

PEER REVIEW REPORT

ON COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE AND
THE COORDINATION ROLE OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL INSTITUTE

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Statistics Iceland is an independent government institution and the main producer of national and European statistics in Iceland with the responsibility of coordinating the National Statistical System (NSS). Statistics Iceland's professional independence is guaranteed by the Act on Statistics Iceland and official statistics (No 163/2007) which took effect in 2008. The office is generally well-regarded for its objectivity, expertise and professional independence by users and commentators.

Statistics Iceland is a relatively small National Statistical Institute (NSI) with some 100 employees. Staff members are highly educated and dedicated to their work and management and leadership teams are clearly committed to enhancing compliance with the European statistics Code of Practice (CoP).

In the aftermath of the collapse of the Banking system in Iceland in late 2008 severe cuts were made on the budgets of public institutions. Consequently, Statistics Iceland had to downsize its functions by reducing staff, terminating the production of some statistics and slowing down implementation of development plans. Despite the challenges it faces, Statistics Iceland is an ambitious and vigorous organisation. It has published its Quality Policy and recently appointed a Quality Manager and a Methodologist, both of whom have important work programmes that will benefit Statistics Iceland in the years ahead.

The Peer Review team identified three broad issues in which compliance with the CoP could be enhanced. These issues are related to modernising governance in order to improve coordination and to become more outward-facing, enhancing efficiency and enhancing value of investment in official statistics.

The shortage of Statistics Iceland's resources seems likely to have contributed to its organisational culture with a more production-oriented than user-focused approach. The Peer Reviewers are of the opinion that increasing collaboration with other experts - for example with other NSIs and with academia - would mitigate its resource constraints.

Even though Statistics Iceland has established various advisory committees and user groups, there is still room for improvement of overall user-engagement. Statistics Iceland's service delivery is largely driven by the capacity and commitment of individual production units in a rather piecemeal fashion. The Peer Reviewers recommend to operate more corporately by establishing a Statistical Council and reviewing the current system of user groups as well as to strengthen methodological work. Though the Icelandic NSS is quite centralised, it is important to improve coordination for making the system more effective.

Under the difficult budgetary conditions it is of utmost importance to increase efficiency. For this reason it is recommended to review the division of labour between Statistics Iceland and the other producers of official statistics, to increase benchmarking and collaboration with other NSIs as well as to strengthen partnerships with the scientific community.

In order to enhance the value of investment in official statistics, Statistics Iceland should improve its websites and work more pro-actively with the media. A higher public profile and more insightful statistical reports would tend to strengthen official statistics' recognition in the society. Also the Quality Management System of Statistics Iceland should be reviewed from a user-perspective, and a higher priority should be given to the production of methodological documentation and metadata.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Modernise governance to improve coordination and to become more outward-facing

1. A Statistical Council, with external stakeholder representation, should be established in the Statistics Law. (European statistics Code of Practice, all Principles.)
2. The remit of the User Groups be reviewed (with users), and the current system of User Groups should be extended to cover other statistical domains. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 11.1, 11.2, 13.3 and 15.6.)
3. Statistics Iceland should establish thematic/topic based groups of producers of, and contributors to, European (and other official) statistics, including owners of registers and administrative data sources. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 2.2 and Principles 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 14.)
4. A Methodological Advisory Committee, with external academic and other appropriate representation, should be established. Its remit – ideally the National Statistical System – and roles and responsibilities, and membership, should be publicised. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 1.4, 4.5, 5.6, 6.1, 6.2 and 12.2 and Principles 7, 8 and 14.)
5. A plan for the National Statistical System (clearly identifying European Statistics) should be developed and published, and progress reported regularly. (European statistics Code of Practice, all Principles and Coordination.)
6. Membership of the Quality Council should be broadened to include representatives of users and experts. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 4, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14 and 15.)
7. Membership of the Confidentiality Committee should be broadened to include relevant external experts from, for example, the research community (this would require a revision of article 7C of the “Rules of Procedure”.) (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 5.4 and 5.6 and Principle 15.)
8. Statistics Iceland should discuss with the EFTA secretariat, and if necessary successive Presidencies, the scope to be granted observer status at the Council Working Party for Statistics meetings. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 3 and 11 and Coordination.)
9. Statistics Iceland should publish transparent plans and full descriptions of the role and functions of the Research Unit. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 1.1 and 1.5 and Principle 6.)
10. Statistics Iceland should review, formalise and publish all data sharing agreements – and should use this exercise to further enhance its understanding of the quality of administrative data, to explore access to other sources of administrative data, and to provide transparency about flows of data. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 5 and indicators 2.2, 7.3, 7.4, 8.1, 9.6, 10.4, 14.3 and 14.4.)

Enhance efficiency

11. The production of methodological guidelines should be prioritised. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 7.2.)
12. The desirability of transferring responsibility for the production of European Statistics currently produced by small Other National Authorities to Statistics Iceland should be considered. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 1.4 and Compliance of small ONAs with the CoP.)
13. A benchmarking exercise should be undertaken as part of reviewing Statistics Iceland's business model. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 4 and indicator 10.4.)

14. Statistics Iceland should discuss with the Government the scope for additional funding to meet the European requirements. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 3.1.)
15. Statistics Iceland should develop a strategic training plan that is aligned with its Business Plan. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 3.1.)
16. Partnerships with the scientific community should be strengthened. For example involvement of users in methodological discussions should be formalised and the scientific community could be involved in professional training of Statistics Iceland staff. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 7.5, 7.6 and 7.7.)
17. Collaboration with other National Statistical Institutes on complex issues such as quality indicators should be strengthened. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 4.4 and 14.5.)
18. Statistics Iceland should prioritise the development of a business register in order to comply with the Regulation on Business Registers and to meet national needs. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 7.1 and 7.3.)

Enhance the value of investment in official statistics

19. Statistics Iceland should continue to enhance its website, including graphical illustrations of statistics. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 15.1 and 15.2.)
20. The explanation of statistical messages, in bulletins and reports, should be improved. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 15.2.)
21. Statistics Iceland should review the Quality Management System from a user-perspective. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 4, 11 and 12.)
22. Statistics Iceland should prioritise the production of methodological documentation, and user-oriented metadata. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 7.1, 7.2, 7.4 and 15.6 and Principles 8, 12 and 14.)
23. Statistics Iceland should work more pro-actively with the media, including holding press conference and seminars, both to raise awareness of its work and to strengthen its communication capacity. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 1.7 and 15.1.)
24. Statistics Iceland should publish and implement a revisions policy. (European statistics code of Practice, indicators 8.6 and 12.3.)

2. INTRODUCTION

This peer review report is part of a series of assessments, the objective of which is to evaluate the extent to which National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) and the European Statistical System (ESS)¹ comply with the European statistics Code of Practice (CoP).

The CoP, which sets out a common quality framework for the ESS, was first adopted in 2005 by the Statistical Programme Committee and updated in 2011 by its successor, the European Statistical System Committee. The CoP — 15 principles and related indicators of good practice — covers the institutional environment, the statistical production process and the output of European statistics. The ESS is committed to fully complying with the CoP and is working towards its full implementation. Periodic assessments review progress towards reaching this goal.

The first global assessment, a round of peer reviews in 2006–2008, explored how the NSIs and Eurostat were progressing in implementing the parts of the CoP relating to the institutional environment and dissemination of statistics (principles 1–6 and 15). This resulted in reports for each NSI and Eurostat, available on the Eurostat website². These reports also include a set of improvement actions covering all the principles of the CoP; these informed the annual monitoring of the implementation of the CoP in the ESS in the period 2009–2013.

The scope of this second round of peer reviews is broader: the assessment of CoP compliance covers all principles; the CoP compliance of selected other national producers of European statistics (as well as the NSI) in each country is assessed; and the way in which statistical authorities coordinate the production and dissemination of European statistics within their statistical systems is explored.

It should be underlined that there is a fundamental difference between the reports in the previous round of peer reviews conducted in 2006–2008 and the reports from this round. In the 2006–2008 round compliance with principles 1 to 6 and 15 of the CoP was assessed by means of a four-level scale (fully met; largely met; partly met and not met) and improvement actions were agreed on all 15 principles. After five years of continuous development most of the improvement actions have been implemented and significant progress towards full compliance with the CoP has been made. Therefore, rather than stating the state of play for all principles of the CoP, the reports from the 2013–2015 round mainly focus on issues where full compliance with the CoP has not been found or further improvements are recommended by the Peer Review team.

In order to gain an independent view, the peer review exercise has been externalised and an audit-like approach, where all the answers to the self-assessment questionnaires have to be supported by evidence, has been applied. As in 2006–2008, all EU Member States, the EFTA/EEA countries and Eurostat are subject to a peer review.

Each peer review in the Member States and EFTA/EEA countries is conducted by three reviewers and has four phases: completion of self-assessment questionnaires by a country; their assessment by Peer Reviewers; a peer review visit; and the preparation of reports on the outcomes. The peer review of Eurostat has been conducted by the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB).

¹ The ESS is the partnership between the Union statistical authority, which is the Commission (Eurostat), the national statistical institutes (NSIs) and other national authorities responsible in each Member State for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics. This Partnership also includes the EFTA /EEA countries.

² <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/quality/peer-reviews>

To test and complete the methodology, it was piloted in two countries, Iceland and Slovakia, over the summer of 2013.

The peer review of Iceland was conducted by Richard Laux (chair), Marie Bohatá and Marina Gandolfo, who conducted a peer review visit to Reykjavik on 3-6 September 2013. The programme of the visit is in Annex A and the list of participants in Annex B.

This report focuses on compliance with the CoP and the coordination of European statistics within the Icelandic statistical system. The report highlights some of the strengths of Statistics Iceland in these contexts and contains recommendations for improvement. Improvement actions developed by Statistics Iceland on the basis of this report will be published within the four-week period starting when the final report is sent to the NSI.

The methodology for the peer reviews was adopted and amended following the pilot peer reviews in the Slovak Republic and Iceland. The original pilot peer review reports for these countries were drafted and published before the start of the other peer reviews, which is why the approach and style therein follow a different approach. Therefore the reports have been aligned with the other reports with regard to the approach and style. Harmonisation of the two pilot reports with the other published peer review reports follows the developed guidelines and template. The revised reports are edited by Heli Jeskanen-Sundström with consultation of the Peer Review team. The conclusions and recommendations set out in the original reports remain unchanged.

3. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

Development of basic legislation

Statistics Iceland (Hagstofa Íslands) was founded in 1914 and was formally a government ministry until the end of 2007. The new Act on Statistics Iceland and official statistics (No 163/2007, hereafter called the Statistics Law) took effect on 1 January 2008. Under this law Statistics Iceland ceased to be a separate ministry and is now an independent government institution. Administrative tasks, such as operating registers, have been devolved from Statistics Iceland to other institutions.

According to the Statistics Law, Statistics Iceland is the centre for official statistics in Iceland and has the leading role in the organisation, coordination and production of official statistics. The Law also establishes a mandate for data collection (including the right of Statistics Iceland to access administrative data) and regulates confidentiality and dissemination of statistical data.

In addition to the Statistics Law and special laws on wage and consumer price indices, Statistics Iceland operates in accordance with the Act on the Protection of Privacy regarding the processing of personal data (No 77/2000).

Head of Statistics Iceland

Statistics Iceland is directed by a Director General, appointed by the Minister for a term of five-years, renewable. The selection process for the recruitment of the Director General is established in the Statistics Law and in the Government employees act (no 70/1996). According to the Statistics Law, the Director General shall be a university graduate in economics, statistics, sociology or related disciplines and have knowledge and experience of the production or use of statistics. The selection process is transparent and the reasons on the basis of which the incumbency can be terminated are specified in the legal framework.

Statistics Iceland's organisation

Statistics Iceland is organised into four divisions: Economic Statistics, Social Statistics, Business Statistics, Resources and Services. In addition, there is an Office of Director General and Administration and a special unit on Research and Forecasts. The Director General, four directors of divisions, the financial manager and the human resource manager constitute the management of the office. Statistics Iceland has recently appointed a Quality Manager and a Methodologist to support its methodological and quality work.

Statistics Iceland has around 100 employees. About 80 % of these had a university level education.

Strategies, programmes

According to the strategic work programme 2013-2014, Statistics Iceland's vision is to be a progressive centre of statistics, to stand equal to exemplary statistical offices in Europe and to be a good and desirable working place characterised by efficiency and flexibility. In 2013 the main emphasis of work is on quality, confidentiality and the new business register. For the next few years the aim is to comply with the requirements of the EU legal acts. Statistics Iceland has developed and published a quality policy which is available on its website.

The annual work programme is prepared in accordance with the financial plan and the strategy and is open to the public on Statistics Iceland's website.

Dissemination

Statistics Iceland disseminates all statistics free of charge on its website www.statice.is where almost equal weight is given to the national version in Icelandic and the international version in English. Metadata are presented on website in the format of the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS, a standard of the International Monetary Fund). The advance release calendar of the key indicators for the forthcoming year is published in November. The release dates for all publications are available on web two months in advance of the publishing date.

National Statistical System (NSS)

The Icelandic NSS is rather centralised. Main producer of official statistics including European statistics is Statistics Iceland. The Statistics Law gives Statistics Iceland a mandate to coordinate official statistics activities. The scope of coordination covers tasks and methods applied, including the application of standards and classifications, requirements for quality and publication, and the treatment of data collected for statistical purposes. The Law also requires that Statistics Iceland should institute and maintain a process of regular consultation between the state institutions which are engaged in official statistics or collect data which are important for that purpose.

Other producers of official statistics are rather small and have only limited functions in the NSS, except the Central Bank of Iceland which has a major role.

The Central Bank (CB) is responsible for all monetary and banking statistics as well as statistics on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and capital transfers. The CB compiles the financial balance when estimating the overall current account, but Statistics Iceland is responsible for statistics on trade in goods and services. Statistics Iceland and the CB have an agreement on the production of Financial Accounts and Statistics Iceland has regular meetings with the bank on statistical issues. To perform its duties the CB has wide permission to collect statistical data from the financial sector according to the article 20 of the Act on the Central Bank of Iceland (No 36, 2001)³. In the Act on the CB there are articles on confidentiality and the bank issues its own advance release calendar.

The other producers of the European statistics in Iceland are the Environment Agency of Iceland (water and waste statistics), the National Energy Authority (energy statistics) and the Icelandic Transport Authority (statistics of transport by air) which has recently replaced the Civil Aviation Administration (CAA). They have only few experts working on statistics. Statistics Iceland has been in active cooperation with the Environment Agency and the Energy Authority and has prepared draft cooperation agreements with these institutions. The agreements have not been signed as there is discussion on moving more of the statistical work to Statistics Iceland, especially on energy prices and environmental statistics.

The Icelandic Centre for Research (RANNIS) has produced statistics on research and development and delivered them to Eurostat. Within the Icelandic NSS the role of RANNIS as a producer of these statistics is currently under discussion.

³ <http://www.cb.is/lisalib/getfile.aspx?itemid=7425>

4. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE AND THE COORDINATION ROLE WITHIN THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

This section summarises the Peer Reviewers' views on the extent of CoP compliance and the nature and effectiveness of coordination within the NSS. It first summarises Statistics Iceland's strengths in these respects, and then explores specific issues including making recommendations that the Peer Reviewers consider would strengthen compliance with the CoP.

4.1 STRENGTHS OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL INSTITUTE IN RELATION TO ITS COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE AND TO ITS COORDINATION ROLE

Statistics Iceland's professional independence is guaranteed by the Statistics Law which took effect in 2008. The rules and procedures of the appointment and dismissal of the Director General are transparent and follow the requirements of the CoP. The office is generally well-regarded for its objectivity, expertise and professional independence by users and commentators and its staff members are regularly interviewed in the media. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 1.)

The Statistics Law establishes Statistics Iceland's rights to collect data for statistical purposes. The law also guarantees its access to registers and other administrative data. In fact, by law Statistics Iceland should seek to obtain data from administrative registers and public registers where possible to minimise response burden. State institutions and municipal authorities should inform Statistics Iceland of their activities and plans to collect data for major statistical processing. The register authorities should consult Statistics Iceland on the organisation of new registers and the renewal of or change in existing ones. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 2 and 9.)

Statistics Iceland has a strong tradition of confidentiality protection reflecting, in part, the small and geographically clustered population. Statistical confidentiality is regulated by law and the staff members have signed confidentiality commitments. Statistics Iceland has set its own "Rules of Procedure for Treating Confidential Data" laying down definitions, roles and procedures regarding statistical confidentiality. There are also two internal groups dealing with confidentiality issues: a Permanent Confidentiality Group and a Confidentiality Working Group. The former group deals with the data requests for scientific research projects and with more general rules of access to confidential data by researchers whereas the main task of the latter group is to investigate and address challenges regarding internal and external confidentiality issues. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 5.)

Statistics Iceland is an ambitious and vigorous organisation. It has published its Quality Policy and recently appointed a Quality Manager and a Methodologist, both of whom have important work programmes that will benefit Statistics Iceland in the years ahead. Staff members are highly educated, well-trained, and appear to be dedicated to their roles. At a senior management level relationships are strong and the sense of team spirit is palpable. More generally, staff members and Statistics Iceland's management and leadership teams are clearly committed to enhancing compliance with the CoP. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 3 and 4.)

4.2 ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section three broad issues which could enhance compliance with the CoP are discussed. These are: modernising governance to improve coordination and to become more outward-facing, enhancing efficiency and enhancing the value of investment in official statistics.

4.2.1 MODERNISE GOVERNANCE TO IMPROVE COORDINATION AND TO BECOME MORE OUTWARD-FACING

Statistical Council and User Groups

Article 2 of the Statistics Law says that "*Statistics Iceland shall decide on [statistical projects] and prioritise its tasks taking account of the needs of the government for statistical information for policy-formation and decisions on public issues, international obligations of the state on statistical production and the needs and demands of the public, businesses, labour market organisations, and research and educational institutions for statistical information. For this purpose the institution shall carry out active consultation with these parties*".

As part of fulfilling this requirement Statistics Iceland has established the Advisory Committees on the Consumer Prices Index and Labour Market statistics as well as the User Groups on Price Indices, National Accounts and Wage (Labour Market) statistics. In addition it is planning to establish further user groups relating to Social Statistics and Business Statistics.

The Peer Review team was told that these User Groups were regarded positively in themselves, for example as vehicles for user consultation. However, the User Groups are not yet seen as being sufficiently effective, with the consequent risk that users might disengage. The User Groups might have an important role to play in helping to identify both emerging priorities and negative priorities - work that might be reduced or stopped - and to contribute to and publicly support decisions made by Statistics Iceland about resourcing. However, the Peer Review team is of the opinion that a more systematic approach to understanding, documenting and using information about its users or the use that they make of Icelandic statistics would be needed.

The Peer Reviewers believe that it would be useful to complement the User Groups by a more strategic Statistical Council, established in statute. This would enable external stakeholders - for example in academia and business:

- to influence plans and priorities;
- to help Statistics Iceland become culturally and practically more user-oriented;
- to advise Statistics Iceland on issues such as how to raise its profile and when to respond publicly to the misuse of statistics;
- to advise Statistics Iceland on the interpretation of the CoP in an Icelandic context;
- to support Statistics Iceland's leadership and coordination roles in the national statistical system; and
- to ensure that Ministries are fully-aware of others' need for statistical information.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 1. A Statistical Council, with external stakeholder representation, should be established in the Statistics Law. (European statistics Code of Practice, all Principles.)**
- 2. The remit of the User Groups be reviewed (with users), and the current system of User Groups should be extended to cover other statistical domains. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 11.1, 11.2, 13.3 and 15.6.)**

Producer Groups

Article 3 of the Statistics Law requires Statistics Iceland to "*coordinate official statistical activities for which it and other state institutions are responsible ... Statistics Iceland shall institute and maintain a process of regular consultation between the state institutions which are engaged in official statistics or collect data which are important for that process*".

Articles 5 and 6 of the Statistics Law establish Statistics Iceland's rights to access administrative data held by others, and its responsibilities in these regards. For example:

- "*Statistics Iceland shall always provide information on the purpose of the data collection, the conditions for the processing, the safeguarding of the data and the dissemination of the results*".
- "*Statistics Iceland shall ... seek to obtain data from administrative registers and other public registers where possible*".
- "*Statistics Iceland may ... request the parties concerned to collect additional information for statistical purposes*".
- "*State institutions ... shall consult Statistics Iceland on the organisation of new registers and the renewal of or change in existing registers ... Statistics Iceland is authorised to request that changes be made in registers*".

Even though the legislative basis is very strong, there seems to be a clear need to strengthen coordination and cooperation in practice with the other statistics producers and the owners of administrative data. The Peer Review team was told that:

- There is a need for more coherence – in some aspects of methodology, such as seasonal adjustment, and some topics such as health, high-tech industries, and education data;
- Some definitions or concepts in administrative data sources (such as the 'family') do not readily lend themselves to statistical purposes;
- The structure of some administrative data systems is not well understood;
- Some organisations that hold administrative data are unaware of the Statistics Law, which means that Statistics Iceland has to actively monitor potential changes;
- There are delays and difficulties influencing some owners of administrative data. The identification of apartments in the Population Register maintained by Registers Iceland - a national registry office - is a long-standing problem. More generally, Statistics Iceland meets some administrative data owners quite infrequently (less than annually).

There would be benefit in bringing together those organisations which provide Statistics Iceland with administrative/register data or which produce statistical information relevant to the work of Statistics Iceland (such as the other statistical authorities - including the Central Bank - and other data providers). The Peer Reviewers believe that this would raise awareness of Statistics Iceland's needs and act as a means of implementing the strong provisions of the Statistics Law and more generally strengthen efficiency, effectiveness and coherence of statistical work.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 3. Statistics Iceland should establish thematic/topic based groups of producers of, and contributors to, European (and other official) statistics, including owners of registers and administrative data sources. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 2.2 and Principles 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 14.)**

Methodological Advisory Committee

Article 4 of the Statistics Law says that *"the Director General [of Statistics Iceland] bears professional responsibility for the statistical activities of Statistics Iceland. He/she makes decisions on methods and practices ... [and] on the application of classifications and standards"*.

Whilst Statistics Iceland has hosted external review teams (such as from the International Monetary Fund and Eurostat, in particular domains), it does not currently have a formal approach to methodological/quality reviews or audits, although this is envisaged for 2014-15 as the quality management strategy is implemented. It has recently appointed a full-time methodologist.

The Peer Review team was told that Statistics Iceland does not formally cooperate with Icelandic universities on methodological issues, although the methodologist does have links with the University of Iceland. The Peer Reviewers believe that more formal links would be helpful in order to support the greater standardisation of methods and the provision of appropriate training, as well as the provision of advice on technical statistical issues as a complement to advice received from other Nordic countries and from Eurostat. And to the extent that new methods are likely to lead to revisions in statistical series, the impartiality and objectivity of Statistics Iceland's work would seem to be supported by expert advice and advocacy which would not challenge the professional independence of the Director General.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 4. A Methodological Advisory Committee, with external academic and other appropriate representation, should be established. Its remit – ideally the National Statistical System – and roles and responsibilities, and membership, should be publicised. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 1.4, 4.5, 5.6, 6.1, 6.2 and 12.2 and Principles 7, 8, and 14.)**

Plan for the National Statistical System

The Icelandic NSS is highly centralised around Statistics Iceland. The other producers of European Statistics are the Environment Agency of Iceland, the National Energy Authority, and the Icelandic Transport Authority.

Article 3 of the Statistics Law requires Statistics Iceland to *"coordinate official statistical activities for which it and other state institutions are responsible ... Statistics Iceland shall institute and maintain a process of regular consultation between the state institutions which are engaged in official statistics or collect data which are important for that process"*.

Whilst Statistics Iceland has a published work programme, there is no similar plan for the NSS as a whole. Reflecting the degree of centralisation in Icelandic statistics, there would be considerable overlap in these plans as regards statistical products. However, the Peer Reviewers consider that the establishment and monitoring of such a plan for the NSS would strengthen Statistics Iceland's coordination role, including: identifying inefficiencies; enhancing compliance with the CoP; ensuring that the needs for methodological and quality management expertise are identified; and delivering training to meet the needs of all statistical authorities.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 5. A plan for the National Statistical System (clearly identifying European Statistics) should be developed and published, and progress reported regularly. (European statistics Code of Practice, all Principles and Coordination.)**

Broader membership of the Quality Council and Confidentiality Committee

Statistics Iceland published its Quality Policy in January 2013, and is currently implementing its "Roadmap for Quality Management" which is intended to meet the standards set out in Principle 4 of the CoP. This work is overseen by the Quality Council, a committee of Statistics Iceland's Directors, which meets monthly. As noted elsewhere, the work on quality appears to be rather input-focused at present, and would benefit from a strategic re-orientation to enable users to influence its development.

Section III of the Statistics Law establishes high level principles for the protection of statistical confidentiality, and requires (article 13) Statistics Iceland to "*issue more detailed rules on the provision or utilisation of data ...*" Consistent with this Statistics Iceland has published its "Rules of Procedure for Treating Confidential Data", article 7C of which commits Statistics Iceland to operate an internal Confidentiality Committee. This Committee, more widely referred to as the Permanent Confidentiality Group, deals with external requests for data from the scientific/academic community. It is complemented by a recently-established internal Confidentiality Working Group (CWG) - a temporary project group - whose remit is to address emerging challenges to confidentiality, such as those emerging from information technology (IT) developments.

In the same way that much methodological and quality-related work has been the responsibility of the individual business areas, so has confidentiality protection. The Peer Review team believes that confidentiality protection requires strong central oversight, and welcomes the establishment of the CWG.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 6. Membership of the Quality Council should be broadened to include representatives of users and experts. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 4, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14 and 15.)**
- 7. Membership of the Confidentiality Committee should be broadened to include relevant external experts from, for example, the research community (this would require a revision of article 7C of the "Rules of Procedure".) (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 5.4 and 5.6 and Principle 15.)**

Statistics Iceland's mission

Article 1 of the Statistics Law describes the role of Statistics Iceland in the following terms:

"Statistics Iceland is an independent institution under the aegis of the Minister which handles official statistics under this Act. It is the centre for official statistics in Iceland and has the leading role in the organisation, coordination and conduct thereof, and also in cooperation with international organisations concerning statistics.

The term official statistics in this Act refers to the operations of Statistics Iceland and other competent state institutions on the collection of data for the generation of statistics on the Icelandic economy and society, the processing of the data and the dissemination of statistical information to the public, businesses, institutions and public authorities on the basis of law and in accordance with instructions issued under this Act."

Statistics Iceland describes its role in the following terms: "*Statistics Iceland produces objective statistics, is the centre for official statistics in Iceland, conducts research and thereby works towards informed discussion and professional decision making*".

Without making any formal recommendations, the Peer Review team considers that Statistics Iceland might:

- adopt a more visionary mission statement, aligned to Article 1 of the Statistics Law, which captures its role as a provider of information (analysis and explanation, rather than just description) to the public and other users of its statistics – and then:
- review its priorities in the context of compliance with the CoP and in the light of this mission statement. This could provide an opportunity to raise the profile of Statistics Iceland.

Council Working Party for Statistics (CWPS) observer status

Two aspects of Statistics Iceland’s engagement with EU statistics developments are noteworthy to mention here.

The Peer Review team was told that the EU Regulations and Directives are enacted by the Icelandic Parliament, and the costs (to the Ministries) of implementing them are covered by additional funding. However, different processes apply in relation to the EU statistical Regulations entering the agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA). These are not incorporated in Icelandic law. As a consequence Statistics Iceland has to absorb the extended statistical obligations without satisfactory means to cover the additional costs. This issue has been raised with the Government.

As Iceland is not represented at the CWPS, Statistics Iceland is sometimes unaware of changes and their wider political context in the drafts of the EU statistical Regulations made after the ESSC has performed its comitological role. Whilst some insights are provided by the Nordic countries, Statistics Iceland considers that its coordination role with other statistical authorities is potentially disadvantaged.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 8. Statistics Iceland should discuss with the EFTA secretariat, and if necessary successive Presidencies, the scope to be granted observer status at the Council Working Party for Statistics meetings. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 3 and 11 and Coordination.)**

Research Unit

Article 1 of the Statistics Law includes the following: *"Statistics Iceland shall operate an independent research unit that shall be separate from statistical operations. The unit shall monitor the performance of the economy, make economic forecasts and plans and publish the results."*

The Research Unit, comprising three people, makes and publishes economic forecasts. It gets pre-release access – documented on Statistics Iceland’s website - to quarterly National Accounts statistics each June, as an input to its June economic forecast. The Research Unit itself grants pre-release access to its draft economic forecast – but not to the National Accounts statistics - to the Ministry of Finance. Although the issue was not raised by users during the peer review visit, the Peer Review team believes that it would be helpful for Statistics Iceland to clarify the extent to which the Ministry of Finance might effectively have pre-release access to the June National Accounts statistics by virtue of the work of the Research Unit.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 9. Statistics Iceland should publish transparent plans and full descriptions of the role and functions of the Research Unit. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 1.1 and 1.5 and Principle 6.)**

Data sharing agreements

Statistics Iceland receives both data from Agencies – such as the Directorate of Fisheries and the Directorate of Customs – as well as administrative data from a number of organisations, and register information from Registers Iceland.

The Peer Review team understands that some agreements – covering cooperation generally, or data sharing in particular – are in place, but most are of a technical nature and are largely out-of-date. An important exception is the Agreement with the Central Bank which covers, for example, the shared responsibilities for the production of Financial Accounts statistics and the supply of firm-level data for Balance of Payments statistics. Some of these agreements are mentioned in Statistics Iceland's Annual Report, but the agreements themselves do not appear to be published.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 10. Statistics Iceland should review, formalise and publish all data sharing agreements – and should use this exercise to further enhance its understanding of the quality of administrative data, to explore access to other sources of administrative data, and to provide transparency about flows of data. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 5 and indicators 2.2, 7.3, 7.4, 8.1, 9.6, 10.4, 14.3 and 14.4.)**

4.2.2 ENHANCE EFFICIENCY

Methodological guidelines

Sound methodology underpins quality statistics. Although Statistics Iceland does not have an overall methodological framework following European and other international standards, guidelines and practices, most of the ingredients are in place for specific statistical domains. Statistics Iceland strives to use relevant concepts, definitions and classifications which are based on European legislation.

The Peer Review team was told that the systematic development of the necessary methodological infrastructure started at the beginning of 2013 and currently one person works full time on methodological projects. A road map to achieve a full compliance with the Principle 7 of the CoP has been adopted within the new quality policy at the institutional level. So far most methodological developments have been subject matter oriented and the supply of standard tools is limited. Currently they include for example a Blaise software for Computer assisted telephone interview (CATI) and Computer assisted web interview (CAWI) surveys, Statistics Iceland's web portal and PX-web⁴ for data tables.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 11. The production of methodological guidelines should be prioritised. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 7.2.)**

Responsibility for the production of European statistics currently produced by small Other National Authorities (ONAs)

According to the Statistics Law, Statistics Iceland coordinates official statistical activities for which it and other state institutions are responsible. The scope of this coordination work covers tasks and

⁴ PX-web is a solution for the web which is used to establish dynamic tables on internet from PC-Axis files.

methods applied, standards and classifications, requirements for quality and publication and the treatment of data collected for statistical purposes. The coordination function is exercised through meetings organised with other producers: no specific coordination body has been established. Other producers of European statistics are independent official institutions but, with the exception of the Central Bank, they are weak in the sense of statistical production having only limited capacity to produce statistics. It is not realistic to expect such small teams or even individuals to operate in full compliance with the CoP.

The Peer Review team was told that Statistics Iceland plans to institute and maintain a process of regular consultation between the state institutions which are engaged in official statistics or collect data which are important for that purpose. Cooperation agreements with other producers have been developed, but not yet signed (except with the Central Bank) as there is discussion on moving more of the statistical work to Statistics Iceland, especially on energy prices and environmental statistics.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 12. The desirability of transferring responsibility for the production of European statistics currently produced by small Other National Authorities to Statistics Iceland should be considered. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 1.4 and Compliance of small ONAs with the CoP.)**

Statistics Iceland's business model

A design of a process model for the institution is a big achievement. Statistics Iceland has recently finalised version 2 of its statistical business process model based on the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) version 4. The continuous improvement of processes is at the core of Statistics Iceland's new quality policy. The process model describes different levels of processes: level 0 is a process map defining eight business processes within Statistics Iceland; level 1 is a description of these processes (in the case of the statistical production process the description is almost identical with the GSBPM); and level 2 consists of standard operating procedures. Inevitably, though, it is a long way from the design to the full implementation of the model. Process-orientation and process-thinking require a big change to the status quo and as such have to be strongly supported by the management of the organisation. Developing a sense of ownership by the staff is crucial.

The Peer Review team was told that in most cases Statistics Iceland reviews and assesses solutions in use by other NSIs. Beyond the existing close cooperation within the network of Nordic countries Statistics Iceland has started some benchmarking activities with small EU countries, namely Malta and Luxembourg.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 13. A benchmarking exercise should be undertaken as part of reviewing Statistics Iceland's business model. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 4 and indicator 10.4.)**

Funding to meet European requirements

After the collapse of Icelandic banks in late 2008, public expenditure was cut sharply, and Statistics Iceland has been suffering as a result - it had to reduce staff (by 8%) and limit its statistical production activity. The strategy implemented in this difficult situation was to reduce tasks and to maintain highly qualified staff, in an attempt to protect infrastructure such as IT and computing and to maintain quality. As an EU candidate country, Statistics Iceland benefitted from EU grants relating to an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), namely for the Housing and Population Census, Agricultural statistics and improvement in National Accounts.

Comparing budgets in 2007 and 2012, the reduction in real terms adjusted for special occurrences, such as the aforementioned IPA grants and a special temporary appropriation to produce statistics on household debt, was 17% and on the per capita basis 19%. Accordingly Statistics Iceland was not able to meet the new demands of the European Statistical Programme and this lack of compliance with the Statistical Requirements Compendium was mapped in the accession process. The establishment of a Business register as a priority project in order to produce Short-term and Structural Business Statistics was included in the Action Plan elaborated within the negotiation process. The Government of Iceland approved a continuation of its financing after the withdrawal of the IPA grants. The 2014 Budget includes appropriations to continue the work on business statistics, albeit at a slower pace than Statistics Iceland had planned. However there has been lack of financing of environmental statistics and some important surveys, including those relating to Health, Adult Education, and Job vacancies.

Statistics Iceland has also had problems in making use of EU grants managed by Eurostat, because projects cannot be supported by these grants if they are below a threshold of € 25,000. This has resulted in Statistics Iceland being unable to apply for several grants, which has made it more difficult to fulfil EU statistical obligations.

The Peer Review team was told that EU Regulations on statistics - contrary to other EU Regulations - are not incorporated into Icelandic law and are therefore not regarded as mandatory or binding. Thus the costs of new EU statistical commitments are not covered by the Ministry of Finance. This results in problems of compliance with the "statistical *acquis communautaire*".

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 14. Statistics Iceland should discuss with the Government the scope for additional funding to meet the European requirements. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 3.1.)**

Strategic training plan

Statistics Iceland's main strength is its highly qualified staff, and continuous vocational training is an important part of the human resource policy. In January 2013 a new career development policy was implemented. This aimed to enhance the knowledge of employees by providing access to courses, both domestic and international, and by providing peer-tutoring.

The training needs of staff are assessed systematically every two years in employee interviews. Training programmes are set up according to the results of interviews and information about staff training needs coming from the educational committee that meets twice a year. Statistics Iceland's Human Resources department is responsible for the development of common training programmes, and heads of unit apply for relevant courses on behalf of their staff. Staff members are partly responsible for their own training, namely for training not specified in the training programme. Employees have a right to paid leave to pursue job related training. There is no systematic or formal monitoring of which courses each employee has taken; only the time spent on training by each staff member is recorded.

The Peer Review team was told that employees of Statistics Iceland are obliged to update their knowledge and skills, and to ensure that they are up to date. To do so they have significant rights to pursue any job related training or educational opportunity while on paid leave. All divisions have a fixed budget earmarked for attending international events including training courses.

Even though Statistics Iceland has developed its training systems and opportunities for its staff to participate, the Peer Reviewers consider that a more strategic approach to training would bring more value to investment and benefit the office in the longer run.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 15. Statistics Iceland should develop a strategic training plan that is aligned with its Business Plan. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 3.1.)**

Partnerships with the scientific community (see also the Recommendation No 4)

Cooperation with the scientific community on complex issues is crucial in order to address many of the new challenges that official statisticians are facing including limited resources, the necessity to respond ever more quickly to emerging user needs, and a drive to improve quality.

Statistics Iceland tries to involve the scientific community in user groups that have been established in several statistical domains, such as National Accounts, Labour Market Statistics and Consumer Price Indices. A cooperation agreement with the business department of the University of Iceland has been signed. It covers cooperation on master thesis projects on statistical topics. Recently Statistics Iceland has established a steering group with representation drawn from the scientific community in an attempt to improve access to microdata for scientific purposes - although progress is slow as it is difficult to obtain funding for improvements.

The current cooperation model is based mainly on good personal relationships. The Peer Review team was told that there are good informal relationships and that the scientific community is very appreciative of Statistics Iceland's willingness to communicate and assist. However there are no formal means of information exchange with the scientific community or communication on methodology, IT and innovation. The Peer Reviewers believe that there is more potential for Statistics Iceland to benefit from the knowledge and experience acquired within academia and universities.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 16. Partnerships with the scientific community should be strengthened. For example involvement of users in methodological discussions should be formalised and the scientific community could be involved in professional training of Statistics Iceland staff. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 7.5, 7.6 and 7.7.)**

Collaboration with other NSIs on complex issues

In recent years Statistics Iceland has made considerable efforts to enhance quality management. The appointment of the quality manager and the adoption of the quality policy in the form of a Quality Commitment Statement were key milestones in this process. The majority of new initiatives have focused on process quality. However, more work has to be done also on product quality monitoring and reporting. The existing close cooperation with the Nordic countries has been complemented by benchmarking with small EU countries, such as Malta and Luxembourg. The Peer Reviewers recognise the benefits of this cooperation and encourage Statistics Iceland to strengthen these efforts.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 17. Collaboration with other National Statistical Institutes on complex issues such as quality indicators should be strengthened. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 4.4 and 14.5.)**

Business register

Business registers are a backbone of the statistical infrastructure. There is currently no business register but preparations to build it (including procedures for evaluating and updating it) are in place.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 18. Statistics Iceland should prioritise the development of a business register in order to comply with the Regulation on Business Registers and to meet national needs. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 7.1 and 7.3.)**

4.2.3 ENHANCE THE VALUE OF INVESTMENT IN OFFICIAL STATISTICS

Dissemination via Statistics Iceland's website

Article 14 of the Statistics Law establishes: "*In principle, Statistics Iceland provides its information free of charge, mainly on its website*". Statistics Iceland uses its website as the main channel to disseminate European statistics. Although there is not a formal dissemination policy, users are consulted about appropriate forms of dissemination and can download data from the website and use table-generation tools.

The Peer Reviewers were told that the priority in dissemination is the data required to comply with European legislation or agreements. The systematic dissemination of all data produced by Statistics Iceland would need further dedicated human resources. At the same time, the web-based publication policy is likely to release a substantial amount of human and financial resources which can then be diverted to improve the accessibility, the user friendliness and the content of website. Statistics Iceland is committed to enhancing its website, including by investing in the improvement of charts and tables. The Peer Review team supports these plans.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 19. Statistics Iceland should continue to enhance its website, including graphical illustrations of statistics. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 15.1 and 15.2.)**

Explanation of the messages in the statistics

Statistics Iceland's bulletins and reports are objective and factual in their statistical presentation. However this aspect of presentation could usefully be complemented by a storytelling (descriptive and analytical) approach to make sure that the users - including the media and the general public - understand the statistics and find them engaging and useful.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 20. The explanation of statistical messages, in bulletins and reports, should be improved. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 15.2.)**

Quality management

Quality Management, Quality Assurance and Quality Reporting tools are key components of a statistical Quality Management System (QMS). It is crucial that QMSs are developed to meet the needs of users. Training about 'quality' is a fundamental aspect for the successful implementation of a system for continuous improvement.

Statistics Iceland has launched a Roadmap for its Quality Management implementation. Although it is an impressive and laudable project, the Peer Reviewers consider that in developing quality reporting a more user-oriented approach should be adopted.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 21. Statistics Iceland should review the Quality Management System from a user-perspective. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 4,11 and 12.)**

Methodological documentation

The description of concepts, definitions and classifications underpinning statistical data - metadata - is important to help users understand the published statistics. In addition, the publication of accessible metadata itself reinforces trust.

Statistics Iceland has recently created a new position of a chief methodologist. His remit includes enhancing the provision of methodological advice to the statistical production units, and harmonising methodologies and documentation.

The active participation at experts meetings on methodological topics at the European level, the exchange of information with the scientific community (mainly with the University of Iceland) and cooperation with the Nordic countries, support Statistics Iceland's methodological activity.

Currently, Statistics Iceland produces and publishes methodological documents on an ad hoc basis. The Peer Reviewers consider that involvement of user groups would be useful in establishing priorities for the development of a more systematic and user-oriented approach to methodological development and the provision of metadata.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 22. Statistics Iceland should prioritise the production of methodological documentation, and user-oriented metadata. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 7.1, 7.2, 7.4 and 15.6 and Principles 8, 12 and 14.)**

Media engagement

Statistics Iceland has good relations with the media, which expressed a positive level of satisfaction in the activity of the Institute. Whilst Statistics Iceland releases new sets of statistics via its website, it does not hold press conferences to present and explain such data. Requests for clarifications and explanations from the media are met by the relevant statistical business area via telephone/mail or by publishing general comments on Statistics Iceland's website.

The Peer Review team was told that Statistics Iceland has traditionally been reluctant to appear in the media in the context of political debates involving statistics, and that there is not a formal policy to react promptly in cases of criticism or the possible misuse of Statistics Iceland's statistical data.

Although there are no formal activities to involve the media in the improvement of Statistics Iceland's dissemination policy and communication strategy, a recent workshop attended by several users including media representatives was considered to have been very effective in improving awareness about Statistics Iceland's statistical activity.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 23. Statistics Iceland should work more pro-actively with the media, including holding press conference and seminars, both to raise awareness of its work and to strengthen its communication capacity. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 1.7 and 15.1.)**

Revisions

Statistics Iceland does not have a published revisions policy, although in practice revisions are disseminated when new statistics are released. Users are informed in advance about the revision process and the information is available on the website.

In the view of the Peer Review team, a well-prepared and published revision policy would give users important information about the nature and timing of revisions and in this way make their work easier.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 24. Statistics Iceland should publish and implement a revisions policy. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 8.6 and 12.3.)**

4.3 NATIONAL STATISTICAL INSTITUTE VIEWS WHERE THEY DIVERGE FROM PEER REVIEWERS' ASSESSMENT

Statistics Iceland wants to thank the review team for excellent work and good and constructive recommendations. We think the report is balanced and fair and it does not diverge in any major way from our self-assessment.

ANNEX A: PROGRAMME OF THE VISIT

PEER REVIEW VISIT TO ICELAND

3-6 September 2013

AGENDA

Time	Programme	Organisation	Participants
Day 1 – Tuesday 3 September 2013			
From-To	Subject	Institution	Name
09.00 – 09.30	Welcome and introduction of programme, and organisational matters	Statistics Iceland	Ólafur Hjálmarsson, Elsa Knútsdóttir, Hrafnhildur Arnkelsdóttir, Magnús S. Magnússon, Ólafur Arnar Þórðarson, Rósmundur Guðnason
09.30 – 10.30	General information session with a description of how the national statistical system is organised	Statistics Iceland	Ólafur Hjálmarsson, Elsa Knútsdóttir, Hrafnhildur Arnkelsdóttir, Magnús S. Magnússon, Ólafur Arnar Þórðarson, Rósmundur Guðnason
10.30 – 10.45	Coffee break		
10.45 – 11.45	Coordination role of the NSI	Statistics Iceland	Ólafur Hjálmarsson, Elsa Knútsdóttir, Hrafnhildur Arnkelsdóttir, Magnús S. Magnússon, Rósmundur Guðnason
11.45 – 12.45	Cooperation/level of integration in the ESS	Statistics Iceland	Ólafur Hjálmarsson, Björgvin Sigurðsson, Elsa Knútsdóttir, Hrafnhildur Arnkelsdóttir, Magnús S. Magnússon, Ólafur Arnar Þórðarson, Rósmundur Guðnason
12.45 – 13.30	Lunch		
13.30 – 14.45	Meeting with main users – Ministries and other public/private institutions	Prime Minister's Office; Ministry of Industries and Innovation; Ministry of Education, Science and Culture; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs; The Central Bank of Iceland; Fed. of Icelandic Industries; The Icelandic Tourist Industry Association; Fed. of Trade and Services; Federation of State and Municipal Employees; Association of Academics; Arion Bank; Icelandic Financial Services Association	Héðinn Unnsteinsson, Margrét Sæmundsdóttir, Gunnar J. Árnason, Ólafur Sigurðsson, Elín Guðjónsdóttir, Tómas Örn Kristinsson, Bjarni Már Gylfason, Gunnar Valur Sveinsson, Lárus Ólafsson, Kristinn Bjarnason, Georg Brynjarsson, Brynjar Örn Ólafsson, Yngvi Örn Kristinsson
14.45 – 15.00	Coffee break		
15.00 – 16.00	Meeting with main users – Media	Vísbinding/Frjáls verslun (Business magazine)	Benedikt Jóhannesson

Time	Programme	Organisation	Participants
Day 1 – Tuesday 3 September 2013			
From-To	Subject	Institution	Name
16.00 – 17.00	Meeting with main users – Scientific Community	University of Iceland, Reykjavik University	Tinna Laufey Ásgeirsdóttir, Guðmundur Jónsson, Sveinn Agnarsson, Ólöf Garðarsdóttir, Jón Torfi Jónsson, Ólafur Ísleifsson, Katrín Ólafsdóttir
Day 2 – Wednesday 4 September 2013			
09.00 – 10.30	The statistical law and related legislation (CoP Principles 1, 2, 5 and 6)	Statistics Iceland	Ólafur Hjálmarsson, Magnús S. Magnússon
10.30 – 10.45	Coffee break		
10.45 – 12.45	Programming, planning and resources (CoP Principles 3, 9 and 10)	Statistics Iceland	Ólafur Hjálmarsson, Elsa Knútsdóttir, Ólafur Arnar Þórðarson
12.45 – 13.30	Lunch		
13.30 – 15.00	Quality (organisational structure, tools, monitoring (CoP Principles 4 and 11 to 15)	Statistics Iceland	Anton Örn Karlsson, Hrafnhildur Arnkelsdóttir, Reynir Kristjánsson
15.00 – 15.15	Coffee break		
15.15 – 16.45	Dissemination and confidentiality (CoP Principles 5, 6 and 15)	Statistics Iceland	Björgvin Sigurðsson, Hrafnhildur Arnkelsdóttir, Magnús S. Magnússon
16.45 – 17.30	Population statistics based on census	Statistics Iceland	Magnús S. Magnússon, Ómar Harðarson
19.30 – 21.30	Dinner at Fiskfélagið (Fish Company)		Ólafur, Elsa, Hrafnhildur, Magnús, Ólafur Arnar, Reynir, Rósmundur
Day 3 – Thursday 5 September 2013			
09.00 – 10.30	Meeting with NCB, mainly as producer of European statistics	The Central Bank of Iceland	Ríkharður Ríkharðsson
10.15 – 10.30	Coffee break		
10.30 – 12.00	Methodology, data collection, data processing and admin. Data (CoP Principles 2, 7 and 8)	Statistics Iceland	Anton Örn Karlsson, Berglind Björk Hreinsdóttir, Björgvin Sigurðsson, Hrafnhildur Arnkelsdóttir
12.00 – 12.45	Lunch		
12.45 – 13.45	This time was booked to continue the methodology meeting above, but proved not to be needed		
13.45 – 14.45	Meeting with junior staff	Statistics Iceland	Alister Faulkes, Árni Fannar Sigurðsson, Hjörvar Pétursson, Ingvi Jón Gunnarsson, Snorri Gunnarsson, Violetta Calian, Víkingur Guðmundsson
14.45 – 15.00	Coffee Break		
15.00 – 16.15	Meeting with other national authorities + Environmental statistics	The Environment Agency, The National Energy Authority, Statistics Iceland	Gunnar Jónsson, Ágústa Loftsdóttir, Kristinn Einarsson, Albert Sigurðsson, Rósmundur Guðnason

Time	Programme	Organisation	Participants
Day 4 – Friday 6 September 2013			
From-To	Subject	Institution	Name
09.00 – 10.30	Meeting with main data providers/respondents	Directorate of Fisheries, Directorate of Customs, Registers Iceland	Þorsteinn Hilmarsson, Guðni Ólafsson, Ingi Þór Finnsson
10.30 – 10.45	Coffee break		
10.45 – 12.45	Meeting with senior management: conclusions and recommendations	Statistics Iceland	Ólafur Hjálmarsson, Elsa Knútsdóttir, Hrafnhildur Arnkelsdóttir, Magnús S. Magnússon, Ólafur Arnar Þórðarson, Rósmundur Guðnason
12.45 – 13.30	Lunch		

ANNEX B. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

	Peer Review Team
1	Richard Laux, Chair
2	Marie Bohatá, Member
3	Marina Gandolfo, Member
	NSI management and senior staff
4	Ólafur Hjálmarsson, Director-General
5	Albert Sigurðsson, Expert, Environmental Statistics
6	Anton Örn Karlsson, Methodologist
7	Berglind Björk Hreinsdóttir, Head of Unit, Surveys
8	Björgvin Sigurðsson, Head of Unit, IT and Dissemination
9	Elsa Knútsdóttir, Financial Manager
10	Hrafnhildur Arnkeldsdóttir, Director, Resources and Services
11	Magnús S. Magnússon, Director, Social Statistics
12	Ólafur Arnar Þórðarson, Human Resources and International affairs
13	Ómar Harðarson, Leading Statistician, Census
14	Reynir Kristjánsson, Quality Manager
15	Rósmundur Guðnason, Director, Economic Statistics
	Junior Staff, Statistics Iceland
16	Alister Faulkes, IT and Dissemination
17	Árni Fannar Sigurðsson, Business Registers
18	Hjörvar Pétursson, Working Conditions and Census
19	Ingvi Jón Gunnarsson, IT and Dissemination
20	Snorri Gunnarsson, Price Statistics and Indices
21	Violetta Calian, Working Conditions and Census
22	Víkingur Guðmundsson, Price Statistics and Indices
	Main users – Ministries and other public/private institutions
23	Héðinn Unnsteinsson, Policy Analyst, Prime Minister's Office

24	Margrét Sæmundsdóttir, Senior Economic Analyst, Ministry of Industries and Innovation
25	Gunnar J. Arnason, Analyst, Ministry of Education, Science and Culture
26	Ólafur Sigurðsson, Minister Counsellor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
27	Elín Guðjónsdóttir, Head of Unit Dep. of Taxation, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
28	Tómas Örn Kristinsson, Dir. Statistics, The Central Bank of Iceland
29	Bjarni Már Gylfason, Economist, Fed. of Icelandic Industries
30	Gunnar Valur Sveinsson, Project Manager, The Icelandic Tourist Industry Association
31	Lárus Ólafsson, Lawyer, Fed. of Trade and Services
32	Kristinn Bjarnason, Economist, Federation of State and Municipal Employees
33	Georg Brynjarsson, Economist, Association of Academics
34	Brynjar Örn Ólafsson, Analyst, Arion Bank
35	Yngvi Örn Kristinsson, Economist, Icelandic Financial Services Association
	Main users – Media
36	Benedikt Jóhannesson, MD and Editor, Vísbending / Frjáls verslun (Business magazine)
	Main users – Scientific community
37	Tinna Laufey Ásgeirsdóttir, Director, MS Programme in Health Economics, University of Iceland
38	Guðmundur Jónsson, Professor, Faculty of History and Philosophy, University of Iceland
39	Sveinn Agnarsson, Associate Professor, Faculty of Business Administration, University of Iceland
40	Ólöf Garðarsdóttir, Professor, School of Education, University of Iceland
41	Jón Torfi Jónsson, Professor, School of Education, University of Iceland
42	Ólafur Ísleifsson, Associate Professor, School of Business, Reykjavik University
43	Katrín Ólafsdóttir, Associate Professor, School of Business, Reykjavik University
	Central Bank of Iceland and other producers of European statistics
44	Ríkharður Ríkharðsson, Head of Unit Balance Payments, The Central Bank of Iceland
45	Gunnar Jónsson, Subj. Manager Nature, The Environment Agency
46	Ágústa Loftsdóttir, Manager Fuels and Renew. Energy, The National Energy Authority
47	Kristinn Einarsson, Senior Manager EMRE, The National Energy Authority

	Main data providers/respondents
48	Þorsteinn Hilmarsson, Director of Information Department, Directorate of Fisheries
49	Guðni Ólafsson, Head of Unit Revision/ Audit, Directorate of Customs
50	Ingi Þór Finnsson, Engineer, Registers Iceland