



**PEER REVIEWERS' RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS  
OF *TURKISH STATISTICAL INSTITUTE*  
IN RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

## Peer reviewer's recommendations and improvement actions in response to the recommendations

### Strengthening the Institutional Environment and Coordination

#### *Access to administrative data*

- 1. TurkStat and the Statistical Council should endeavour to have the outstanding legal obstacles to allowing full access to administrative data and registers addressed as a matter of the highest priority. (European Statistics Code of Practice, indicator 2.2)**

#### **Current situation:**

Articles 9 and 10 of the Statistics Law of Turkey provide full access to TurkStat to all administrative data and registers held by public institutions. TurkStat signs protocols with some public institutions on sharing administrative registers. However, some public authorities, such as Ministry of Finance Revenue Administration, are not willing to share their registers with regard to their own laws (e.g. Tax Procedure Law).

In order to raise awareness and increase willingness of the authorities, the importance of the use of administrative registers for statistical purposes was emphasized, and preparations and main idea of the forthcoming Official Statistics Programme (2017-2021) was declared in the Statistical Council meeting on March 31, 2016.

#### **Improvement action**

##### **1. Signing protocol with owners of major administrative registers:**

The protocols will be signed with Ministry of Finance, Directorate General of Migration Management, and Social Security Institution allowing access to administrative registers.

##### **2. Focus on administrative registers in the third Official Statistics Programme:**

A group will be established under Register Systems Department so as to coordinate and standardise the use of administrative registers.

#### **Timeline:**

1. 2017 Q II
2. 2016 Q I (Completed in January 2016)

## **Strengthening the Institutional Environment and Coordination**

### *Institutional independence of TurkStat*

**2. TurkStat and the Statistical Council should endeavour to have TurkStat's institutional status reviewed with the objective of adopting a form that strengthens its institutional status and emphasises its professional independence (and the public's perception of same) within the Turkish public administration system. (European Statistics Code of Practice, Principle 1)**

#### **Current situation:**

According to Article 20 of the Statistics Law of Turkey, the President of Turkish Statistical Institute is also the chair of the Statistical Council. Nevertheless, the President is not at the same level as the undersecretaries, who are the top public servant in the ministries and members of the Council. Therefore, the issue may sometimes put the President at a disadvantage in trying to influence top management in other ministries and institutions on statistical matters.

#### **Improvement action**

##### **Initiate a legal amendment on the institutional status of Turkish Statistical Institute:**

Justification on legal amendment request for the improvement of the institutional status of Turkish Statistical Institute will be submitted to political authorities in 2016. If the justification is accepted, then TurkStat will initiate the legal amendment into the Statistical Law.

#### **Timeline:**

Depends on the legislative process. Estimated adoption 2019 Q IV

**3. Greater transparency should apply in the appointment of the President of TurkStat, with a particular emphasis on ensuring that the appointment process has regard to professional competence only. (European Statistics Code of Practice, indicator 1.8)**

**Current situation:**

According to the Article 23 of the Statistics Law of Turkey, in addition to general requirements specified in the Civil Servants' Law, graduating from the higher education institutions which provide at least four years education is the only requirement to be appointed as the President of Turkish Statistical Institute.

**Improvement action**

**Establish clear criteria on the appointment of the President of Turkish Statistical Institute:**

Justification on legal amendment including clear criteria; such as graduation, relevant experience, term of office; on the appointment of the President of Turkish Statistical Institute will be submitted to political authorities in 2016. .If the justification is accepted, then TurkStat will initiate the legal amendment into the Statistical Law.

**Timeline:**

Depends on the legislative process. Estimated adoption 2019 Q IV

**Strengthening the Institutional Environment and Coordination**

*Organisational capacity of TurkStat*

**4. The relevant national authorities should ensure that TurkStat and the Other National Authorities are provided with the necessary human resources to ensure that they can meet all priority national and international statistical needs, particularly those required to comply with European Union statistical acquis. (European Statistics Code of Practice, Principle 3)**

**Current situation:**

Activities to be carried out in regional offices are evaluated annually at the final quarter of each year and required number of staff is determined according to necessities and workload analyses. For central office, evaluation studies are underway.

**Improvement action****1. Increase the number of highly skilled staff:**

In line with Turkish Statistical Institute Human Resources Strategy, approximately 200 staff will be employed. Moreover, justification for further recruitment will be submitted to political authorities, if necessary.

**2. Incentives for stakeholders to recruit new staff:**

Stakeholders will be encouraged with some mechanisms such as awarding quality logo, etc. within the context of Official Statistics Programme in order to recruit adequate staff for official statistics activities.

**Timeline:**

1. 2020 Q IV
2. 2020 Q IV

**5. TurkStat should review on an ongoing basis its current organisational structure with a view to assessing whether it continues to be fit for purpose in meeting current and future statistical requirements, particularly having regard to rapidly changing statistical demands and the introduction of new statistical methodologies. (European Statistics Code of Practice, Principles 3 and 10)**

**Current situation:**

The structure of Turkish Statistical Institute was re-organised by the adoption of the Statistics Law in 2005. Number of regional offices was organised in line with NUTS II level and the departments were re-structured taking into consideration of Eurostat and statistical systems in other developed countries. In 2012, organisational structure of Turkish Statistical Institute was re-modelled according to process-based approach, instead of stove-pipe model. Furthermore, job definitions of subject matter departments were removed from the Law enabling Turkish Statistical Institute to easily amend the definitions by the Ministerial approval. Thus, organisational structure, when required, has become flexible enough for re-structuring according to workload analyses.

**Improvement action****Review the organisational structure of Turkish Statistical Institute:**

Organisational structure of Turkish Statistical Institute will be reviewed annually according to business process studies and workload analyses to be conducted at Turkish Statistical Institute.

**Timeline:**

2017 Q I

**6. TurkStat should develop a more explicit staff mobility programme in order to meet its business needs and the professional and managerial career development needs of its staff. (European Statistics Code of Practice, indicators 3.1 and 7.6)**

**Current situation:**

- According to Article 34 of the "Regulation on Entrance Examination of Turkish Statistical Institute Assistant Experts and Proficiency Examination of Turkish Statistical Institute Experts and Their Assignment and Placement", newly recruited assistant experts will be on an orientation programme employing them on various departments and regional offices on a temporary basis. Turkish Statistical Institute has also a regulation on the mobility of Regional Offices' staff. In practice for the central organisation, staff mobility is carried out through a job vacancy practice based on the needs of the departments; however it is not rest upon written regulations or procedures.

**Improvement action****1. Adoption of a internal circular on assistant experts:**

An internal circular will be adopted by Turkish Statistical Institute on the training processes of assistant experts enabling staff mobility within various departments.

**2. Preparation of a staff mobility policy:**

A policy on staff mobility will be prepared following the completion of the standardisation studies for business and statistical processes.

**Timeline:**

1. 2016 Q I (Completed in March 2016)
2. 2019 Q I

**Strengthening the Institutional Environment and Coordination***Coordination of the national statistical system*

**7. The relevant national authorities should review the role and functioning of the Statistical Council with a view to optimising its contribution to the coordination and governance of the national statistical system. (Coordination)**

**Current situation:**

Structure of the Statistical Council was amended in 2012 in accordance with an improvement action of the light peer review carried out in 2011. In addition, Official Statistical Programme working groups are in place to discuss and evaluate all statistical subjects in a comprehensive manner at expert level. All problems, challenges and opportunities are dealt with in working groups and decisions are drafted for the adoption of the Statistical Council.

**Improvement action**

**Reorganisation of the Official Statistics Programme working groups:**

- a) The structure and working procedures of the Official Statistics Programme working groups will be reorganised to enhance the active participation of the stakeholders, academicians and NGOs.
- b) Regulation on Statistical Council will be amended in order to enhance the effectiveness of Statistical Council if necessary.

**Timeline:**

- a) 2016 Q III (Completed in 2016 Q II)
- b) 2017 Q I

**8. TurkStat and the Statistical Council should identify the staffing and other resources required for the implementation of the statistical projects included in the next five- year Official Statistics Programme (2017-2021) and should report annually on their availability and adequacy. (European Statistics Code of Practice, Principles 3 and 10 and Coordination)**

**Current situation:**

A questionnaire was designed for stakeholders in order to determine the cost and human resources required for the realisation of the activities within the Official Statistics Programme.



## **Improvement action**

### **1. Annual survey on cost and human resources with stakeholders:**

An annual survey will be conducted with stakeholders in order to gather data on the cost and human resources for statistical production process.

### **2. Updating of Official Statistics Programme table lists:**

Table lists of third Official Statistics Programme (2017-2021) will cover two more columns including cost and human resources of each statistical sub-subject.

### **3. Annual reports on cost and human resources:**

Details on the cost and human resources of Turkish Statistical Institute and stakeholders will be reported annually within Official Statistics Programme Annual Monitoring Reports.

## **Timeline:**

1. 2016 Q IV
2. 2017 Q I
3. 2018 Q I

**9. TurkStat should put in place mechanisms to actively promote greater skills transfer between it and the Other National Authorities in order to improve coordination and the quality of statistical work throughout the national statistical system. (European Statistics Code of Practice, Principles 3 and 10 and Coordination)**

## **Current situation:**

Turkish personnel system is not eligible for this kind of secondments. Nevertheless, Turkish Statistical Institute experts are commissioned in other stakeholders as consultants to establish systems and improve their statistical procedures, although Turkish Statistical Institute has limited experienced human resources for each statistical domain. In addition, in Official Statistics Programme working groups, experts of other stakeholders are informed regularly. Also, training courses are held annually and staffs of stakeholders are assigned for international trainings and meetings. It is planned that these kinds of activities will be increased in terms of quality and quantity within the period of third Official Statistics Programme (2017-2021).

<p><b>Improvement action</b></p> <p>Turkish Statistical Institute has a divergent view on this recommendation and therefore no improvement actions are foreseen.</p>
<p><b>Timeline:</b></p> <p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Developing quality procedures</b></p>
<p><b>10. TurkStat should further integrate and develop its quality procedures in the context of implementing a total quality management approach throughout the organisation. (European Statistics Code of Practice, Principle 4)</b></p>
<p><b>Current situation:</b></p> <p>Culture of quality within the Turkish Statistical Institute has been promoted for the recent years and a quality management structure is being developed. Turkish Statistical Institute Quality Assurance Framework (including the quality policy, TQAF) is available on the website. An integrated total quality management (TQM) approach has not yet been developed and there is no specific unit dedicated to quality. Quality control activities are carried out by different units at Turkish Statistical Institute and each of them is responsible for one or several stages of the process. In 2015, a quality action plan was prepared in line with CoP, ESS Quality Assurance Framework and Common Assessment Framework. TQAF gives brief information about the methods and tools that ensure the quality of the production processes. In parallel with TQAF, a Quality Action Plan was prepared and will be updated on a regular basis. Knowing the fact that process management is one of the bases for TQM, Turkish Statistical Institute has adopted the GSBPM and mapped the statistical business processes.</p>

## **Improvement action**

### **1. Review of organisation structure:**

Organisational structure will be reviewed and a proposal will be submitted to the top management for integration of quality issues within Turkish Statistical Institute.

### **2. Preparation of a quality assessment guideline:**

A guideline will be prepared for quality assessment (description of the quality management implementation, developing descriptions of methods to monitor the quality at each stage of the GSBPM) within the statistical production processes based on the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) at Turkish Statistical Institute.

### **3. Implementation of a feasibility study:**

A study will be implemented providing guidance on the most feasible model for Total Quality Management at Turkish Statistical Institute.

## **Timeline:**

1. 2016 Q IV
2. 2016 Q IV
3. 2018 Q IV

**11. TurkStat should establish a quality audit function and introduce a systematic programme for regularly auditing its key statistical products. (European Statistics Code of Practice, indicators 4.1 and 4.4)**

## **Current situation:**

Within the context of studies carried out regarding quality audit, three main tools are used. Data Analysis Control Checklist, a central quality control tool - namely Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI), and quality reports are prepared after each study.

**Improvement action**

**Establish a quality audit function:**

A quality audit function will be established based on an integrated plan in the light of the feasibility study mentioned in third improvement action of the tenth recommendation.

**Timeline:**

2020 Q IV

**12. TurkStat should publish Quality Reports relating to its statistical outputs in English on its website. (European Statistics Code of Practice, indicators 4.3 and 15.7)**

**Current situation:**

Quality reports have already been published on Turkish Statistical Institute web site since the year 2015.

**Improvement action**

**Publishing quality reports in English:**

Quality reports will also be published relating to the statistical outputs in English on Turkish Statistical Institute website. The number of quality reports prepared until 2015 are 148 in Turkish.

**Timeline:**

2016 Q I (Completed in January 2016)

**13. TurkStat should ensure that the certification of statistics produced by the Other National Authorities, involving the awarding of the Quality Logo, is progressively and systematically rolled out as part of the implementation of the next Official Statistics Programme (2017-2021). (European Statistics Code of Practice, Principle 4 and Coordination)**

**Current situation:**

In order to improve the quality of the statistics produced by Other National Authorities within the Turkish Statistical System, Turkish Statistical Institute has developed a system of quality certification, the Quality Logo. A standard questionnaire, including a number of issues related to quality, such as techniques applied in the different stages of the statistical process, or standards, definitions and classifications used, is completed by the applicant. The Quality Logo is awarded by Turkish Statistical Institute only when the answers are considered satisfactory. Until March 2016, eighteen Quality Logos was awarded.

**Improvement action**

**1. Adoption of a directive on quality evaluation:**

A directive will be prepared in order to regulate the principles and procedures regarding the studies on quality evaluation and awarding of quality logo in official statistics.

**2. Annual plan for certification studies:**

Annual plans will be prepared following the applications of stakeholders for certification, taking into consideration the institutional capacity of Turkish Statistical Institute.

**Timeline:**

1. 2016 Q II (Completed in July 2016)
2. 2017 Q II

**14. TurkStat, in conjunction with the relevant institutions, should resolve the quality problems with certain registers and administrative data sources that are restricting their use for statistical purposes. (European Statistics Code of Practice, indicators 8.7, 8.8 and 8.9)**

**Current situation:**

“Institutional Evaluation Study” was conducted in 2012 and 2013 to determine which ministries / institutions possess which kind of administrative data and to observe the existing capacity of the ministries / institutions. In addition, one-to-one studies have been realised with stakeholders in order to enhance the quality of administrative registers. Also, the issues are continuously discussed at Official Statistics Programme working group meetings.

In order to raise awareness and increase willingness of the authorities, the importance of the use of administrative registers for statistical purposes was emphasized, and preparations and main idea of the forthcoming Official Statistics Programme (2017-2021) was declared in the Statistical Council meeting on March 31, 2016.

**Improvement action**

**Improvement of the quality of administrative registers:**

- a)** The Official Statistics Programme working groups will be reorganised to make them more efficient and functional.
- b)** The quality of the following administrative registers will be improved and, as a result, will be used in the production of statistics:
  - Registries of Revenue Administration (economic activity code, turnover, number of employees, etc.)
  - Registries of Social Security Institution (economic activity code, payment of premium, number of employees etc.)

**Timeline:**

- a) 2016 Q IV
- b) 2017 Q IV

## **Improving the service to users**

### *User needs and satisfaction*

**15. TurkStat should further develop its procedures for consulting regularly, and raising statistical awareness among, users and potential users of official statistics. (European Statistics Code of Practice, indicators 11.1 and 11.3)**

#### **Current situation:**

There are a number of existing channels in place to monitor the needs of users and society in general. These include the Statistical Council and the wide range of working groups with the users and producers established by Turkish Statistical Institute to assist in the preparation and implementation of the statistical programmes. Both producers and users of official statistics are represented in the Official Statistics Programme working groups. In addition, representatives from any institution can be invited if deemed necessary. Turkish Statistical Institute also obtains valuable information from monitoring the use of its website. In addition, Turkish Statistical Institute analyses user information requests and finally reports the situation annually. Using all these information, Turkish Statistical Institute decided to have a goal to raise the awareness on official statistics among users in Turkish Statistical Institute Communication Strategy.

#### **Improvement action**

##### **1. Interactive communication platform:**

An interactive communication platform will be established for social media use.

##### **2. Meetings and trainings for press:**

Introductory and informative meetings and trainings will be held for press representatives on a regular basis.

##### **3. Meetings and seminars for academia, NGOs and business world:**

Meetings and seminars will be held for academia, NGOs and business world on a regular basis.

**Timeline:**

1. 2016 Q IV
2. 2017 Q II
3. 2017 Q II

**16. TurkStat should commission a comprehensive user satisfaction survey to determine and examine the extent to which users are satisfied with its products and trust its independence and impartiality. (European Statistics Code of Practice, indicator 11.3)**

**Current situation:**

A user satisfaction survey has already been carried out on Turkish Statistical Institute since 2007 on its web site to determine profiles, needs and expectations of users and setting the policies of the Institute in the medium and long term. A summary of the survey is published on Turkish Statistical Institute web site.

**Improvement action****Satisfaction, perception and trust survey:**

A comprehensive survey on the satisfaction, perception and trust of Turkish Statistical Institute and products will be carried out to identify the image and trust of Turkish Statistical Institute.

**Timeline:**

2017 Q IV

**17. TurkStat should adopt a more pro-active approach in communicating with the media, including the holding of more regular media briefing sessions on key outputs and developments. (European Statistics Code of Practice, Principles 10 and 15)**

**Current situation:**

In recent years planned, media briefings have been organised twice a year and spontaneous meetings have also been realised when needed.



**Improvement action****1. Annual media briefings:**

Media briefings will be organised at least once a year on a regular basis,

**2. Focused meetings on substantial subjects:**

Meetings will be organised when new statistics are produced or main revisions are introduced, in line with the Communication Strategy.

**Timeline:**

- 1.2017 Q I
2. Regular

**18. TurkStat should engage more actively with appropriate educational and other stakeholders in promoting statistical literacy. (European Statistics Code of Practice, Principle 15)**

**Current situation:**

Training programme on official statistics has been organised in December of each year. Trainings for different target groups (stakeholders, students, media, local authorities etc.) have also been organised on a demand-driven basis. Five e-learning modules on the main fields of official statistics activities were developed and submitted through the website in order to increase the awareness of the users.

Besides, official statistics is given as a lecture in statistics, economy and/or similar departments of some universities. Also themes of official statistics have also been in textbooks of secondary education in Turkey.

**Improvement action**

**Introducing new activities for promoting statistical literacy among stakeholders:**

New e-learning modules on the main fields of studies will be prepared and submitted to the users via Turkish Statistical Institute web site and also statistical literacy trainings for different groups of stakeholders will be organised.

**Timeline:**

2017 Q IV

**Improving the service to users**

*Improved service to users*

**19. TurkStat should prepare and publish more analytical and user-focused reports based on its statistical outputs to meet the needs of users. (European Statistics Code of Practice, Principle 15)**

**Current situation:**

Turkish Statistical Institute has used Handbook on Press Release Preparation Standards for several years in order to standardise news releases. The Institute created a new and more analytic and outstanding version of press releases called as "Press Room Release". The Institute also publishes analytical reports on the web site, such as "Labour Force Survey, Regional Results (2004-2013)", "Gross Value Added, Regional Results (2004-2011)" etc.

**Improvement action****1. Improvement of standardisation of news releases:**

The Handbook on Press Release Preparation Standards will be revised in order to enrich the content,

**2. Enhancement of number of analytical reports:**

Number of analytical reports will be increased. 12 reports will be completed until the end of 2020.

**Timeline:**

1. 2018 Q IV

2. 2020 Q IV

**20. TurkStat should develop its use of social media in the dissemination and communication of its statistical outputs and services. (European Statistics Code of Practice, Principle 15)**

**Current situation:**

Press releases of Turkish Statistical Institute have already been published on Turkish Statistical Institute web site along with social media tools, such as Twitter and Facebook.

## **Improvement action**

### **1. Diversification of content shared in social media:**

Press Room releases, prepared mainly for the media, will be shared in social media, such as Twitter and Facebook, in line with Turkish Statistical Institute Policy of Social Media Use.

### **2. Diversification of social media use:**

Dissemination of statistical outputs will be further diversified through various social media tools in line with the Communication Strategy.

## **Timeline:**

1. 2016 Q I (Completed in January 2016)
2. 2018 Q III

**21. TurkStat should review the implementation of its Revisions Policy with a view to providing more retrospective data (i.e. back-casting) in order to meet the needs of users. (European Statistics Code of Practice, indicator 14.2)**

## **Current situation:**

Turkish Statistical Institute has a revisions policy regulated by a directive on the principles and procedures regarding the revision of statistical data. The Institute publishes back-casted series if major revision is applied according to revision policy. The general principle of the Revision Policy of TurkStat is to have more retrospective data as much as possible. In this regard, it is possible to have more comparable time series for national accounts, total employment etc based on available administrative data. However, due to the lack of relevant administrative data, it is not possible to have retrospective data on the breakdowns of employment time series such as economic activities, region, etc. since number of observation for new series is not adequate for long term estimation.

**Improvement action****Improvement of the implementation of revision policy:**

Backcasting of series will be improved in terms of time series, geographical and sectoral breakdown, following the further use of administrative registers for statistical purposes. It is planned that two major revisions will be realized in the areas of Gross Domestic Product and Household Labour Survey.

**Timeline:**

2018 Q IV

**Improving the service to users***Access to microdata*

**22. TurkStat should introduce remote access facilities for researchers, who are permitted to use its anonymised microdata for research purposes. (European Statistics Code of Practice, indicator 15.4)**

**Current situation:**

Turkish Statistical Institute provides access to microdata in two ways (Group A microdata sets are submitted in Data Research Centres due to the more sensitive characteristics; and Group B anonymised microdata are submitted on CDs) for researchers in special Data Research Centres located in the headquarters in Ankara and in seven regional offices, based on well-defined rules.

**Improvement action****Remote access and remote execution of anonymised microdata:**

Anonymised microdata will be shared through remote access and remote execution.

<p><b>Timeline:</b></p> <p>2019 Q III</p>
<p><b>23. TurkStat should review the administrative arrangements for granting researchers access to anonymised microdata in order to ensure that they are flexible and kept to the minimum necessary for complying with legal requirements. (European Statistics Code of Practice, indicator 15.4)</b></p>
<p><b>Current situation:</b></p> <p>Turkish Statistical Institute uses generic protocols regarding microdata access upon a request from researchers. An Evaluation Committee assesses the convenience of the applications, so that only applications to be used for scientific purposes are accepted in line with Statistics Law of Turkey.</p>
<p><b>Improvement action</b></p> <p><b>Improvement in the approval processes for anonymised microdata access:</b></p> <p>Approval processes will be improved, by means of an online application and evaluation system for microdata users.</p>
<p><b>Timeline:</b></p> <p>2017 Q III</p>
<p><b>Improving the service to users</b></p> <p><i>Web accessibility</i></p>
<p><b>24. TurkStat should take the necessary measures to ensure that its website complies with the universal web content accessibility guidelines. (European Statistics Code of Practice, indicator 15.2)</b></p>
<p><b>Current situation:</b></p> <p>Following an improvement action of the light peer review carried out in 2011, Turkish Statistical Institute has re-designed a more user friendly web site. However, current web site does not comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).</p>

**Improvement action**

**Developing a web site in line with universal web content accessibility guidelines:**

Turkish Statistical Institute web site will be developed in line with the universal web content accessibility guidelines.

**Timeline:**

2019 Q III