



EUROPEAN
STATISTICAL
SYSTEM

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European Statistical System Peer Reviews

Third round: 2021-2023

Guides' Annex II: Template for the agenda of the peer review visit

Endorsed by the ESS Committee in October 2020

General

The template for the agenda of the peer review visit of 4 to 5 days is shown below. This could serve as a point of departure for discussion and modifications, and more details could be added. It is flexible in many aspects: the length of the sessions is flexible, the peer review expert team has to decide on which principles and indicators it shall focus during the visit, the NSI can decide to devote more time for the sessions with the ONAs, some of the sessions are optional and some of the sessions can run in parallel or be split. It is therefore important to carefully read the information in this introduction and the template. The peer review expert team and the national coordination desk/national peer review coordinator should therefore closely cooperate and coordinate the changes and consequences of changes in the agenda.

The peer review expert team will not travel inside the country and the peer review visit sessions shall preferably be organised in the same location/building due to limited time and financial resources. The use of video conference (VC) for the peer review visit sessions is possible, if there is no other way to organise the session. If VC is used, the national peer review coordinator should ensure that the connections are established in a smooth manner causing no disruption in timing, and that all persons participating are fully visible and audible.

Internal peer review expert team meetings: before the first session and at the end of each day

The work of the peer review expert team should begin with a short internal meeting in the evening before the programmed start of the peer review visit to the NSI (not included in the agenda template). This meeting should be used to finalise the preparation of the visit, to share final views on the information received (self-assessment questionnaires and other documents), to settle any issues and make sure that all the peer review experts understand their role and the way of working of the team. It is also recommended that the peer review experts meet at the end of every day to sum up the discussions and results of the whole day, and to discuss, compare notes, and agree on preliminary findings. The national peer review coordinator or an appointed member of the national coordination desk should be available at this time in case any questions arise, but should not participate in the meeting. The national peer review coordinator/national coordination desk and the peer review expert team could also agree on different ways to exchange information or a different location for the peer review expert team meeting (such as the hotel).

Agenda topics

The agenda has been structured thematically, but with reference to the ES CoP principles, in addition to including meetings with stakeholders comprising the NSI, ONAs producing European statistics, data providers and main users, including representatives of policy makers, media and businesses as well as the scientific community.

The first day in the agenda template starts with a **preparatory meeting** with the national coordination team and, possibly, other national participants (if perceived as useful by the NSI and depending on their availability). The main goals of this meeting are to facilitate the communication among the participants, to discuss in an informal way practical aspects of the visit and to get to know each other.

Short presentations (max. around 10 minutes) from country representatives at the beginning of some sessions would be useful; the presentation at the **general information session presenting the**

National Statistical System may take a bit more time, but should not exceed 30 minutes, because the peer review experts have already read the information contained in the self-assessment questionnaires and the core documents.

The length of each session is flexible and to be decided by the peer review expert team, especially regarding the **ES CoP principles** they wish to emphasise during the visit. Each country visit will focus on professional independence (Principle 1) and coordination and cooperation (Principle 1.bis) as well as on the principles including elements of modernisation (Principle 2: indicators 2.1, 2.2 and 2.4, Principle 4: indicator 4.2, Principle 7: indicators 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 and 7.7, Principle 8: indicators 8.1, 8.3, 8.4, 8.6 and 8.7, Principle 15: indicators 15.2, 15.5 and 15.6). In addition, the peer review expert team will have the possibility to decide, for each country, on which other principles it will focus during the peer review visit. This decision will be based on the following criteria: a) potentially problematic areas identified in the SAQ, b) areas identified to be in need for improvements in the second round of peer reviews and c) improvement actions from the second round of peer reviews experiencing difficulties in implementation.

There may also be a need for changes such as timing of coffee and lunch breaks, as well as a need to change the order of the sessions depending on the availability of their participants.

The meetings with **other national authorities** (approx. 3-6 ONAs producing European statistics) could last the major part of a day, but could need more or less time in some countries, depending on the number of participating ONAs and issues to be discussed. The template contains an opening and closing session with all the ONAs invited to the peer review visit – these sessions are optional and could be organised if the NSI believes that they would be useful and logistically possible. If organised, the closing session should be scheduled on a different day than the individual sessions with the ONAs, so that the peer review expert team has sufficient time to analyse the material before the meeting. For timing reasons and depending on the number of ONAs in the peer review visit, two individual ONA sessions could be held simultaneously by splitting the peer review expert team: each of these ONA sessions would then be run by two peer review team members instead of four. An alternative would be to skip the general opening and closing sessions with the ONAs and reduce the timing for each individual session with ONAs. The length of each ONA session could vary between 1 and 2 hours, also depending on the need for interpretation. In case the NSI would opt to skip the opening and/or closing session(s) with all the ONAs, alternatives could be discussed with the peer review expert team. If there is no general opening session, it should be agreed with the peer review expert team that it should provide the introduction explaining the methodology and answering possible questions by the ONA(s) at the beginning of each of the individual sessions. Additional time should then be allocated for this purpose. If there is no general closing session on the next day, the peer review expert team should explain the next steps at the end of each individual session and it will not be possible for the peer review expert team to provide general findings. It is strongly recommended that the ONAs are invited to the meeting with the senior management of the NSI in which the peer review expert team will present its conclusions including strengths and recommendations for improvements.

A separate **session with junior staff** only (staff with 2-5 years' experience in the NSI) should be included and kept strictly confidential. No senior manager, national peer review coordinator, or other staff may be present at this meeting.

The **meeting with providers of new data sources** has been included to reflect the spirit of this round of peer reviews, not only aimed at compliance with the ES CoP, but also aimed at helping the NSIs to

improve. In addition, regarding the ES CoP, the peer review visit will focus, among others, on the elements of modernisation in the ES CoP. So, even if there are no providers to participate in this session, this session could be used to discuss with the NSI modernisation developments related to “other sources”.

The peer review expert team should have some time to discuss and prepare an outline of the report; hence a time slot has been reserved for the team at the beginning of day 5, followed by a **session for clarifications**, remaining or additional issues and focus areas. At the end of each day of the visit, the national peer review coordinator (or national coordination desk) receives feedback from the peer review expert team on issues that should be clarified at the “clarification session” (last day of the visit). This would allow the national coordination desk to ensure that the appropriate representatives (including those of the ONAs) can participate in the session.

In the **final meeting with the senior management of the NSI**, the chair of the peer review expert team will present the peer review conclusions and recommendations. It is highly recommended that the ONAs that have taken part in peer review visit be invited to this session, so that it/they could benefit from receiving the peer review expert team’s explanations on the strengths and the exact reasons behind the recommendations. A supervisory body/Supervisory bodies could also be invited to this session, so that they could benefit from receiving the peer review expert team’s explanations on the strengths and the exact reasons behind the recommendations. The format of this session and the exact bodies to participate or not should depend on the country context and the peer review expert team should agree with the NSI whether the participation of such bodies is appropriate/useful.

Timing	Topic	Participants
Day 1		
09.00-09:45	<p>Preparatory meeting with the national coordination desk and, possibly, other national participants in the visit</p> <p>This meeting aims at facilitating the communication among the participants, discussing, in an informal way, practical aspects of the visit and getting to know each other.</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>The NSI:</p>
09:45-10.00	<p>Welcome and introduction of the programme, adopting the agenda and organisational matters</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>The NSI:</p>
10.00-11.00	<p>Presentation of the National Statistical System</p> <p>General information session with a description on how the national statistical system is organised (bodies, distribution of responsibilities, relations between authorities, etc.). A presentation from the NSI of 20-30 minutes would be useful.</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>The NSI:</p>
11.00-11.15	Coffee break	
11.15-12.45	<p>Coordination and cooperation (ES CoP principle 1bis)</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>The NSI:</p>
12:45-13:45	Lunch	
13:45-15.15	<p>Professional independence and the Law on Official Statistics and related legislation (ES CoP principles 1, 2, 5 and 6)</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>The NSI:</p>
15:15-15.30	Coffee break	
15:30-17:00	<p>Programming, planning and resources (ES CoP principles 1, 3, 9 and 10)</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>The NSI:</p>
17:00-18:00	<p>Recommended: peer review expert team discussion (the national peer review coordinator/national coordination desk)</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p>

	<p>should be available at this time in case any questions arise).</p> <p>The national peer review coordinator/national coordination desk and the peer review expert team could also agree on different ways to exchange information or a different location for the meeting (such as the hotel).</p> <p>The national peer review coordinator/national coordination desk should receive feedback from the peer review expert team after this meeting on issues that should be clarified during the “clarification session” (last day of the visit). The NSI should ensure there is an appropriate representation during the “clarification session” on the last day allowing for more in-depth discussion.</p>	
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Timing	Topic	Participants
Day 2		
09:00-10:15	Quality (organisational structure, tools, monitoring) (ES CoP principles 4 and 11 to 15)	The peer review expert team: The NSI:
10:15-10:30	Coffee break	
10.30-12:00	Dissemination and confidentiality (ES CoP principles 5, 6 and 15)	The peer review expert team: The NSI:
12:00-13:00	Lunch	
13:00-14:45	Methodology, data collection, data processing and administrative data (ES CoP principles 2, 7 and 8)	The peer review expert team: The NSI:
14:45-15.45	Progress and plans for the future The aim of this session is to discuss progress since the last 5 years and the NSIs plans for the future. A short presentation from the NSI of maximum 10 minutes would be useful.	The peer review expert team: The NSI:
15:45-16:00	Coffee break	
16.00-17:00	Meeting with junior staff <u>only</u> (staff with 2-5 years' experience in the NSI) This session aims at providing a fresh view on the NSI and should therefore be kept strictly confidential and attended by junior staff only.	The peer review expert team: Junior staff:
17:00-18:00	Recommended: peer review expert team discussion (the national peer review coordinator/national coordination desk should be available at this time in case any questions arise). The national coordinator/national coordination desk and the peer review expert team could also agree on different ways to exchange information or a different location for the meeting (such as the hotel). The national peer review coordinator/national coordination desk	The peer review expert team:

	<p>should receive feedback from PR team after this meeting on issues that should be clarified during the “clarification session” (last day of the visit). The NSI should ensure there is an appropriate representation during the “clarification session” on the last day allowing for more in-depth discussion.</p>	
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Timing	Topic	Participants
Day 3		
09.00-09.30	<p>Optional: General opening session with all the other national authorities (ONAs) producing European statistics that are taking part in the peer review visit</p> <p>If perceived as useful by the NSI and depending on the availability of the ONAs and the decision of the NSI on the organisation of individual ONA sessions (in parallel with split peer review expert team or one after the other with a full peer review expert team), this session could be organised. It aims at providing an explanation of the methodology, an introduction to the individual sessions and an opportunity for the ONAs to ask questions.</p> <p>An alternative to organising the general opening session would be to include an introduction and provide an explanation of the methodology in each individual ONA session. Additional time should then be allocated to the individual sessions for this purpose.</p> <p>If the NSI decides to organise the individual ONA sessions one after the other in case of more than 3 participating ONAs, the general opening session would need to be dropped for timing reasons.</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>The NSI:</p> <p>1st ONA:</p> <p>2nd ONA:</p> <p>3rd ONA:</p> <p>4th ONA:</p> <p>5th ONA:</p> <p>6th ONA:</p>
09.30-11.00	<p>Meeting with 1st other national authority (ONA) producing European statistics</p> <p>This session aims at discussing strengths and weaknesses regarding ES CoP compliance, and at identifying areas for improvements for the specific ONA. The session also aims at discussing the coordination role of the NSI in the NSS as experienced by the ONA (principle 1bis – perspective of the ONA). A short presentation of the ONA on the above-mentioned issues of maximum 10 minutes would be useful.</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>1st ONA:</p> <p>The NSI:</p>

	<p>Depending on the number of ONAs in the peer review visit, the peer review expert team could be split to organise two sessions with ONAs simultaneously.</p> <p>The length of each session can vary between 1 and 2 hours, also depending on the need for interpretation.</p> <p>If there are more than 3 participating ONAs, the NSI should decide how it wishes to organise the individual ONA sessions: either two sessions in parallel with a split peer review expert team or one after the other with a full peer review expert team, but allocating less time to each individual session. The agenda would have to be rearranged accordingly.</p>	
09.30-11.00	<p>Meeting with 2nd other national authority (ONA) producing European statistics</p> <p>If there are more than 3 participating ONAs, the NSI should decide how it wishes to organise the individual ONA sessions: either two sessions in parallel with a split peer review expert team or one after the other with a full peer review expert team, but allocating less time to each individual session. The agenda would have to be rearranged accordingly.</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>2nd ONA:</p> <p>The NSI:</p>
11:00-11.15	Coffee break	
11:15-12:45	<p>Meeting with 3rd other national authority (ONA) producing European statistics</p> <p>If there are more than 3 participating ONAs, the NSI should decide how it wishes to organise the individual ONA sessions: either two sessions in parallel with a split peer review expert team or one after the other with a full peer review expert team, but allocating less time to each individual session. The agenda would have to be rearranged accordingly.</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>3rd ONA:</p> <p>The NSI:</p>

11:15-12:45	<p>Meeting with 4th other national authority (ONA) producing European statistics</p> <p>If there are more than 3 participating ONAs, the NSI should decide how it wishes to organise the individual ONA sessions: either two sessions in parallel with a split peer review expert team or one after the other with a full peer review expert team, but allocating less time to each individual session. The agenda would have to be rearranged accordingly.</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>4th ONA:</p> <p>The NSI:</p>
12:45-13:45	Lunch	
13:45-15:15	<p>Meeting with 5th other national authority (ONA) producing European statistics</p> <p>If there are more than 3 participating ONAs, the NSI should decide how it wishes to organise the individual ONA sessions: either two sessions in parallel with a split peer review expert team or one after the other with a full peer review expert team, but allocating less time to each individual session. The agenda would have to be rearranged accordingly.</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>5th ONA:</p> <p>The NSI:</p>
13:45-15:15	<p>Meeting with 6th other national authority (ONA) producing European statistics</p> <p>If there are more than 3 participating ONAs, the NSI should decide how it wishes to organise the individual ONA sessions: either two sessions in parallel with a split peer review expert team or one after the other with a full peer review expert team, but allocating less time to each individual session. The agenda would have to be rearranged accordingly.</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>6th ONA:</p> <p>The NSI:</p>
15.15-15:30	Coffee break	
15:30-16.45	<p>If there exists an ESGAB-like body: Meeting with ESGAB-like body or Statistical Council, Statistical Board, ...</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>ESGAB-like body/Council/Board:</p> <p>The NSI:</p>

	<p>The aim of this session is to discuss the mandate and functioning of the ESGAB-like body or other. A short presentation from the Chair of the ESGAB-like body or other of maximum 10 minutes would be useful.</p>	
<p>16:45-17:45</p>	<p>Recommended: peer review expert team discussion (the national peer review coordinator/national coordination desk should be available at this time in case any questions arise).</p> <p>The national coordinator/national coordination desk and peer review expert team could also agree on different ways to exchange information or a different location for the peer review expert team meeting (such as the hotel).</p> <p>The national peer review coordinator/national coordination desk should receive feedback from peer review expert team after this meeting on issues that should be clarified during the “clarification session” (last day of the visit). The NSI should ensure there is an appropriate representation during the “clarification session” on the last day allowing for more in-depth discussion.</p> <p>In addition, after their meetings of the third day, the peer review expert team should inform the national coordination desk about the usefulness of inviting the participating ONAs to the meeting with the NSI management on the last day of the visit in which the conclusions and recommendations will be presented.</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p>

Timing	Topic	Participants
Day 4		
09:00-09:30	<p>Optional: General closing session with all the other national authorities (ONA) producing European statistics that are taking part in the peer review visit</p> <p>If perceived as useful by the NSI and depending on the availability of the ONAs and the decision of the NSI on the organisation of individual ONA sessions, this session could be organised. It would aim at providing general findings, an explanation of the next steps with respect of the ONAs and an opportunity for the ONAs to ask questions after their sessions.</p> <p>An alternative to organising the general closing session would be to include information on next steps and an opportunity for each ONA to ask questions within each the separate ONA session. Additional time should then be allocated to the individual sessions for this purpose.</p> <p>If the NSI decides to organise the individual ONA sessions one after the other in case of more than 3 participating ONAs, the general opening session would need to be dropped for timing reasons.</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>The NSI:</p> <p>1st ONA:</p> <p>2nd ONA:</p> <p>3rd ONA:</p> <p>4th ONA:</p> <p>5th ONA:</p> <p>6th ONA:</p>
09.30-11:00	<p>Meeting with main data providers</p> <p>This session aims at discussing with main administrative data providers, including relevant public bodies, business organisations, etc. (agreements, burden, data confidentiality, ...)</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>The NSI:</p> <p>Main data providers:</p>
11:00-11.15	Coffee break	
11.15-12.00	<p>Meeting with providers of new data sources</p> <p>This session aims at discussing innovation and new developments with the NSI and providers of new data sources, such as shopping centres for scanner data, mobile telephone operators, others. This session is an opportunity to bring</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>The NSI:</p> <p>Providers of new data sources:</p>

	<p>the new data sources providers towards the NSI enabling a discussion aimed at an increased use of their data and possible partnerships (partnership agreements, personal data, data transmission/retrieval, innovations perceived as relevant by the NSI, ...).</p> <p>If there are no providers to participate in this session, this session could be used to discuss with the NSI modernisation developments related to “other sources”.</p>	
12:00-13:00	<p>Meeting with main users – Media</p> <p>This session aims at discussing with the media on their experience as users of official statistics (easy to obtain, needs, contacts with NSI, trust, ...).</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>The NSI:</p> <p>Media:</p>
13.00-14.00	Lunch	
14:00-15:00	<p>Meeting with main users – Ministries and other public/private institutions (including Central Bank as a user)</p> <p>This session aims at discussing with the Ministries and other public/private institutions of official statistics on their experience (data availability in relation to data needs, contacts with NSI, trust, ...).</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>The NSI:</p> <p>Ministries and other public/private institutions:</p>
15:00-16:00	<p>Meeting with main users – business associations and federations and trade unions, as well as representatives of a committee of users – if any</p> <p>This session aims at discussing with the business associations and federations and trade unions, as well as representatives of a committee of users – if any (data availability in relation to data needs, contacts with NSI, trust, ...).</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>The NSI:</p> <p>Main users:</p>
16:00-16:15	Coffee break	
16:15-17:15	Meeting with main users – Scientific community	The peer review expert team:

	<p>This session aims at discussing with the scientific community on their experience as users of official statistics (access to microdata in secure environment, data availability in relation to data needs, contacts with NSI, trust).</p>	<p>The NSI:</p> <p>Scientific community:</p>
17:15-18:15	<p>Recommended: peer review expert team discussion (the national peer review coordinator/national coordination desk should be available at this time in case any questions arise).</p> <p>The national coordinator/national coordination desk and peer review expert team could also agree on different ways to exchange information or a different location for the meeting (such as the hotel).</p> <p>The national peer review coordinator/national coordination desk should receive feedback from peer review expert team after this meeting on issues that should be clarified during the “clarification session” (last day of the visit). The NSI should ensure there is an appropriate representation during the “clarification session” on the last day allowing for more in-depth discussion.</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p>

Timing	Topic	Participants
Day 5		
09.00-10.30	<p>Per review expert team discussion</p> <p>This session could be organised for peer review team members only if needed by the peer review expert team.</p>	The peer review expert team:
10.30-10.45	Coffee break	
10.45-12.45	<p>Clarifications, remaining or additional issues and focus areas</p> <p>This session of the peer review expert team and the national peer review coordinator could be organised if the peer review expert team needs to request and analyse additional material.</p> <p>If a need arises to request and analyse additional material from ONAs, the peer review expert team will inform the national coordination desk during the evening of day 3 or the morning of day 4, so that the relevant ONA(s) could also participate in this session.</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>The NSI:</p> <p>If relevant ONA(s):</p>
12.45-13.45	Lunch	
13.45-15.45	<p>Meeting with the senior management of the NSI: conclusions and recommendations</p> <p>In this meeting the chair of the peer review expert team presents the peer review conclusions, highlighting strengths and recommendations for improvements. She/he will explain the background for the peer review findings and explain for each recommendation whether it is compliance relevant or improvement related. This session provides the senior management of the NSI with an opportunity to discuss the findings with the peer review expert team, as well as next steps.</p> <p>Depending on the country context and if perceived as useful by the NSI, the senior management of ONAs and/or governmental</p>	<p>The peer review expert team:</p> <p>The NSI:</p> <p>ONAs (highly recommended):</p> <p>Governmental stakeholders (optional and presence should be suggested by the peer review expert team in case of recommendations addressed to such stakeholders):</p>

	<p>stakeholders such as responsible bodies could also be invited to this session. They could be invited to the entire or only a part of the session which could then be split into two or more sessions on the agenda.</p>	
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