

The implementation of quality assurance frameworks for international and supranational organisations producing statistics

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In order to promote the use and convergence of quality frameworks for international organisations, the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA) supported in 2005 a Eurostat coordinated project on the use and convergence of international quality assurance frameworks with the aim of bringing different quality initiatives under a common framework in order to ensure that the right quality assurance procedures (methods and tools) are put in place and that the current and future quality activities of international organisations are well integrated.

In this paper, we review the main results arising from the project, stressing elements that are important for facilitating the implementation of quality assurance frameworks in international organisations. It presents the scope and uses of quality assurance frameworks; the impact on data quality; costs and benefits; relationships between frameworks; implementation experiences; monitoring and evaluation; and how to work with quality tools in order to facilitate a systematic implementation of data quality assessment in international organisations.

Quality assurance requirements for all aspects of statistical output quality and the underlying process quality should be monitored on a regular basis. Such data quality information could be embedded into an international statistical reporting system in order to provide synthesised information on the level of the quality of the statistical outputs for similar statistical processes, across countries and over time. This requires agreement on detailed guidelines and examples of quality reporting practices taking into account the significant updates reflecting the advances in quality practices over the recent years. In particular when it comes to the coverage of statistical processes using administrative sources or involving multiple data sources and standard quality and performance indicators.

Finally, we discuss the importance of continuous efforts for pursuing the quality assurance across countries by adjusting quality requirements, such as target values and minimum standards for statistics production, taking into account the evolving production environment from an international context.