division Finances und central register)  
Mr. Pierre-Antoine Rey (Central Compensation Office, Head of Section Statistics and Central Registers)  
Mr. Matthias Lutz (Swiss National Bank, Deputy Director, Head Forecasts and Analysis)  
Mr. Lionel Galley (Migros-Genossenschafts-Bund, Customer & Market Intelligence Expert)

## **Media**

Mr. Jonas Glatthard (SRF Swiss Radio and Television, journalist)  
Mr. Titus Plattner (Tamedia, journalist)

## **Ministries and Public/Private Institutions**

Ms. Madeleine Imhof (Statistics Basel City, Head Statistical Office)  
Mr. Stefan Leist (State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, Head of Section Labour Market Analysis and Social Policy)  
Mr. Guido Boller (Swiss National Bank, Director Statistics)

## **Scientific Community**

Mr. Yves Tillé (University of Neuchatel, Professor)  
Mr. Diego Kuonen (University of Geneva, Professor)  
Mr. Stefan Wolter (University of Berne, Professor)  
Mr. Michael Stucki (Winterthur Institute of Health Economics, School for Management and Law of Zurich, PhD Student)  
Mr. Yngve Abrahamsen (KOF Swiss Economic Institute at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, Professor)  
Mr. Lothar Thiele (ETHZ Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Professor)