

European Statistical System Peer Reviews

Eurostat and the national statistical authorities of all the EU and EFTA countries form a partnership called the European Statistical System (ESS). Together, they produce European statistics which respect a common quality framework. One instrument that ensures the implementation of the common quality framework and thus the quality of European statistics is the so-called ESS Peer Reviews.

Code of Practice

The common quality framework of the ESS is based on the *European Statistics Code of Practice*, a set of 16 principles covering the institutional environment, statistical processes, and statistical outputs.

The principles are complemented with a set of 84 indicators of best practices and standards to provide guidance and reference for reviewing the implementation of the Code (or CoP).



ESS Peer Reviews

Quality is the trademark of European statistics and makes them more trustworthy than other data that are readily available through many channels. To guarantee the quality of their statistics, the ESS created a common quality framework. The European Statistics Code of Practice is the cornerstone of this quality framework.

The objective of the peer reviews is to assess ESS members' the compliance with the principles and indicators of the Code. The subsequent recommendations should also help statistical authorities to further improve and develop their statistical systems.

All members of the ESS are reviewed, i.e. Eurostat and the national statistical authorities of the EU Member States and EFTA countries. Peer review expert teams are composed of four European experts in statistics, auditing and governance issues,



including an independent expert, to assess the national statistical authorities. An expert team from the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB) reviews Eurostat.

The peer reviews are carried out on a country-by-country basis according to these steps:

1. Each ESS national statistical authority assesses itself against the principles of the Code through a questionnaire and provides extensive documentation on its functioning;
2. These documents are checked and analysed by an expert team which subsequently carries out an in-country visit during which a further in-depth review is performed;
3. The expert team compiles a final report with recommendations for improvements;
4. This report is submitted to the national statistical authority for approval and the drafting of improvement actions.

The implementation of the improvement actions in the EU and EFTA countries is monitored on an annual basis by Eurostat. The implementation of the improvement actions for Eurostat is monitored by ESGAB.

Peer Review 2021–2023

Two previous rounds of Peer Reviews (2006–2008 and 2013–2015) were focused mainly on compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice. Peer Review 2021–2023 (round III) will go further and help ESS partners to improve by making future-oriented recommendations that go beyond the current Code. In addition, future-oriented elements could help revise the Code to reflect new developments that experts will identify in this round.

