



EUROPEAN
STATISTICAL
SYSTEM

PEER REVIEW REPORT

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

Country

AUTHORS

(DRAFTING) MONTH YEAR

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The summary should explicitly highlight and briefly describe the strengths (positive messages) about the NSS (approximately 1 page) and list the recommendations, which will refer to the opportunities for improvement identified during the peer review. For the latter, the report could highlight especially professional independence (ES CoP Principle 1) and coordination and cooperation (ES CoP Principle 1.bis) as well as the principles including elements of modernisation (ES CoP Principles 2, 4, 7, 8, 15), if relevant.

The reasons for including a recommendation should be described briefly (1-2 sentences of explanation per recommendation). Furthermore, the recommendations are either compliance-relevant (“To comply with the European statistics Code of Practice”) or improvement-related (“To improve beyond compliance with the European statistics Code of Practice”). In addition, the recommendations should be clearly addressed to the responsible authority/ies (the NSI, the government, the ONA, ...). As for recommendations addressed to ONAs, in principle only those participating in the peer review can be addressed, unless the expert team has sufficient evidence that the recommendation is valid for all ONAs.

Finally, the recommendations should be listed/numbered in the same way as in point 5.2 and presented in the following structure:

RECOMMENDATIONS

Broad issue 1

1-2 sentences explaining the recommendation

To comply with the European Statistics Code of Practice, the peer review team recommends that

1. The NSI/ONA(s)/the government should ... (Compliance-relevant: European Statistics Code of Practice Indicator(s) X.X)

1-2 sentences explaining the recommendation

To improve beyond compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice, the peer review team recommends that

2. The NSI/ONA(s)/the government should ... (Improvement-related: European Statistics Code of Practice Indicator(s) X.X)

Broad issue 2

Broad issue 3

Broad issue 4

Standard sentence to be added at the end of the executive summary – not to be changed

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

2. INTRODUCTION

standard text to be used for all the peer review reports, not to be changed

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A combination of an audit-like and a peer review approach is used when assessing the national statistical systems (NSS) in the countries to benefit from the positive aspects of both approaches. The audit-like approach requires the provision of documents as evidence, the ownership of the

recommendations by the peer review expert team, and the right for the NSIs to express diverging views on the recommendations and to formulate the corresponding improvement actions. Whereas the peer review approach allows for common agreement within the ESS on the methodology, the objectives, scope and implementation arrangements, the focus on improvements and a peer learning process.

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

In addition to the common principles to be addressed for every member of the ESS, the peer review team also placed an emphasis on ...

Text above to be drafted by the expert team for each peer review report separately to describe on what principles the peer review for the given country focuses including an explanation for the choice.

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

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

3. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

The brief description of the NSS (of max 2,5 pages) should cover legislation, organisation, appointment procedures for the head of the NSI, statistical programmes, resources, coordination of the NSS (including at least a 0,5 page text on the ONAs invited in the peer review visit), data access, relations with users/dissemination of statistical products and services. (NB: this description will be taken from the description submitted by the NSI as a core document)

4. PROGRESS/ADVANCEMENT IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS

This description (1-2 pages) should be based on the implementation of the improvement actions after the second round of peer reviews, the answers from the SAQs and discussions during the peer review visit.

5. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE AND FUTURE ORIENTATION

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

This section is meant to describe those aspects and elements where the NSI and the participating ONAs show high standards and where no problems/issues are detected. The strengths should be grouped around identified broad issues/themes, with a reference to the principle(s) and indicator(s) concerned. Strengths could also be a good/innovative practice.

Strengths regarding the principles of professional independence (principle 1), coordination and cooperation (principle 2) and those including elements of modernisation (principles 2, 4, 7, 8, 15) could be highlighted in this section.

Future-oriented projects and activities that are not necessarily linked to the ES CoP should also be highlighted in this chapter.

The text should cover Eurostat/the NSI and the participating ONAs being visible and named, in separate paragraphs.

The structure of the section should be flexible, i.e. it should be adapted depending on the outcome of the peer review.

At the end of this chapter, potential innovative practices should be highlighted/named explicitly.

5.2 ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

See also annex VI of the guides.

This section should describe in further detail the issues where improvements are needed. The recommendations of the peer review team should be split into fundamental/important to ensure compliance/alignment with the CoP (compliance-relevant: “To comply with the European Statistics Code of Practice, the peer review team recommends that”), and less critical/technical supporting improvements (improvement-related: “To improve beyond compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice, the peer review team recommends that”). In addition, they should be future-oriented and grouped around identified broad issues/themes, with a reference to the principle(s) and indicator(s).

Both types of recommendations should cover the NSI and the participating ONAs being visible and named in separate paragraphs, in particular if recommendations are addressed to them. In case the recommendations are addressed to other stakeholders/actors than the NSI and the participating ONAs, this will be clearly spelled out in the report:

The NSI/ONA(s)/the government should ... (European Statistics Code of Practice Indicator(s) X.X)”.

The text should also lead the reader of the report to understand the recommendations as included into the executive summary. Recommendations in the executive summary and in the report should be the same. While in the executive summary the reasons for including such a recommendation will be described briefly, the main report should provide sufficiently detailed explanations on why the recommendations were issued by the peer review expert team. The recommendations should be formulated in such a way that the NSI/ONA is able to define suitable improvement actions. The

formulation of each recommendation should clearly identify the rationale to what is behind it and frame the potential future action(s).

The structure of the section is flexible, i.e. it could be adapted depending on the outcome of the review.

Within each broad issue, the recommendations should be grouped under Principle-subheaders (“Professional independence”, “Relevance”), if possible

BROAD ISSUE 1

BROAD ISSUE 2

BROAD ISSUE 3

BROAD ISSUE 4

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

ANNEX A – AGENDA OF THE VISIT

ANNEX B – LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

To be decided by each country but in view of the GDPR it may be advisable to mention only names of people whose names are published in the organisational chart of the authorities, all other people are mentioned with the function and the name of the authority only.