

The ESS peer review process and follow-up



The ESS peer review process follows these main steps:



- Completing self-assessment questionnaires (SAQs) by the national statistical authorities.
- Analysing these SAQs and other documents and information by the expert team.
- An in-depth country visit by the expert team;
- Drafting the final report and ensuing recommendations by the expert team.
- Drafting concrete improvement actions by the national statistical institute to address the recommendations.
- Monitoring of the improvement actions on an annual basis by Eurostat.

1

Completing the SAQs



- The SAQ addresses all 16 Principles of the [European Statistics Code of Practice](#).
- The national statistical authorities must indicate how they are complying with the Code and provide documented evidence.
- In addition questions have to be answered on forward-looking/innovative practices.
- SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis for each Principle.

2

Analysis of the SAQs



- The expert team analyses the SAQs and the accompanying documentation.
- A combination of an audit-like approach and a peer review approach is used by the expert team.
- Any gaps or inconsistencies in the information provided are flagged and form the basis for the follow-up questions to be asked during the peer review visit.



3

The country visit



- The country visit lasts 4-5 days and follows an agenda agreed beforehand between the expert team and the national statistical institute.
- Participants include members of staff of the national statistical authorities, representatives of users, researchers, data providers, media...
- Not all Principles must be covered – the expert team is able to decide which Principles to assess following the analysis of the SAQ (possible problematic areas or issues which need further clarification).
- BUT mandatory assessment of Principles dealing with professional independence, coordination and cooperation within the national statistical system, and modernisation.

4

The final report and recommendations



- The final report and the ensuing recommendations are drafted by the expert team based on its findings.
- The expert team has sole ownership of the report and the recommendations.
- The final report identifies:
 - Strengths including forward-looking practices.
 - Areas for improvement through recommendations for follow-up by the national statistical authorities.

5

Drafting improvement actions by the national statistical institute



- The national statistical institute, in cooperation with the reviewed other statistical authorities drafts improvement actions to address the recommendations.
- The improvement actions are based on the SMART approach (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound).

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Monitoring of the improvement actions



- The implementation of the improvement actions by the national statistical authorities is monitored by Eurostat on an annual basis.
- An annual monitoring report is then submitted by Eurostat to the [European Statistical System Committee](#) – the oversight body of the ESS.
- The monitoring of this round of ESS peer reviews will end in December 2027.