



**IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS
SWEDEN**



**PEER REVIEWERS' RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPROVEMENT
ACTIONS OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM OF
SWEDEN IN RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Recommendation

Swedish appointing authorities are encouraged to strengthen the emphasis on statistical qualifications in the process of selecting the head of Statistics Sweden and statistical heads of the other national authorities developing, producing, and disseminating official statistics. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 1.8)

Current situation:

Statistics Sweden has expressed a diverging view on the recommendation. The ES CoP Indicator 1.8 does not explicitly require the heads of statistical agencies to have statistical qualifications but that the process is transparent and according to professional criteria. In our view, experience of managing large organisations, change management and ensuring relevant competence in the organisation and among upper management (including competence in statistics) are the primary professional criteria to be considered.

Improvement action 1:

Statistics Sweden will inform the government about the recommendation.

Deadline: 2023

Responsible institution for the improvement action: Statistics Sweden

2. Recommendation

Statistics Sweden is encouraged to open a discussion on possible changes related to the process in which the government decides on the statistical areas, with the goal of enhancing the role of Statistics Sweden in the development of new statistical areas and in broadening the user focus. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1.3 and 1.4)

Current situation:

Statistics Sweden has expressed a diverging view on the recommendation. Indicators 1.3 and 1.4 of the ES CoP outline that the heads of statistical authorities should have the responsibility for ensuring that statistics are developed, produced, and disseminated independently, and that they have the sole responsibility for deciding on statistical methods, standards, procedures, and dissemination of statistics. According to the process in Sweden, the government only decides on the subject areas and statistical areas. The responsible statistical authority then has sole responsibility for deciding on the content and scope of the statistics based on user needs. This process guarantees professional independence and user focus, and we have no indication that it lacks independence. Statistics Sweden has a designated responsibility to coordinate the system of official statistics. Within this responsibility, Statistics Sweden, together with the Council for Official Statistics, has suggested a change in the existing structure of the subject and statistical areas to be more consistent and to avoid overlap.

Improvement action 2:

Statistics Sweden will inform the government about the recommendation.

Deadline: 2023

Responsible institution for the improvement action: Statistics Sweden

3. Recommendation

The government and holders of administrative data should keep Statistics Sweden continuously and effectively involved in the design, development, and discontinuation of registers, considering in particular the key importance of register data as the primary source for producing statistics in the Swedish statistical system. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 2.2)

Current situation:

Statistics Sweden is heavily reliant on administrative registers as sources for compiling statistics. The “registers first” policy implies that when new statistics will be developed, relevant administrative sources should be investigated. In general, there is good cooperation with the holders of administrative registers. Statistics Sweden has experienced situations in which administrative registers that are used for producing official statistics have been altered without consulting Statistics Sweden, and situations where initiatives to add variables have not been successful.

Improvement sub-action 3.1:

Statistics Sweden will hold a discussion with the government regarding how Statistics Sweden’s involvement can be strengthened regarding the design, development and discontinuation of registers that are used for statistical production.

Deadline: 2023

Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 3.1: Statistics Sweden

Improvement sub-action 3.2:

Statistics Sweden will implement the changes imposed by a possible new law regarding the design, development and discontinuation of registers that are used for statistical production.

Deadline: 2027

Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 3.2: Statistics Sweden

<p>4. Recommendation Statistics Sweden should ensure that possible statistical confidentiality incidents are specifically identified through regular monitoring reports. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 5.5)</p>
<p>Current situation:</p> <p>The current information security management system is built to encompass all kinds of confidentiality breaches including those in a statistical context. All reported information security incidents are reviewed and compiled in a quarterly report. It is, however, true that statistical confidentiality breaches are not separated from other but similar types of confidentiality breaches, all of which are treated in the same manner in Swedish legislation. However, all reported incidents (including statistical confidentiality breaches) are reviewed by experts to ensure that proper action is taken.</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 4.1:</p> <p>Current policy documents and guidelines will be revised to specify statistical confidentiality and ensure proper action in the incident handling process. These changes will then be included in the obligatory training on information security.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2023</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 4.1: Statistics Sweden</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 4.2:</p> <p>Incidents concerning statistical confidentiality will be identified through the current processes and supporting instruments without further development, but the reviewing expert of each incident will be educated and instructed to pinpoint statistical confidentiality breaches to document them specifically. The documentation of each case will clarify which confidentiality breaches concern statistics and distinguish those from other types of confidentiality breaches in separate reports.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2023</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 4.2: Statistics Sweden</p>

<p>5. Recommendation</p> <p>Statistics Sweden should devise a plan for replacing personal identifiers with statistical identifiers in the production of official statistics, as soon as the data enters the statistical production environment, to minimise possible breaches of confidentiality. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 5.5)</p>
<p>Current situation:</p> <p>During 2019 Statistics Sweden completed a project that addressed these questions. The aim of the project was, among other things, to set an objective regarding what Statistics Sweden can achieve with limited access to personal identifiers and how this can be done. The suggestions from the project are not yet implemented. Since September 2021, Statistics Sweden has a new organisation in place, which gives the department in charge of handling data better possibilities to address these kinds of issues.</p> <p>Furthermore, a project investigating the possibility and demand for a new register on individuals is currently ongoing. This register can possibly contain objects with a wider scope and use than the current register holding information on individuals.</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 5.1:</p> <p>Consider the possibilities and recommendations given in the forthcoming work within this area and consider the suggestions in the original report from 2019.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2026</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 5.1: Statistics Sweden</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 5.2:</p> <p>Implement the outcome of the considerations about statistical identifiers.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2027</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 5.2: Statistics Sweden</p>

<p>6. Recommendation</p> <p>The government should abolish the current possibility of access to microdata for investigative purposes. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 5.1)</p>
<p>Current situation:</p> <p>Following the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act (2009:400), mainly chapter 24, section 8, the main rule when it comes to statistical confidentiality is that secrecy is absolute within the agency's separate activities to produce statistics.</p> <p>However, there are exceptions to the absolute confidentiality of data. For data directly related to a private party or person needed for research or statistical purposes. There is also an exception for data indirectly related to a private party or person. The legislation thus provides a possibility to disclose pseudonymised (indirect) data for purposes other than research or statistics. For this to happen, without risk of damage or harm to the private party or person, the data (according to our interpretation) must benefit from the same strong protection of confidentiality on the side of the recipient.</p> <p>The same level of confidentiality also applies to data in other statistically comparable surveys conducted by the Swedish National Audit Office, by the Riksdag's administration, by the Swedish Agency for Public Management or within the state committee system. The same applies to other comparable surveys conducted by any other agency to the extent that the government issues regulations to that effect.</p> <p>In the case of the Government Offices there is even a special law (the so-called Fasit Act) that regulates the handling of statistical data for this purpose.</p> <p>There are benefits that data can be used for other purposes than statistics and research alone. For this practice to be used, the same strong protection of confidentiality as for statistics and research must be maintained.</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 6.1:</p> <p>Statistics Sweden will inform the government about the recommendation, outlining advantages and disadvantages of the current situation.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2023</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 6.1: Statistics Sweden</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 6.2:</p> <p>Statistics Sweden will arrange a meeting with the relevant authorities to agree on a way forward.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2023</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 6.2: Statistics Sweden</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 6.3:</p> <p>Statistics Sweden will implement the agreed way forward.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2023</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 6.3: Statistics Sweden</p>

<p>7. Recommendation Statistics Sweden should identify possible cases of pre-release access and make sure that these cases are limited, well-justified, controlled, and publicised. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 6.7)</p>
<p>Current situation: Apart from few exceptions, there is no pre-release access to statistics.</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 7.1: Statistics Sweden will produce an overview on current practices in the NSI and ONAs.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2023</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 7.1: Statistics Sweden</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 7.2: Statistics Sweden will initiate a discussion on procedures regarding how to avoid cases of pre-release access that are not limited, well-justified, controlled, and publicised</p>
<p>Deadline: 2024</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 7.2: Statistics Sweden</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 7.3: Implement the new release procedure for the NSS.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2024</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 7.3: Statistics Sweden</p>

<p>8. Recommendation</p> <p>The other national authorities reviewed are encouraged to step up ongoing efforts towards an enhanced overall adherence to the European Statistics Code of Practice, drawing support from Statistics Sweden, if necessary, particularly with regard to transparency to users, quality requirements and reporting, the publication calendar and user consultations. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 11.1, 11.2 and 15.7).</p>
<p>Current situation:</p> <p>The cooperation between the statistical authorities is well developed under Statistic Sweden's coordination role. The cooperation takes place on a strategic level with the Directors General and on other management levels depending on the issue. Most of the statistical authorities participate in the work on a regular basis. To develop the common work on official statistics in Sweden, a strategic plan has been developed with an associated action plan. The plan is developed as a cooperation project between many of the authorities responsible for official statistics. The two other national authorities with responsibilities for European statistics, which are not part of the Swedish System of Official Statistics, will both be included in this work.</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 8.1:</p> <p>Actions to improve the situation according to the recommendation will be included in the strategic plan for official statistics in Sweden.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2023</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 8.1: Statistics Sweden</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 8.2:</p> <p>Arrange workshops regarding the European Statistics Code of Practice for authorities responsible for official statistics and include other authorities responsible only for European statistics.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2023</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 8.2: Statistics Sweden</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 8.3:</p> <p>Implement actions according to the strategic plan for official statistics.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2027</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 8.3: All authorities responsible for official and European statistics</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 8.4:</p> <p>Support and follow up the efforts that statistical authorities, particularly those who participated in the peer review, make regarding their transparency towards users, the formulation of quality requirements, their quality reports, their contribution to the common publication calendar, and their user consultations according to the European Statistics Code of Practice.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2027</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 8.4: Statistics Sweden</p>

9. Recommendation

Statistics Sweden and the government should better define the role of Statistics Sweden in the national data ecosystem; the role of national data steward could be considered. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1bis.1 and 8.7)

Current situation:

The Swedish Agency for Digital Government (DIGG) coordinates and supports digitalisation within the public administration. It is responsible for digital policy development and the common digital infrastructure within the public administration. One of the agency's tasks is to encourage open and data-driven innovation, the re-use of open data, as well as user-driven development of digital information and services within public administration.

Statistics Sweden's aim is to strengthen its role as a data steward within the National Statistical System mainly through the three lines of action, described below.

In January 2022, Statistics Sweden was included in the group of government agencies that are appointed to develop the common digital infrastructure, "Ena", with DIGG as coordinator. This joint assignment enables Statistics Sweden to take a more active role in the national data ecosystem.

Statistics Sweden is also responsible for one of the government assignments linked to the National Data Strategy. It will deliver quality criteria for data and for new statistics on mobility and provide increased access to official statistics from all statistical agencies as open data and with visualisation examples. These are all elements of importance to strengthen Statistics Sweden's role in the national data ecosystem, especially the National Statistical System.

In addition to Ena and the Government assignment, Statistics Sweden's commission service regarding statistical production for other government agencies offers opportunities to strengthen its data stewardship approach within the National Statistical System, for example, by offering extended data capture services for public and private data sources.

Improvement sub-action 9.1:

Develop a proposal to establish a "building block" (joint capability) for official statistics in "Ena", with frameworks, standards, tools etc. This action aims to strengthen official statistics as an important use case for the national digital data infrastructure. The proposal needs to be formally approved by DIGG.

Deadline: 2023

Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 9.1: Statistics Sweden

Improvement sub-action 9.2:

Deliver a report for the government assignment "Data for smart statistics".

Deadline: 2023

Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 9.2: Statistics Sweden

Improvement sub-action 9.3:

Develop a business case for extended commissioned services regarding data capture and processing for other government agencies

Deadline: 2024

Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 9.3: Statistics Sweden

10. Recommendation

Statistics Sweden is encouraged to open a discussion within the Swedish statistical system to determine whether the current division of work is appropriate for all other national authorities, particularly for those with limited resources dedicated to statistics. The discussion should also address the mandate related to official statistics within the other national authorities and, where relevant, the clarification of responsibilities between the head of the other national authority and the actual head(s) of its statistical departments. If necessary, the results of the discussion could be presented to the government. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1.4 and 1bis.1)

Current situation:

Statistics Sweden has expressed a diverging view on this recommendation.

The government decides on the tasks and responsibilities of government agencies. According to Swedish law, the Director General of the relevant agency is responsible for the tasks of that agency to be managed effectively and according to the regulations and the goals for the agency. This comprises all tasks at the agency, including the responsibility for statistics, and compliance with the ES CoP as well as the division of responsibility within the agency. All government agencies are subject to effectiveness audits both from internal auditors, and from the National Audit Office.

Improvement action 10:

Statistics Sweden will inform the government about the recommendation.

Deadline: 2023

Responsible institution for the improvement action 10: Statistics Sweden

<p>11. Recommendation Statistics Sweden should equip itself with capacities to analyse and better understand the quality of administrative data. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 3.1 and 8.1)</p>
<p>Current situation: Statistics Sweden is currently transforming its entire structure, methods, IT-system, and statistical design to meet the demands of modern statistics and accelerating changes in society. Such transformation requires in part new capacities from the present standpoint, since this transformation started a few years ago allowing the organisation to act to meet future needs. The Data department has initiated work on how to develop the cognitive lab's methods for the evaluation of new data sources, including administrative data.</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action: 11.1 Finalise the quality assessment method for administrative sources developed by the Cognitive lab and prepare an implementation plan, which includes skills development.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2024</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 11.1: Statistics Sweden</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 11.2: Evaluate the quality assessment method regarding administrative data based on concrete implementation cases and adjust it to become a generic process at Statistics Sweden.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2026</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 11.2: Statistics Sweden</p>

<p>12. Recommendation</p> <p>Statistics Sweden should consider additional measures to follow up on the information included in the annual self-assessment questionnaires from Statistics Sweden and the other national authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics, in particular to ensure the consistent compliance with the quality requirements throughout the Swedish statistical system. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1bis.2 and 4.2).</p>
<p>Current situation:</p> <p>In the Annual Report for Official Statistics 2021, part 2, Statistics Sweden described the current situation as follows:</p> <p>As in previous years, Statistics Sweden notes serious deficiencies in the statistical agencies' understanding and ability to formulate quality requirements based on the purpose of the statistics. The measures taken by Statistics Sweden in 2021 were insufficient. Thus, the statistical agencies have limited possibilities to reap the benefits of the evaluation to make improvements. The deficiencies also limit Statistics Sweden in its analysis of the results of the evaluations (self-assessment questionnaires).</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 12.1:</p> <p>Statistics Sweden will take the initiative to write joint papers to deepen the understanding of quality requirements</p>
<p>Deadline: 2024</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 12.1: Statistics Sweden</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 12.2:</p> <p>Statistics Sweden will develop a template to support the work in all the statistical agencies to formulate quality requirements according to the purpose of the official statistics.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2024</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 12.2: Statistics Sweden</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 12.3:</p> <p>Statistics Sweden will run a programme to train statisticians in the statistical agencies to understand and to be able to formulate quality requirements according to the purpose of the official statistics for which they are responsible.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2023</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 12.3: Statistics Sweden</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 12.4:</p> <p>Prepare a document to request additional funding from the government for an increased coordination role and discuss it with the government</p>
<p>Deadline: 2023</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 12.4: Statistics Sweden</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 12.5:</p> <p>Implement the decision (if taken by the government) on an increased coordination role.</p>

Deadline: 2027

Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 12.5: Statistics Sweden

13. Recommendation

Statistics Sweden should implement the Single Integrated Metadata Structure as the basis for quality reporting in the whole Swedish statistical system, to promote efficient and harmonised reporting at national, European, and international levels. A greater amount of quality information should be publicly available in English. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.5).

Current situation:

Statistics Sweden has expressed a diverging view on this recommendation.

For all European statistics, Statistics Sweden as well as the other relevant statistical authorities in Sweden comply with the quality reporting procedures required within the ESS, i.e., the Single Integrated Metadata Structure, when applicable.

For official statistics in Sweden, a legal quality framework is in place, which has been formed to suit the needs of Swedish users and for producers of official statistics. The information provided regarding quality has a greater focus on use and fitness for purpose than the Single Integrated Metadata Structure and is fundamental to the Swedish System of Official Statistics. It is considered neither resource effective nor catering to the needs of users if the producers would implement the Single Integrated Metadata Structure for the national quality reporting in Sweden.

Improvement action 13: N/A

Deadline: N/A

Responsible institution for the improvement action 13: N/A

14. Recommendation

Statistics Sweden is encouraged to further investigate the potential of new data sources (i.e., 'big data') for the regular production of statistics, and eventually adapt the mandate for data collection if necessary. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 2.4).

Current situation:

Statistics Sweden is currently transforming its entire structure, methods, IT-system, and statistical design to meet the demand of modern statistics and accelerating changes in society. The potential of new data sources and consequently the redesign of statistics for modern needs is in focus within this transformation. During 2022 a new process for evaluation and approval of new data sources has been developed, as an important step to be able to include various data sources into the regular statistical production.

Improvement action 14:

The new process for evaluation and approval of new data sources developed in 2022 will be implemented and used for all new data sources.

Deadline: 2023

Responsible institution for the improvement action 14: Statistics Sweden

15. Recommendation

Statistics Sweden should consider further aligning the Process Support System with the Generic Statistical Business Process Model to promote efficiency, standardisation, and comparability beyond the Swedish statistical system. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 7.2).

Current situation:

Statistics Sweden has a well-developed process management system, the Statistical Production Support System (SPS). Its objective is to consistently ensure the application of common methods, tools, and approaches. This is the backbone of statistical production in Statistics Sweden. The system is very closely linked to the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM), which was developed in a cooperation between UNECE, OECD and Eurostat. The SPS is available through Statistics Sweden's intranet, with each sub-process having its own sub-page. There is a system for verifying the description of the sub-processes. Statistics Sweden is planning to share the SPS within the whole Swedish statistical system.

The plan is also to expand the system itself. Statistics Sweden deploys continuous efforts and investments in developing best practice methodologies and quality assurance procedures. The plan to share the SPS with the other actors in the Swedish statistical system, will certainly be helpful for the other producers of official statistics for setting up efficient systems for their production of statistics.

However, the peer review team got the impression that the expansion and changes planned for the SPS will move the system further away from the GSBPM. In the light of expanding the SPS to the whole Swedish statistical system, it would seem even more important to ensure alignment with the GSBPM to ensure comparability beyond the Swedish statistical system.

Improvement action 15:

Review the current business process model and make sure any deviations from the GSBPM are well motivated and documented.

Deadline: 2023

Responsible institution for the improvement action 15: Statistics Sweden

<p>16. Recommendation Statistics Sweden should better balance formal training, guidelines and on-the-job training, including comprehensive training on the general aspects of European statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 7.6)</p>
<p>Current situation: A two-day introduction programme for all new employees to Statistics Sweden including what we do, the national statistical system, regulations, and policies, etc. is carried out 2-3 times a year. In the new organisation for Statistics Sweden, the responsibility for statistical methodology is placed with several sections. To secure collaboration and a coherent practice, a digital forum has been established. The statistical production process (SPS), including instructions and manuals, is described on a detailed level and accessible to all employees on Statistic Sweden's internal website.</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 16.1: Update the existing introduction programme with information regarding European statistics.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2023</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 16.1: Statistics Sweden</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 16.2: Implement a newly built digital forum that gathers educational material to enable on-the-job training at manager meetings.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2023</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 16.2: Statistics Sweden</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 16.3: Update and implement the SPS with information regarding European statistics.</p>
<p>Deadline: 2023</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 16.3: Statistics Sweden</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 16.4: Implement the new introduction programme with information on European statistics</p>
<p>Deadline: 2023</p>
<p>Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 16.4: Statistics Sweden</p>

17. Statistics Sweden should systematically and continuously measure and monitor the response burden, and the results of the measurements should be made public. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 9.2)

Current situation:

The response burden is calculated based on the estimated time required for each survey. At Statistics Sweden, the information is retrieved, among other things, from the documentation that is compiled for the annual overall consultation with the Board of Swedish Industry and Commerce for Better Regulation (NNR). However, there is an uncertainty in the applied method. The time for submitting the data may vary in a single survey depending on, for example, the size of a company or municipality, its organisation, or the structure of administrative systems. It is therefore difficult to estimate an average response burden.

In most of Statistics Sweden's surveys, the respondent is asked how much time is needed to provide the data. For other surveys, the time required for the submission of data is estimated by staff responsible for the survey. Since the estimated response burden in most of Statistics Sweden's surveys is now based on the respondents' own estimate of time spent, the data now calculated should better reflect reality.

Several government authorities responsible for statistics find it difficult to assess the time required for the data collection. Some completely lack data for several surveys.

The compilation of the costs of data submission refers to all official statistics with data obligations that are carried out annually or more frequently.

Data from companies and organizations should be collected only once by the government agencies, regardless of who is collecting. The aim is also to reduce the burden on respondents by retrieving data directly from companies' systems instead of via electronic forms.

Improvement sub-action 17.1:

An investigation will be carried out to develop proposals for ways of monitoring and measuring the total response burden regardless of which statistical agency is responsible.

Deadline: 2026

Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 17.1: Statistics Sweden

Improvement sub-action 17.2:

Suggest ways on how to improve the measurement of the response burden.

Deadline: 2026

Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 17.2: Statistics Sweden

Improvement sub-action 17.3:

Implement the new measurement process.

Deadline: 2027

Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 17.3: Statistics Sweden

18. Statistics Sweden should reflect upon how to further promote European/official statistics produced by the Swedish statistical system, building in particular on the existing 'Official Statistics of Sweden' label. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1bis.1)

Current situation:

The users and producers are most familiar with the concept of official statistics for historical reasons. This is the most crucial factor as to why European statistics and the ES CoP are not so well known in Sweden. The requirements for official statistics have brought official statistics and European statistics closer together, for example by including the quality criteria from Regulation 223/2009 on European statistics into the Official Statistics Act of Sweden. Work in this area should focus on highlighting the slight differences between official and European statistics.

Improvement sub-action 18.1:

Ways to better promote European/official statistics will be integrated in the action plan for the subgroup for improving the accessibility of official statistics in Sweden.

Deadline: 2023

Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 18.1: Statistics Sweden

Improvement sub-action 18.2:

Implement actions to promote European/official statistics.

Deadline: 2024

Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 18.2: Statistics Sweden

19. Statistics Sweden should consider implementing improvements to the website related to usability. More information should be given to non-Swedish speaking users and a more diversified approach to different categories of users should be taken. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 11.1, 15.5, 15.6 and 15.7)

Current situation:

Statistics Sweden continuously works on improving the accessibility and usability of the website for a wide range of different users. The peer review team identified further opportunities to optimise experience for all types of users – expert and casual – who engage with Statistics Sweden’s website. Statistics Sweden is reviewing the information structure taking input from user needs gathered by the “did you find what you were looking for” functionality built into the website and user interviews conducted in May 2022. A first project, which has investigated optimisations of content regarding wage statistics, has been successfully launched in 2022 providing new landing pages that answer the most common questions asked by users using search engines.

Improvement sub-action 19.1:

Monitor and analyse how the information structure, the accessibility and the search engine work for the users.

Deadline: 2024

Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 19.1: Statistics Sweden

Improvement sub-action 19.2:

Implement changes on the website to improve usability.

Deadline: 2024

Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 19.2: Statistics Sweden

Improvement sub-action 19.3:

Analyse the content on the website regarding the aspect of translation into English to an extent that a user can learn about the main content of the statistics.

Deadline: 2024

Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 19.3: Statistics Sweden

Improvement sub-action 19.4:

Implement changes regarding the English content according to the analysis.

Deadline: 2025

Responsible institution for the improvement sub-action 19.4: Statistics Sweden

20. Statistics Sweden should review how users are consulted, widen the scope of user consultations, and include discussions on priority setting and quality. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 11.1, 11.2 and 15.7).
Current situation: Statistics Sweden has expressed a diverging view on this recommendation. Statistics Sweden has an advisory board, appointed by the government. The board discusses priorities and quality issues and advises Statistics Sweden on priorities with user focus. There are also user boards for all statistical areas regarding content, quality, and priorities.
Improvement action 20: N/A
Deadline: N/A
Responsible institution for the improvement 20: N/A

21. Statistics Sweden should produce a calendar of changes to publication dates, containing explanations for the reasons of each deviation. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 13.4)
Current situation: Statistics Sweden has a calendar on its website that provides users with information about the content of and the date/time statistics will be released, for one year in advance. The peer review team noted that information about changes made to publications dates are not available for users, nor is there any note about the reasons for the delay.
Improvement action 21: Implement a change in the publication calendar including a note about date changes alongside the other information provided for each publication. The reason for changes will be provided to users on the product specific page that is accessible through the calendar.
Deadline: 2023
Responsible institution for the improvement action 21: Statistics Sweden

22. Statistics Sweden should review the current arrangements for access to microdata for research purposes, in order to provide the assurance that statistical confidentiality is fully ensured throughout the process, especially in cases where microdata is transferred to research organisations. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.4)

Current situation:

This recommendation would require a change of the Swedish constitution. For this reason, Statistics Sweden will focus on communication activities, informing about the responsibility of the recipients of microdata.

MONA is a platform for accessing microdata. The purpose of MONA is to offer a secure solution in which the recipient can process the data released for research or statistical purposes, following a confidentiality assessment pursuant to the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act. Once Statistics Sweden has released microdata, the recipient will be responsible for the data, in the same way as if the data were released outside the MONA-system.

Under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the recipient is the personal data controller for the personal data that the recipient processes, while Statistics Sweden is a personal data processor through its provision of storage areas in MONA. Statistics Sweden is only the personal data controller for the personal data processed as part of the technical aspect of providing the storage area, for example information about users. A personal data processing agreement (DPA agreement) regarding the personal data in MONA must be signed between Statistics Sweden and the recipient. Since the recipient is responsible for the data, Statistics Sweden cannot ensure the statistical confidentiality throughout the whole process.

Before microdata are disclosed/released, Statistics Sweden ensures that the information receives the same high level of confidentiality at the government agency, or research institution, of the recipient.

Improvement action 22:

Communication activities will be arranged through networks and conferences in which representatives of the researchers participate. These are, for example, the annual conference for register-based research, organised by the Swedish Research Council, with Statistics Sweden as a co-organiser. Information will be provided through daily contacts with data purchasers, through workshops and in written form.

Deadline: 2023

Responsible institution for the improvement action 22: Statistics Sweden