



"The role of peer reviews as an important instrument in the context of monitoring and enhancing quality of official statistics"

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Policy developments around the world have put statistics in the forefront. Every national statistical system has been devoting increased attention to the production, dissemination and communication of official statistics in order to ensure their credibility, soundness and appropriate understanding. Sound high-quality data and statistical analysis are required for policy-making at national and European level. A clear path to strengthen quality of the European statistics have been part of the European Statistical System's developments from the adoption of the European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP) in 2005, the regular monitoring of its implementation, including the first peer review exercise, the adoption of the European Statistic Law in 2009, the second round of peer reviews in 2014/2015.

The CoP and its principles set out a framework for credible and trustworthy European statistics. Assessing progress in adhering to the CoP and strengthening its implementation by promoting the use of innovative practices developed by different countries are an integral part of the development of the European statistics. The Quality Assurance Framework is an important evolving tool in assisting the implementation of the CoP.

Peer reviews are a key instrument in this context. They have evolved in terms of scope, coverage and mainly approach. The second round (2014/2015) of peer reviews to the national statistical systems of the Europe Union including Eurostat, are a clear tribute to an independent and objective exercise based upon a clear methodology applied throughout the ESS using an audit-like approach, based upon clear evidences of policies, practices, processes and methods. In addition the assessment and recommendations made by the peer reviewers give raise to concrete action plans towards improvements in a given time frame. A strong and regular monitoring of the progress made in implementing the agreed actions is key to the peer review exercises. Overall annual reports on progress will be publicly available. This paper describes the rationale and the methodology of the second round of peer review to the ESS, the scope and coverage and yet a preliminary evaluation of the improvement actions to enhance the quality of official statistics as they emerge from the various country exercises.