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**Peer review on the implementation
of the
European Statistics Code of Practice**

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Main findings (including an assessment of the co-ordination role of Eurostat):

The Review Panel was very impressed with Eurostat's strong commitment to statistical quality and its leadership on this matter within the European Statistical System.

All stakeholders noted that significant improvements have been achieved in Eurostat's work and its standing within the European Statistical System over the last few years. Stakeholders are looking to Eurostat to provide even more statistical leadership, in terms of high-value added work such as enhanced statistical analysis and more feedback to users and NSIs on data quality issues. The Review Panel reads this as a very strong vote of confidence in Eurostat management and staff.

Eurostat is assessed as fully or largely meeting most of the indicators of good practice in Principles 1 to 6 and 15 in the European Statistics Code of Practice. That said, current arrangements can be strengthened further and the Review Panel supports Eurostat's list of improvement actions set out in Section 7 of this report.

Eurostat has very significant coordination responsibilities, which are discussed in Section 4 of the report. The Review Panel applauds this work. The Panel notes the inherent tensions within the European Statistical System, between the ever growing demands for more and better quality statistics and the resources and capabilities of the System to deliver. Eurostat is a very significant player within the international statistical community in which it makes an important contribution.

2. INTRODUCTION

With the adoption of the European Statistics Code of Practice, the Statistical Programme Committee (SPC) committed itself to adhering to its principles. At its meeting on 25 May 2005, the SPC endorsed a stepwise monitoring procedure for the implementation of the Code over three years during which countries' and Eurostat's self-assessments should be combined with elements of peer review, benchmarking and monitoring on the basis of the explanatory indicators added to each principle of the Code.

During December 2005/January 2006 the National Statistical Institutes and Eurostat have completed their self-assessments; the results have been summarised by Eurostat in a report submitted to the Economic and Financial Committee in May 2006 which has been published on the Eurostat website.

As a next step towards implementation of the Code, the European Statistical System is organising peer reviews to complement the self-assessments starting with 2006. They are considered a vital element for the implementation of the Code of Practice given their capacity to encourage the sharing of best practice and to contribute to transparency in what is, essentially, a self-regulatory approach. This approach is designed to enhance accountability and to help build trust in the integrity of the European Statistical System, its processes and outputs.

The Code of Practice peer reviews follow a common methodology focusing on the institutional environment and dissemination part of the Code comprising the following principles: (1) Professional independence, (2) Mandate for data collection, (3) Adequacy of resources, (4) Quality commitment, (5) Statistical confidentiality, (6) Impartiality and Objectivity and (15) Accessibility and Clarity.

During a three-day visit on-site, which included discussions within Eurostat and with other stakeholders in the European statistical system, and on the basis of material provided by Eurostat prior to the review, this peer review assesses compliance with the Code of Practice at indicator level for each of Principles 1 to 6 and 15, following a four-point assessment scale. The review also makes some observations on the important coordination role played by Eurostat. The report includes a refined set of improvement actions covering all principles of the Code which are being used to feed the monitoring process of the implementation of the Code in the European Statistical System.

While the peer reviewers have based their assessment to the extent possible on factual information, it is worth noting some of the limitations of the peer review process. For example, peer reviewers are dependent upon the resources made available to them (though experienced reviewers can be expected to identify where appropriate information is not forthcoming). In addition these reviews are conducted on a strategic, organisation-wide and system wide basis. Accordingly it is not straightforward to ascertain that certain practices or behaviours or systems operate in all statistical domains.

3. FINDINGS PER PRINCIPLE

Principle 1: Professional Independence

The professional independence of statistical authorities from other policy, regulatory or administrative departments and bodies, as well as from private sector operators, ensures the credibility of European Statistics.

Overall assessment:

The existing European basic legislation in the field of Community statistics – Article 285 of the Treaty, Council Regulation 322/97 on Community Statistics and Commission Decision of 21 April 1997 on the role of Eurostat as regards the production of Community statistics – provides Eurostat to a certain extent with independence in technical matters but the legal basis is not at all clear and precise enough to clarify and to guarantee the full professional independence of Eurostat. Moreover its status as a department and a service of the Commission does not give to the outside world the impression of an independent statistical institution.

Most of the stakeholders who were interviewed in the course of the Peer Review nevertheless expressed their view that Eurostat in practice – at least at present – can act independently. They questioned, however, whether the institutional arrangements are a sufficient safeguard to guarantee Eurostat's independence and integrity under a different personnel constellation.

A special problem with regard to the professional independence of statistical authorities in the EU is the fact that European statistics have, to a large extent, been laid down by European

legislation because only legislation can guarantee the necessary harmonisation of European statistics (see comments on indicator 1.4).

Indicator 1.1: The independence of the statistical authority from political and other external interference in producing and disseminating official statistics is specified in law.

Assessment: **Largely Met**

Comments:

The professional independence of Eurostat is not fully and clearly enough specified in the European legislation. Article 285 of the Treaty establishing the European Community lays down that Community Statistics are compiled keeping inter alia the principles of impartiality, reliability, objectivity and scientific independence, without defining these principles. In accordance with Article 1 of the basic European legislation in the field of official statistics, the Council Regulation (EC) No 322/97 of 17 February 1997 on Community Statistics, the national authorities at national level and the Community authority at Community level shall be responsible for the production of Community Statistics in compliance with the principle of subsidiarity. Article 2 of the said regulation defines the Community authority as “the Commission department responsible for carrying out the tasks devolving on the Commission as regards the production of Community Statistics (Eurostat)”. Council Regulation No 322/97 on Community Statistics also contains a list of principles for the production of Community statistics which, however, does not include the principle of scientific independence, but the principle of impartiality is defined as “an objective and independent manner of producing Community statistics, free from any pressure from political or other interest groups, particularly as regards the selection of techniques, definitions and methodologies...”. The principle of reliability implies according to the definition in the regulation “that scientific criteria are used for the selection of sources, methods and procedures”.

As far as the independence of the timing and content of releases and of all other forms of dissemination of statistical data is concerned, European statistical legislation is not very clear and precise. According to Article 2 of the aforementioned regulation of the Council the ‘production of statistics’ is defined as “the process encompassing all the activities necessary for the collection, storage, processing, compilation, analyses and dissemination of the statistical information”. With regard to an independent behaviour of the statistical authorities in the field of dissemination the Council regulation only sets out in Article 10 that the principle “Impartiality” “implies the availability of statistics, with a minimum delay, to all users” and Article 11 lays down “that access to Community statistics is rendered simple and impartial throughout the Community”. The Commission Decision of 21 April 1997 on the role of Eurostat as regards the production of Community statistics does not go further with regard to the independence of Eurostat than the Council regulation. It sets out that Eurostat is a service of the Commission and that “Eurostat is in charge of the selection of scientific techniques best suited to the attainment of the principles and objectives laid down in the Basic Regulation”.

The passing of the Proposal of the Commission for a Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on European Statistics (COM(2007) 625 final) and of the Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board would lead to a substantial improvement of the legal safeguards for the professional independence of Eurostat. Therefore the Peer Review team recommends Eurostat to intensify its efforts for getting the new legislation passed as soon as possible.

Indicator 1.2: The head of the statistical authority has sufficiently high hierarchical standing to ensure senior level access to policy authorities and administrative public bodies. He/She should be of the highest professional calibre.

Assessment: **Largely Met**

Comments:

As a Director General within the European Commission the head of Eurostat ranks among the highest non-political cadre of the Commission.

The nomination process and the qualification of candidates for this position are not addressed in the European statistical legislation. As with all civil servants of the Commission, the Director General of Eurostat has life tenure. Commission guidelines require mobility within 5 to 7 years. An earlier dismissal of the Director General is possible, but needs the approval not only of the responsible Commissioner but of the Commission as a whole.

The present procedure to appoint a new Director General is carried out as an open competition which is very much welcomed by the Peer Review team. Key criteria for a Director General of Eurostat should be his or her professional standing, his or her acceptance as the European Chief Statistician and his or her credibility in the international statistical community.

Eurostat should seek to establish open competitions for future appointments of Directors General of Eurostat. Although the indicator only refers to the Director General post, because of the nature of the appointing processes to senior appointments in the European Commission, clarification is required of the need to select candidates with excellent professional expertise for the positions of Director General, Deputy Director General and Directors of Eurostat.

Indicator 1.3: The head of the statistical authority and, where appropriate, the heads of its statistical bodies have responsibility for ensuring that European Statistics are produced and disseminated in an independent manner.

Assessment: **Largely Met**

Comments:

The interviewed stakeholders during the Peer Review underlined that they have at present no doubts that the Director General of Eurostat can act in practice in a professionally independent manner. However, they questioned whether the institutional arrangements are a sufficient safeguard to guarantee Eurostat's independence and integrity under different personnel constellations within the Commission.

The Peer Review team took note of the "Working Arrangements between the Cabinet of Commissioner Almunia and Eurostat" which are published on the Eurostat web.¹ In the opinion of the Peers, these arrangements are not fully in accordance with the professional independence of Eurostat. In particular, we would like to see amendments to the current arrangements for the approval of the Director-General of Eurostat giving interviews and consulting on the timetable of statistical releases. It is recommended to bring the Working Arrangements for the year 2008 into line with the new proposal of the Commission for a Regulation on European Statistics.

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

Indicator 1.4: The head of the statistical authority and, where appropriate, the heads of its statistical bodies have the sole responsibility for deciding on statistical methods, standards and procedures, and on the content and timing of statistical releases.

Assessment: **Largely Met**

Comments:

All stakeholders interviewed in the course of the Peer Review expressed their view that the Director General of Eurostat in practice can decide on the content and timing of statistical releases and on statistical methods, standards and procedures as far as they are not defined through European legislation. Parts of the already mentioned “Arrangements between the Cabinet of Commissioner Almunia and Eurostat”, however, restrict the responsibility of the Director General of Eurostat in his/her decisions on the timing of ad hoc statistical releases.

In the European Statistical System standards, methods and procedures to be used by the national authorities and the Community authority to a large extent have to be and are defined by European legislation which means that they are adopted through procedures provided for in the Treaties (legal acts by the European Parliament and the Council in a co-decision procedure, or legal acts by the Commission in a comitology procedure together with the Statistical Programme Committee, the members of which are the heads of the National Statistical Institutes). Without such legislation the indispensable harmonisation of European Statistics would not be achievable. Legal acts by the European Parliament and the Council are clearly decided on a political level. If such legal acts determine standards and methods, the Director General of Eurostat – and equally the heads of the National Statistical Institutes of the EU - will not have the sole responsibility for deciding on standards, methods and procedures as required by the Code.

Because the European statistical legislation and its influence on the professional independence of the statistical authorities in the EU is not a particular problem of Eurostat, but as well a problem for the national statistical authorities, it is not taken into account in the assessment of Indicator 1.4 nor in the overall assessment of the professional independence of Eurostat.

The Peer Review team recommends that Eurostat together with the National Statistical Institutes intensify their efforts to limit legal acts of the European Parliament and the Council in the field of European Statistics to framework regulations, in which in particular the requested output (i.e., the requested statistical information) is laid down and not the input (i.e., the sources, standards, methods and procedures), which should be assigned to the responsibility of the statisticians and decided in a comitology procedure by the Statistical Programme Committee.

Indicator 1.5: The statistical work programmes are published and periodic reports describe progress made.

Assessment: **Fully Met**

Comments:

According to Article 3 of Council Regulation 322/97 on Community Statistics the Commission shall establish a Community statistical programme for a period not exceeding five years to be adopted by the Council. The Statistical Programme Committee, the Committee on Statistical Information in the Economic and Social Spheres and the Committee on Monetary, Financial and Balance of Payments Statistics have to be involved in the preparation of the programme.

The activities of all Commission services in the field of Community statistics shall be determined by the Community statistical programme. A report on the implementation of the programme has to be prepared at the end of the programme period.

In addition the Commission prepares each year a work programme for the following year which is discussed with the Statistical Programme Committee and decided by the Commission.

Indicator 1.6: Statistical releases are clearly distinguished and issued separately from political/policy statements.

Assessment: **Fully Met**

Comments:

Statistical releases are clearly identified as products of Eurostat and labelled with its logo. They are purely statistical in their nature and never mixed with any political statements. The representative of the media who was interviewed during the Peer Review had no doubts regarding the objectivity of Eurostat.

Indicator 1.7: The statistical authority, when appropriate, comments publicly on statistical issues, including criticisms and misuses of official statistics.

Assessment: **Fully Met**

Comments:

According to the “Protocol on Impartial Access to Eurostat Data for Users” adopted by Eurostat’s Directors in their meeting of 5 June 2007 Eurostat reserves the right to respond, in an impartial manner, to any misunderstandings or misleading interpretations of its output. An internal guideline how to react exists. In case of a criticism or misuse the procedure will be controlled by Eurostat’s press office. The response will normally take the form of a letter or e-mail either to the journalist in question, or the editor.

Principle 2: Mandate for Data Collection

Statistical authorities must have a clear legal mandate to collect information for European statistical purposes. Administrations, enterprises and households, and the public at large may be compelled by law to allow access to or deliver data for European statistical purposes at the request of statistical authorities.

Overall assessment:

Principle 2 “Mandate for Data Collection” is only partly applicable to Eurostat. Eurostat does not collect data from enterprises, private households and public administrations but collects its information for the production and dissemination of European Statistics nearly completely in the form of statistics which are compiled by national statistical authorities in their respective spheres of competence.

Indicator 2.1: The mandate to collect information for the production and dissemination of official statistics is specified in law.

Assessment: **Fully Met**

Comments:

The mandate of Eurostat to collect information for the production and dissemination of official statistics is nearly completely a mandate for the collection of statistics from the national statistical authorities which are produced and delivered to Eurostat on the basis of individual statistical legal acts of the EU or on the basis of agreements between the national authorities and Eurostat. According to Article 3 in conjunction with Article 6 of the Regulation 322/97 on Community Statistics, Eurostat could in exceptional cases directly collect data but the rule was never used because of its narrow limitations.

Indicator 2.2: The statistical authority is allowed by national legislation to use administrative records for statistical purposes.

Assessment: **Fully Met**

Comments:

According to Article 16 of Council Regulation 322/97 on Community Statistics and Article 10 of Commission Decision of 21 April 1997 on the role of Eurostat as regards the production of Community Statistics, Eurostat has access to all administrative data sources held by Commission services, wherever such data are necessary for the production of Community statistics. Eurostat has, however, no direct access to administrative data in the Member States of the EU.

Indicator 2.3: On the basis of a legal act, the statistical authority may compel response to statistical surveys.

Assessment: **Not applicable for Eurostat**

Principle 3: Adequacy of Resources

The resources available to statistical authorities must be sufficient to meet European Statistics requirements.

Overall assessment:

Eurostat appears to have adequate financial resources, although a significant proportion of its finances is derived from subdelegated credits from other Directorates within the European Commission, which raises the question whether a substantial proportion of these subdelegated funds should be formalized within Eurostat's budget. Eurostat has a cap on the number of staff positions that may put a constraint on the effective spending of the financial budget.

Indicator 3.1: Staff, financial, and computing resources, adequate both in magnitude and in quality, are available to meet current European Statistics needs.

Assessment: **Largely Met**

Comments:

In the context of the overall assessment, reservations are held that Eurostat has sufficient staff with the appropriate skills to meet the growing expectations of the stakeholder community. Eurostat's self-assessment notes the need to strengthen the statistical skills of the staff. The proportion of the budget devoted to training and development activities appears to be relatively low compared with best practice NSIs. Higher level Eurostat staff could participate to a greater extent in the programs which offer training for European statisticians.

Moreover, temporary interchanges of staff between Eurostat and NSIs could be of help to improve the statistical skills of Eurostat's staff and their knowledge of the processes in the NSIs. At present, staff from NSIs are working at Eurostat to a rather large extent but not Eurostat staff in NSIs. The Peers welcomed that the subject will be discussed in the next SPC meeting. Further, Eurostat must recruit staff with the appropriate skills. There may be merit in having more regular programs of external recruitment of statistically qualified staff.

Views were expressed, both within and outside Eurostat, that there is a misallocation of staff between core statistical work and horizontal activities. Some reservations were expressed about the fungibility of Eurostat staff to be redeployed across statistical programs.

Many best practice NSIs set annual "efficiency targets" that line managers must achieve to generate internal resources for redeployment on to new work or to strengthen existing programs. Eurostat could consider the desirability of adopting a similar approach in its internal planning.

Indicator 3.2: The scope, detail and cost of European Statistics are commensurate with needs.

These matters are addressed by the Statistical Programme Committee.

Indicator 3.3: Procedures exist to assess and justify demands for new European Statistics against their cost.

These matters are addressed by the Statistical Programme Committee.

Indicator 3.4: Procedures exist to assess the continuing need for all European Statistics, to see if any can be discontinued or curtailed to free up resources.

These matters are addressed by the Statistical Programme Committee.

Principle 4: Quality commitment

All ESS members commit themselves to work and co-operate according to the principles fixed in the Quality Declaration of the European Statistical System.

Overall assessment:

There are three aspects of Quality Commitment in the case of Eurostat: (a) creating and promoting policies for quality across the ESS, (b) monitoring and reporting on the quality of products that depend in large part on quality performance and reporting by member states and (c) monitoring and reporting on quality for processes and outputs that are contained within Eurostat. The major commitment that Eurostat has made to the first of these, promoting quality issues across the ESS, is widely recognised. The ESS Quality Framework has been strongly promoted and on this aspect one would classify Eurostat's commitment as being 'fully met'. Within Eurostat also, staff are well aware of the importance attached to the quality of processes and outputs. In general, promoting a commitment to quality has been a major feature of Eurostat's statistical leadership over the last few years.

The individual indicators focus on underpinning processes and measures that to a large extent depend on input from member states. We have tried to take account of this and comment on the Eurostat contribution.

Indicator 4.1 Product quality is regularly monitored according to the ESS quality components.

Assessment: **Largely Met**

Comments:

The ESS quality components are reflected in all of Eurostat's product quality monitoring. There are 20-30 quality reports and 'PEEs in Focus'. Those we reviewed are very thorough and impressive documents although not all are available to the public. These are largely descriptive in content and draw together a wide variety of quality information from all member states. Users recognise and value these as extremely useful outputs. More are in preparation. In addition there are a large number of quality profiles which are a much more summarised account of product quality in particular domains. These mainly provide summary information for users.

A quality assurance framework has recently been approved to integrate the various quality initiatives into a single coherent framework. Implementation is ongoing.

Indicator 4.2 Processes are in place to monitor the quality of the collection, processing and dissemination of statistics.

Assessment: **Partly Met**

Comments:

Many of the processes that underpin product quality are carried out in member states and these are covered by the quality reports (see 4.1). These will be monitored at national level and discussed at Eurostat working group meetings. There are some Eurostat-level processes, such as receiving data inputs from member states, assembling European wide statistical reports, calculating EU and Euro-area aggregates and publishing and disseminating these. Some greater attention to monitoring and analysing process quality for these, with a view to identifying possible quality improvements, would be useful and will be launched in the context

of an office-wide assessment of data quality based on the quality reviews which is in train with a work programme to be established by the end of 2007.

External users would welcome more emphasis on monitoring data quality, as delivered from NSIs, and more effort being made to resolve specific concerns. NSI representatives recognised a useful role for Eurostat to play and would welcome more informed feedback on data quality.

Indicator 4.3 Processes are in place to deal with quality considerations, including trade-offs within quality, and to guide planning for existing and emerging surveys.

Assessment: **Largely Met**

Comments:

The main process for reviewing product and process quality involves the working groups that contain representatives of NSIs. This is where discussion of trade offs between competing quality considerations for new or existing activities take place and discussion guides the planning for existing and emerging surveys. There is more potential for injecting into this process specific consideration of the European level, focussing on the quality of the EU-aggregates and euro-area aggregates specifically. Analysis of the Quality Reports at this level would identify the impact on pan-European aggregates from changes, either within individual member states or across the ESS.

In general, quality information could be used more actively to feed back into quality improvement for specific activities or products and at a higher strategic level to identify priorities and the need for major investment.

Indicator 4.4 Quality guidelines are documented and staff are well trained. These guidelines are spelled out in writing and made known to the public.

Assessment: **Fully Met**

Comments:

Documentation on the Quality Framework, Quality Monitoring and the production of Quality Reports etc. is extensive and thorough.

Indicator 4.5 There is a regular and thorough review of the key statistical outputs using external experts where appropriate.

Assessment: **Largely Met**

Comments:

There is a series of CEIES seminars which focus on specific statistical topics and which allow users and others from outside the ESS to comment on the production, quality, relevance and timeliness of European statistical outputs.

In addition the key economic outputs relating to excessive deficit and debt and GNI per capita are reviewed at the NSI-level by Eurostat and involve external experts. When there was concern over Greek macro-economic statistics, a review was conducted also involving external experts. We commend this and suggest that in selected cases it would be useful to extend this practice - either in response to specific concerns or where the general importance of the output merits it. Such reviews may cover data quality or statistical processes or both as appropriate.

We note that these reviews should not only relate to activities within NSIs. The creation of a consolidated set of National Accounts for the euro-area, for example, also lends itself to review involving external experts.

In all of this the term 'external' may include experts from NSIs within or outside the EU as well as experts from international agencies.

Principle 5: Statistical confidentiality

The privacy of data providers (households, enterprises, administrations and other respondents), the confidentiality of the information they provide and its use only for statistical purposes must be absolutely guaranteed.

Overall assessment:

Both the legal framework and the administrative arrangements to ensure data confidentiality seem very satisfactory.

There was a concern expressed by NSI representatives that the current arrangements might be eroded over time. The confidentiality committee, on which NSIs are represented, maintains the oversight of the general framework and may deal with specific cases. Hence any future changes to the basic framework would involve NSIs.

Indicator 5.1 Statistical confidentiality is guaranteed in law.

Assessment: **Fully Met**

Comments:

The legal basis for data confidentiality is very satisfactory.

Indicator 5.2 Statistical authority staff sign legal confidentiality commitments on appointment.

Assessment: **Fully Met**

Comments:

Staff regulations for all statutory staff include a confidentiality commitment as well as special authorisation procedures for Eurostat staff working with confidential data which involve staff under contract.

Indicator 5.3 Substantial penalties are prescribed for any wilful breaches of statistical confidentiality.

Assessment: **Fully Met**

Comments:

Staff are first subject to disciplinary procedures which may involve suspension or dismissal. Beyond this, staff are subject to Luxembourg law which includes provision for financial penalties and imprisonment. Other people, such as approved researchers, are also subject to legal penalties.

Indicator 5.4 Instructions and guidelines are provided on the protection of statistical confidentiality in the production and dissemination processes. These guidelines are spelled out in writing and made known to the public.

Assessment: **Fully Met**

Comments:

The level of documentation seems adequate.

Indicator 5.5 Physical and technological provisions are in place to protect the security and integrity of statistical databases

Assessment: **Fully Met**

Comments:

There is a system of separate data 'custodians' responsible for access to separate data sets. No access is given for longer than one year without renewal and there is a system to trigger repeal of access as staff are reassigned to different functions. There are technical measures to restrict access including passwords and restricting access to specific terminals.

Indicator 5.6 Strict protocols apply to external users accessing statistical microdata for research purposes.

Assessment: **Fully Met**

Comments:

External users are individually approved and sign agreements governing their access. For the most sensitive data, access is only allowed through a safe setting via computer terminals that have been established within Eurostat for the purpose.

Principle 6: Impartiality and objectivity.

Statistical authorities must produce and disseminate European Statistics respecting scientific independence and in an objective, professional and transparent manner in which all users are treated equitably.

Overall assessment:

In general, there is a good compliance with the principle "Impartiality and objectivity". The users interviewed, including the media, expressed their confidence in Eurostat and its statistical output. Improvements are necessary with regard to a stronger limitation of the early access to Eurostat's statistical information and with regard to the release calendars Eurostat prepares and publishes.

Indicator 6.1: Statistics are compiled on an objective basis determined by statistical considerations.

Assessment: **Fully Met**

Comments:

As described in detail under indicator 1.1 the basic European statistical legislation – Article 285 of the Treaty and Regulation 322/97 on Community Statistics – lays down that Community statistics shall be produced in an objective and independent manner and that scientific criteria shall be used for the selection of techniques, definitions and methodologies. In practice methods and techniques to be used for the compilation of Community statistics are extensively discussed with the specialists from National Statistical Institutes in the relevant working groups. The media representative and other users interviewed did not perceive any lack of objectivity on the part of Eurostat. (The problem of European statistical legislation laying down methods, standards and procedures is not discussed again here).

Indicator 6.2: Choices of sources and statistical techniques are informed by statistical considerations.

Assessment: **Fully Met**

Comments:

The compliance with indicator 6.2 is supported by the legal basis as described under indicator 6.1. Users interviewed expressed their confidence in the objectivity of Eurostat's methodological decisions.

Indicator 6.3: Errors discovered in published statistics are corrected at the earliest possible date and publicised.

Assessment: **Fully Met**

Comments:

Eurostat has a policy that encourages staff to report on serious errors in published statistics, to correct the errors at the earliest possible date and to inform the users in an adequate way. The procedure which is to be followed is laid down in a guideline and errors are documented on the basis of an "Error in statistics reporting form" which the responsible domain-manager has to fill in.

Indicator 6.4: Information on the methods and procedures used by the statistical authority are publicly available.

Assessment: **Fully Met**

Comments:

Information on the methods and procedures used in the production of Community statistics is available on Eurostat's website and regularly updated. Most of the users interviewed were satisfied with the information provided by Eurostat, apart from information on revisions which was criticised in the User Satisfaction Survey and in interviews as not sufficient. For further comments to the accessibility and clarity of Eurostat's metadata see under indicators 15.5 and 15.6.

Indicator 6.5: Statistical release dates and times are pre -announced.

Assessment: **Largely Met**

Comments:

Eurostat announces its news releases for the Euro-indicators in the Eurostat release calendar up to 12 months ahead (first announcement for the year t at the end of the year t-1; in the course of the year t only information for the remaining months). All other news releases are announced each Friday for the following week, after consultation with the spokesperson of the Commissioner. A release calendar for printed publications one month before their issue is planned from the end of 2007.

The Peer Review team recommends to review the release calendar arrangements with a view to adopting a rolling 12 months calendar for the Euro-indicators and to give longer notice for its other news releases at least for selected statistics. The consultation with the spokesperson before the final approval of the last-named calendar impinges on the sole responsibility of the Director General of Eurostat to decide on the timing of statistical releases. Moreover some of the users interviewed asked for increased visibility of the release calendar on the website.

Indicator 6.6: All users have equal access to statistical releases at the same time and any privileged pre-release access to any outside user is limited, controlled and publicised. In the event that leaks occur, pre-release arrangements should be revised so as to ensure impartiality.

Assessment: **Partly Met**

Comments:

Eurostat recently revised its impartiality practices as a pre-requisite for compliance with the Code of Practice. The result is the “Protocol on Impartial Access to Eurostat Data for Users” which was adopted by the Directors in their meeting of 5 June 2007 and released on the Eurostat website on 1st October 2007. In principle all users should have access to the statistical information at the same time, but there are exceptions granting pre-release access for privileged users.

Commission departments whose policies are based upon European statistics and the European Central Bank may have early access to selected statistical releases through the Eurostat press office under embargo the evening before release. Early access is subject to a signed agreement laying down the rules for dealing with data accessed prior to official release. Information on this pre-release access is publicised on the Eurostat website.

All news releases are transmitted under embargo to the Cabinet and the Spokesperson of the Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs the working day before their dissemination to the public, in order for them to be prepared for any questions that may be put by journalists.

Euro-indicator news releases are transmitted under embargo one hour before official release to accredited news agencies in Brussels.

It is the intention of indicator 6.6 of the Code of Practice to clearly limit the early data access to a very few exceptions; current practice allows for a rather long list of exceptions. The representatives of the National Statistical Institutes stressed that it should be completely in the

hands of the statistical authority whether early access to press releases is granted; the reason should not be to follow a general rule of the respective administration.

The Peer Review team recognizes Eurostat's efforts to implement a systematic and transparent policy with regard to a strong limitation of the early access to its data; it recommends to further limiting early data access in respect of the range of statistics and the number of people to whom access is granted to those few persons who have a specific responsibility that requires seeing the figures **before** their general release. It is further recommended to review the pre-release arrangements under embargo with the news agencies to assess risks involved with insider trading for market sensitive outputs. In all cases of pre-embargo access, there should be rigid audit trails in place to be able to retrospectively establish which persons have had access to the data.

Indicator 6.7: Statistical releases and statements made in Press Conferences are objective and non-partisan.

Assessment: **Largely Met**

Comments:

Eurostat's statistical releases are objective and not mixed with any political statements. According to the "Report by the Study Group on Eurostat's Communication Policy" Eurostat intends to provide its users with objective comments, go beyond the simple provision of figures and give better guidelines for use (particularly by the media). Some users interviewed criticised Eurostat's releases as still being too descriptive and not providing a thorough interpretation of the data.

As a rule Eurostat does not hold its own press conferences to present very important results of European Statistics or to explain major revisions to the media. Representatives of Eurostat can only participate in press conferences organized by the spokesperson of the Commissioner in cases where statistical questions are dealt with. In the opinion of the Peer Review team the lack of its own press conferences is a deficiency in Eurostat's communication strategy because press conferences give an institution a 'face to the public' and reinforce the visibility of its independence. In the opinion of the peers Eurostat should seek to install its own spokesperson and to hold press conferences on its own.

Principle 15: Accessibility and clarity

European Statistics should be presented in a clear and understandable form, disseminated in a suitable and convenient manner, available and accessible on an impartial basis with supporting metadata and guidance.

Overall assessment:

Eurostat is seen as disseminating its statistical outputs in an impartial manner. While there is some room for improvement, overall Eurostat statistics are accessible, provided free of charge and presented in clear and understandable forms.

Indicator 15.1: Statistics are presented in a form that facilitates proper interpretation and meaningful comparisons.

Assessment: **Largely Met.**

Comments:

Users, both within and outside the European Commission, see scope for improving the analytical content of Eurostat statistical releases. There was also a plea that the content and presentation of statistical releases reflect the statistical interests of the key users to whom the releases are pitched to make them more user friendly.

Indicator 15.2: Dissemination services use modern information and communication technology and, if appropriate, traditional hard copy.

Assessment: **Largely Met.**

Comments:

Eurostat's website is seen as in need of improvement. Observations were made that it can be unreliable in terms of its availability. The site design is seen as being "EC-centric" and would benefit from redesign, with the interests of the wider user community in mind. Further, the search facilities in the website are seen as being very poor.

The view was also expressed that the balance between hard copy and electronic releases should be reviewed. It was observed that large elements of the printed publications are statistical tables that could be better disseminated electronically.

Indicator 15.3: Custom-designed analyses are provided when feasible and are made public.

Assessment: **Fully Met.**

Comments:

Such analyses are made more generally available through Eurostat dissemination databases. Where this is not feasible, a description of the data analysis is published on the Eurostat website together with information on how the data can be obtained.

Indicator 15.4: Access to microdata can be allowed for research purposes. This access is subject to strict protocols.

Assessment: **Fully Met.**

Comments:

Extensive policy and operational guidelines are in place to facilitate access to microdata for research purposes under strict protocols. The policy guidelines are being reviewed in the context of the guidelines on microdata access adopted by the June 2007 Conference of European Statisticians.

Indicator 15.5: Metadata are documented according to standardised metadata systems.

Assessment: **Largely Met.**

Comments:

Users welcomed the metadata currently provided by Eurostat. They noted, however, that the metadata are not always fully complete and they seek closer association between the data and the metadata on the website.

Indicator 15.6: Users are kept informed on the methodology of statistical processes and the quality of statistical outputs with respect to the ESS quality criteria.

Assessment: **Largely Met.**

Comments:

Users welcomed the increased emphasis being given by Eurostat to informing them on methodology and data quality issues. They want advance notice of revisions coming through to previously published statistics and, more generally, would welcome better explanation of Eurostat's revisions policies. Users are looking for enhanced transparency in the revised data in statistical releases.

4. CO-ORDINATION ROLE OF EUROSTAT

Coordination of the ESS is a fundamentally important role for Eurostat and one which takes a much higher proportion of effort and resources than would be the case in an NSI. It is undertaken at many different levels and using many different mechanisms. One facet of the coordination role involves the links with other directorates in the European Commission as well as other institutions such as the ECB. A second facet involves the international community, the UN, OECD, UNECE and the statistical arms of many international agencies. A third facet is the coordination role for the ESS as a group of statistical producers and a fourth is the coordination of technical assistance to a wide number of countries outside the EU.

Co-ordination within the European Commission and with the European System of Central Banks

Eurostat's coordination role within the Commission is legally based on Council Regulation No 322/97 on Community Statistics and on Commission Decision of 21 April 1997 on the role of Eurostat as regards the production of Community statistics. According to Article 1 in connection with Article 2 of the Council Regulation Eurostat is the Commission service responsible for carrying out the tasks devolving on the Commission as regards the production of Community statistics. In Article 7 of the Commission Decision, Eurostat, assisted by the Steering Committee on Statistical Information, is given the responsibility to coordinate within the Commission all statistical activities with regard to the preparation and implementation of Community action in the field of statistics and to ensure an appropriate level of cooperation with other Community bodies. Also of importance is Article 8 of the Commission Decision which lays down that the activities of all Commission services in the field of Community statistics shall be determined by the Community statistical programme. In addition Eurostat is given access to all administrative sources of all Commission services (Article 10 of the Commission Decision).

While Eurostat's legal basis to play a strong coordination role within the Commission is rather solid, the practice seems to be quite different. In its self-assessment against the Code of Practice, Eurostat assesses as a weakness the role it actually plays in the coordination of statistical work inside the Commission with a view to other Commission services producing statistics and the delimitation between official statistics and administrative data. In the discussion with Eurostat's management it was confirmed that many or even most Directorates General collect their own data. These activities are often, at least at the beginning, not known to Eurostat, but lead sometimes later to official requests for new statistics.

Representatives of other Directorates General interviewed during the Peer Review explained that the formal consultation process with Eurostat in principle works quite well. The Commission services are consulted in the planning process and there is an annual system of hearings with the Directorates General. If, however, an urgent and short-term need for data arises, the processes with Eurostat require too much time and the directorates collect the data on their own account. It was said that Eurostat often does not have the capacities to fulfil new needs and that there is in general reluctance to address new demands, often coming from the National Statistical Institutes. Here we see exactly the dilemma of Eurostat: it is between the Directorates General and their short-term demands for new statistics and the National Statistical Institutes which are not able and not willing to accept all requests of the Commission. With the present European statistical legislation, but also because of its limited staff capacities, Eurostat is practically not in a position to compile such statistics by itself – and the result is the data collection by other Commission services.

To find a solution is not at all easy. The new "Proposal of the Commission for a Regulation on European Statistics" will further strengthen the legal position of Eurostat as a coordinator of European Statistics and it will give Eurostat new possibilities to produce European Statistics, but a new law alone will not solve the problems. Eurostat should try to convince all other services of the Commission that a better coordination of statistical work will improve efficiency, produce better quality data and reduce the burden on respondents. It should advocate that its legal role be accepted in the Commission.

According to Article 5 of the Protocol on the Statute of the European System of Central Banks (ESCB) and the European Central Bank (ECB), the ECB with the support of the national Central Banks is entitled to collect the necessary statistical information either from the competent national authorities or directly from economic agents. That means that the Treaty provides a role for both the ECB and the Community institutions (Article 285 of the Treaty) in the provision of statistics. Since there is an overlap between the statistics necessary for the performance of the activities of the Community and those necessary for the ECB to undertake the tasks of the ESCB, and since it is necessary to ensure consistency across areas of statistics within the framework of the European System of Accounts (ESA 95) in the Community, both sides agreed that there is a need for co-operation. A Memorandum of Understanding on Economic and Financial Statistics was completed on 10 March 2003, the purpose of which is in particular to set out the respective areas of responsibility in economic and financial statistics at the Community level of the ECB (Directorate General Statistics) and the Commission (Eurostat). The new "Proposal of the Commission for a Regulation on European Statistics" includes again a provision that the European System of Central Banks and the European Statistical System shall co-operate closely in the production of European Statistics.

Co-ordination of the ESS

Coordination of the ESS involves extensive collaboration with the NSIs in member states. Compared to any NSI, Eurostat promotes a large number of pieces of legislation, often involving precise specification for statistical production, as a means of achieving consistency and comparability across the EU. Given the diversity of culture of public administration across member states, a legal basis is seen as a strong mechanism for coordination. The 5-year and annual statistical plans, examined by SPC and adopted through co-decision respectively by the Commission are an important part of the long- and short-term planning which is essential to the ESS. Underpinning these arrangements is a large number of specialist working groups, task forces etc., which provide expert advice on developing standards and the design of new statistical activities. In terms of statistical production, coordination is essential to ensure timely delivery of data from all member states and consistent monitoring of quality of products and processes more generally. Concerns over the integration of all these activities in a coherent manner was one of the considerations that led to the creation of the partnership group, a subgroup of the SPC, as a high level coordination mechanism between Eurostat and NSIs. This seems to be well appreciated.

None of this is easy and there are signs that various aspects could work better in an ideal world. The legislative framework places an obligation on member states but even with this, the wide use of derogations may delay the production of consistent statistics by many years. Greater statistical capacity and better resourcing in some countries would reduce this delay and hence improve coordination if it could be achieved. The planning process creates tensions between the EC Directorates, which want more statistics, and the NSIs, which do not see a well-articulated business case for every statistic desired and which face competing pressures from national needs. The practice of bringing together some representatives of NSIs and Commission DGs at the sector level seems to be appreciated and may help this tension. A participation of high-level representatives of the NSIs in the hearings between Eurostat and other Directorates General of the Commission could lead to better mutual understanding. There has been an impressive increase in coordination of the statistical production with improved timeliness and a large number of quality reports that require a coordinated effort. There is concern that the SPC spends too little time on strategic issues and high level coordination issues. These are still being addressed and the current DG of Eurostat is strongly committed to developing the ESS as a partnership between Eurostat and the NSIs. It is acknowledged that there are many areas where expert knowledge is contained within NSIs rather than Eurostat and the coordination function must mobilise this expertise for the general benefit. Article 13 of the proposed legislation embodies this idea of a collaboration network for the future development of the ESS. Additionally the action plan agreed after the Cracow DGINS meeting is intended to strengthen the strategic management of the ESS through collaboration between Eurostat and NSIs.

Co-ordination within the international community

Eurostat is a very important player within the international statistical community. It is at the apex of the European Statistical System, whose influence now extends to many countries beyond the 27 European Union countries. Eurostat plays a key role in the development of statistical methodologies, in the collection and dissemination of country data, and it is playing a growing role in provision of technical assistance in statistics.

Eurostat is active within the United Nations Statistical Commission and its associated activities. Most relevant here is the key link role that Eurostat plays in the international deliberations regarding development of statistical methodologies and standards. On the one hand, Eurostat seeks to ensure that these methodologies and standards adequately reflect European circumstances; on the other hand, Eurostat facilitates the incorporation of agreed standards into European statistics to ensure that internationally comparable statistics will be available. Particularly relevant here is the active participation of Eurostat in the current updating of international standards in macroeconomic statistics. Tensions can arise, however. The need to revise relevant European legislation can sometimes be perceived by non-EU NSIs as an inhibiting factor in revising international statistical standards. Conversely, statistical standards work in Europe can outpace that of the rest of the world.

Eurostat is also active in many other fora, including the UNECE Conference of European Statisticians; other UN regional statistics fora; the OECD Committee on Statistics; and the Executive Board and Technical Advisory Group of the International Comparison Program. In the framework of the UN Committee for the Co-ordination of Statistical Activities Eurostat lead during the past two years a project on the use and convergence of international quality assurance frameworks with the aim of bringing different quality initiatives under a common framework.

Eurostat has data sharing arrangements in place with other international agencies to minimize statistical reporting burden on countries. Eurostat has been a co-sponsor, with other international agencies, of the SDMX (system of data and metadata exchange) initiative to facilitate data sharing among countries and international agencies.

Eurostat is playing a growing role in technical assistance in statistics and its influence extends well beyond Europe. This engagement with the wider statistical community is to be applauded. Eurostat is very conscious of the serious coordination issues that arise in technical assistance and training and makes strenuous efforts in these matters.

Overall, within the international statistical community, Eurostat is seen as being cooperative and collaborative—a very good international statistical citizen. It will be critical that Eurostat continue in this vein in the interests of the continuing evolution of international statistical work.

5. GOOD PRACTICES TO BE HIGHLIGHTED

To the Review Panel, the standout feature is Eurostat's leadership within the European Statistical System on all aspects of quality management and the Data Quality Framework.

In terms of the Statistics Code of Practice, Eurostat ranks strongly in terms of Principle 5 (Statistical Confidentiality), and Principle 6 (Impartiality and Objectivity).

Passage of the new “Proposal of the Commission for a Regulation on European Statistics” will further strengthen Eurostat’s statistical leadership role within Europe and will improve the institutional setting for official statistics activities in Europe.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PEER REVIEW TEAM

The Review Panel agrees with Eurostat’s list of improvement actions as set out in Section 7 of this report, which addresses all key findings from the review. The Panel has no further recommendations to make.

7. LIST OF IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS BY PRINCIPLE OF THE CODE

Principle 1: Professional Independence

Improvement actions

	Timetable
★ Indicate Eurostat source in publications and databases	end of 2007
★ Intensify the efforts for getting the new legislation – Proposal for a Regulation on European Statistics - adopted by the European Parliament and the Council	end of 2008
★ Intensify the efforts for getting the Proposal for a Decision establishing the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board adopted	end of 2007
★ Prepare an intensive communication with main stakeholders on the new legislation on European Statistics	end of 2008
★ Discuss with and seek advice of the ESGAB on how to best reconcile European statistical legislation with the need for leaving decisions on methods, standards and procedures in the hands of statisticians	during 2008
★ Seek to bring the Working Arrangements between the Cabinet and Eurostat for 2008 in line with the new basic legislation	end of 2008
★ Seek to establish public open competition and to clarify the need for professional expertise for the filling of posts of the Director General of Eurostat. A similar procedure should also be used for the selection of other senior managers.	first steps during 1 st quarter of 2008

Principle 3: Adequacy of Resources

Improvement actions

	Timetable
★ Adequacy of Eurostat resources will be addressed in the framework of the evaluation of the 2003-2007 multi-annual statistical programme	2008
★ Review whether resources allocated to training and development activities are adequate.	1 st quarter of 2008
★ Consider enhanced participation of Eurostat staff in European statistical training programs.	Ongoing
★ Consider more regular programs of external recruitment of statistically qualified staff.	Last quarter of 2008
★ Review allocation of resources between core statistical and horizontal activities	Second half of 2008
★ Consider in the framework of the forthcoming screening the merits of introducing efficiency targets to generate internal resources for allocation to high priority new work.	Next screening exercise

Principle 4: Quality commitment

Improvement actions

	Timetable
★ Establishment of Management Development Plan for Eurostat	Early 2008
★ To implement fully the recently approved quality assurance framework, including an office-wide assessment of data quality based on quality reviews	ongoing, work programme to be established during 2007
★ Invest in following-up quality reports on a systematic basis	ongoing

Principle 4: Quality commitment

Improvement actions

- ★ Complete coverage of quality profiles for all SI and SDI indicators envisaged
- ★ To feed quality information into the strategic planning process.
- ★ To extend the use of external experts in data validation and quality reviews of key activities
- ★ To increase data validation of data delivered from NSIs in the framework of the implementation of the Validation Building Block (CVD)

Timetable

end of 2008
ongoing
ongoing
key milestones during 2008

Principle 5: Statistical Confidentiality

Improvement actions

- ★ Statistical Disclosure Control handbook and harmonisation of NSI rules

Timetable

end of 2008

Principle 6: Impartiality and objectivity

Improvement actions

- ★ Arrive at a clear delineation between official statistics and other statistics in order to improve transparency (label for European Official statistics)
- ★ Pre-announcement 1 month before the issue of printed publications
- ★ Intensify the efforts to further limit early data access in respect of the range of statistics and the number of people to whom access is granted
- ★ Review release calendar arrangements with a view to adopting a rolling 12 month calendar for Euro-indicators and to extend release calendar for other data releases to give longer notice
- ★ Increase the visibility of the release calendar on Eurostat's website
- ★ Review pre-embargo arrangements to assess risks involved with insider trading for market sensitive outputs
- ★ Consider the possibilities of having a spokesperson for Eurostat
- ★ Hold Eurostat press conferences on statistical matters

Timetable

2008
end of 2007
2008
Early 2008
February 2008
2008
First steps during 2008
2008

Principle 7: Sound Methodology

Improvement actions

- ★ General improvement actions on governance issues for production of PEEIs like seasonal adjustment guidelines, back-calculation of time series, flash estimates
- ★ Handbook on Composite Indicators
- ★ Seasonal Adjustment Guidelines
- ★ Manuals and inventories of sources and methods (EDP, COFOG and QFAGG)
- ★ Update STS documentation on sources and methods, HICP sources and methods on the basis of SDSS standard, compilation of background documentation for PEEIs
- ★ Updating the database on national methodologies and data sources used for statistics on food consumption and organic farming and expanding it to the area of food and feed control and monitoring activities
- ★ Implementation plan of specific components of CVD
- ★ Investigate in possibilities for EU-sampling in the area of employment statistics
- ★ Knowledge transfer with research community
- ★ Concepts of ESS net to be further pursued in the context of TF3
- ★ Update Guidelines for the Implementation of the Intrastat legislation

Timetable

ongoing
ongoing with OECD, JRC
end of 2007
end of 2007
end of 2007
September 2007-March 2008
ongoing
end 2007
ongoing; see also p. 8, 9, 13
ongoing
ongoing

Principle 8: Appropriate Statistical Procedures

Improvement actions

- ★ Single Data Entry Point for data transmissions to Eurostat

Timetable

60 % coverage by end of 2007, 80 % by end of 2008

Principle 8: Appropriate Statistical Procedures

Improvement actions

- ★ Plan for collaborative IT Development with the Member States
- ★ Census HUB using SDMX
- ★ Draft Manual: Introduction to data validation in Eurostat

Timetable

Mid 2008

pilots in 2008; implementation by end of 2010

Mid 2008

Principle 9: Non-Excessive burden on respondents

Improvement actions

- ★ To develop a policy for intensifying the dialogue with other DGs on their data collection plans and on administrative data collected in order to better streamline production of statistics within the Commission and to improve communication on/allocation of related costs
- ★ Promote cross-checks of data availability on a broader basis within Eurostat
- ★ Assessment of cost and burden in relation to benefits of STS
- ★ Reflect on possible use of national administrative data for compilation of STS in the framework of the report to EP and Council in 2008
- ★ Continue efforts on burden measurement in the area of R&D statistics on a basis of a comparable methodology
- ★ Implementation of Objectives 3 and 4 of MEETS (obj. 3: support the implementation of a more efficient way of collecting data, obj. 4: modernise and simplify Intrastat)

Timetable

during 2008

ongoing

2008 to EP and Council

ongoing

ongoing

MEETS programme to be implemented during 2008-2013

Principle 10: Cost Effectiveness

Improvement actions

- ★ All new statistical projects likely to impose a significant additional burden on the data providers, in particular enterprises, will be subject to a cost-benefit analysis before they are implemented
- ★ All the fields covered by the next multi-annual statistical programme (2008-2012) will be subject to a cost-benefit analysis before the end of the programme.

Timetable

ongoing

ongoing

Principle 11: Relevance

Improvement actions

- ★ PG TF 2 "Statistical challenges"
- ★ Eurostat quality and rolling reviews involving main stakeholders
- ★ Reform of the CEIES
- ★ Revision of the tourism directive with a view to improving timeliness, coverage and comparability

Timetable

ongoing

ongoing

end of 2007

May 2008

Principle 12: Accuracy and Reliability

Improvement actions

- ★ Central recommendations for publication where accuracy concerns
- ★ Quality reports and indicators should become a regular exercise including calculation of accuracy (quality) measures (CVs where possible). As far as possible, the requirements should be included in legal acts

Timetable

DM to re-discuss in 2008

2007/ ongoing

Principle 13: Timeliness and Punctuality

Improvement actions

- ★ Compression of transmission deadlines for a number of indicators to align national and EU release calendars

Timetable

ongoing

Principle 14: Coherence and Comparability

Improvement actions

- ★ Comparison of time series for turnover in services from STS and SBS. Study of employment comparing STS, Labour Force Survey and National Accounts

Timetable

end of 2008

Principle 14: Coherence and Comparability

Improvement actions

- ★ Reconciliation exercise between foreign trade statistics and goods item in balance of payments
- ★ Implementation of Objective 2 of MEETS (streamline the framework of business related statistics: integration of the legal framework and the methodology, development of statistics on enterprise groups, European surveys to minimise the burden on business)
- ★ Comprehensive quality review of the European Labour Force Survey focusing in particular on the quality dimensions, accuracy and coherence
- ★ Establishment of an action plan for improving SILC data quality, and particularly data comparability and coherence

Timetable

ongoing

MEETS programme to be implemented during 2008-2013

ongoing

ongoing

Principle 15: Accessibility and clarity

Improvement actions

- ★ Revision of legal framework in confidentiality aspects
- ★ User Satisfaction surveys/Usability on Eurostat internet site. Particular attention should be given to the reliability, user friendliness, and search facilities of the website.
- ★ New metadata model including more on quality dimensions. Particular attention should be given to the completeness of the metadata and its association with the data themselves.
- ★ Review the balance of hard copy and electronic releases.
- ★ Review with key users the layout, content, and quality of the analytical material presented in data releases.
- ★ Improve the process for informing users in advance of major revisions to series. Improve the visibility of the revisions in statistical releases.

Timetable

ongoing

Mid 2007 - Mid 2008

Mid 2008

March 2008

2008

Dec 2008 (in the frame of the PEEI internal TF).

ANNEX A: PROGRAMME OF THE EUROSTAT PEER REVIEW

Discussion with internal stakeholders (organised in Luxembourg)	
1st day	
09.30 – 10.00	Welcome and introduction, organisational matters
10.00 – 11.30	Meeting with management and senior staff, Principles 1, 2, 3
11.30 – 12.30	Meeting with management and senior staff, Principle 5
12.30 – 14.00	Lunch break
14.00 – 15.00	Meeting with management and senior staff, Principles 6, 15
15.00 – 15.45	Interview with DG, DDG and Quality manager, Principle 4
15.45 – 16.45	Meeting with junior staff, Principles 1-6, 15
16.45 – 17.15	Meetings with Directors and senior management from production units to review specific aspects in practice
17.15 – 17.45	Presentation of CVD exercise
Discussion with external stakeholders (organised in Brussels)	
2nd day	
10.30 – 11.00	Meeting with stakeholders of the European Commission and the ECB
11.00 – 12.00	Meeting with NSIs
12.00 – 13.00	Meeting with members of the CEIES Bureau
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch break
14.00 - 14.30	Meeting with stakeholders of the European Commission cont.
14.30 – 15.30	Meeting with international organisations
15.30 – 16.30	Meeting with media
Conclusions (organised in Luxembourg)	
3rd day	
09.30 – 11.30	Meeting with management to sum-up and detailed review of list of improvement actions for all principles
11.30 – 13.00	Meeting with top management: conclusions, recommendations and follow-up (improvement actions)

ANNEX B: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Internal stakeholders

Name, surname	Title, Directorate/Unit
Hervé CARRÉ	Director- General
Marie BOHATÁ	Deputy Director-General
Robert VAN DER STAR	Advisor of Director-General
Annika NÄSLUND	Assistant to the Director-General
Stephen KAISER	Director of Directorate A, Resources
Pedro DIAZ MUÑOZ	Director of Directorate B, Statistical Methods and Tools, Dissemination
Laurs NORLUND	Director of Directorate C, National and European Accounts
Inna ŠTEINBUKA	Director of Directorate D, Economic and Regional Statistics
Michel GLAUDE	Director of Directorate F, Social Statistics and Information Society
Peter BEKX	Director of Directorate G, Business Statistics
Antonio BAIGORRI MATAMALA	Head of Unit DDG-02, Statistical Governance, Quality and Evaluation
Roland LANE	Head of Unit A-1, Personnel
Efstratios CHATZIDOUKAKIS	Head of Unit A-2, Planning and Reporting
Christine COIN	Head of Unit A-3, Budgetary Matters
Philippe BAUTIER	Head of Unit A-5, Communication
Adam WRONSKI	Head of Unit B-1, IT Systems for Statistical Production
Wolfgang KNÜPPEL	Head of Unit B-2, IT Infrastructure
August GÖTZFRIED	Head of Unit B-4, Reference Databases
Rainer MUTHMANN	Head of Unit B-5, Methodology and Research
Gunter SCHÄFER	Head of Unit B-6, Dissemination
Brian NEWSON	Head of Unit D-3, Short-term Statistics
Gilles DECAND	Head of Unit E-3, Environment Statistics
Michail SKALIOTIS	Head of Unit F-1, Demographic and Migration Statistics
Inger ÖHMAN	Head of Unit G-1, Structural Business Statistics
Martina HAHN	Head of Section, Unit DDG-02, Statistical Governance, Quality and Evaluation
Timothy ALLEN	Head of Section, Unit A-5, Communication
Pascal JACQUES	Head of Section, Unit B-5, Methodology and Research
Håkan LINDEN	Unit DDG-02, Statistical Governance, Quality and Evaluation
Gerhard WÄCHTER	Unit A-2, Planning and Reporting
Helena OTTOSSON	Unit A-4, Legal, Institutional and International Affairs
Pierre CONSTANT	Local informatics security officer , Directorate B
Pavel BORKOVEC	Unit B-6, Dissemination
John VERRINDER	Unit C-5, Validation of Public Accounts
Laure LEDOUX	Unit D-1, Key Indicators for European Policies
Karin BLUMENTHAL	Unit E-3, Environment Statistics
Sabine GAGEL	Unit F-5, Health and Food Safety Statistics
Johan DEBRUYN	Unit G-2, International Trade Statistics – Methodology and Classifications

External stakeholders

Name, surname	Institution
Joao NOGUEIRA MARTINS	DG ECFIN , Adviser to Deputy Director-General
Douglas KOSZEREK	DG ECFIN, Unit A-2, Economic Databases and Statistical Coordination
Radek MALY	DG EMPL, Head of Unit D-1, Employment Analysis
Paul MINTY	DG EMPL Unit D-1, Employment Analysis
Marek STURC	DG ENV, Unit C-5, Energy and Environment
Barbara BACIGALUPI	DG ENV, Unit G-1, Sustainable Development and Economic Analysis
Robert WAKELING	DG MARKT, Unit C-1, Economic and Internal Dimension of Public Procurement
François DOM	DG FISH, Unit D-1, Monitoring and Licenses
Miguel PENA CASTELLOT	DG FISH, Unit E-4, Economic Analysis
Michele SURACE	DG FISH, Unit D-1, Monitoring and Licenses
Bertin MARTENS	DG TRADE, Deputy to the Chief Economist
Michael PAJOT	DG TRADE, Chief Economist Unit
Claes HALLBERG	DG TRADE, Unit G-3, Industrial Tariff & Non-tariff Negotiations
Andreas NAEGELE and Juan MORENO ACEDO	DG TREN Unit A-2, Economic Analysis, Impact Assessment, Evaluation and Climate Change
Agnieszka OSIECKA	DG TREN Unit E-2, Rail Transport and Interoperability
Hugo POELMAN	DG REGIO, Unit B-2, Development of Cohesion Policy, Accession Negotiations
Pierre BASCOU	DG AGRI, Head of Unit G-2, Economic Analysis of the Agriculture of the EU
Carmen ALCAIDE GUINDO	President, INE, Spain
Heli JESKANEN SUNDSTRÖM	Director General, Statistics Finland
Aija ZIGURE	President, Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia
Alda CARVALHO	President, INE, Portugal
Irena KRIZMAN	Director General, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia
Richard LAUX	Director, National Statistics and International Division, ONS, UK
Margit EPLER	Dept. for Economic Research and Statistics, Vienna, CEIES Vice President
Prof. Lea BREGAR	University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Economics; CEIES member
Dr. Ineke STOOP	Head of Department of Data Services and Information Technology (I&A), the Netherlands; CEIES member
Stephen KEUNING	Director-General of Statistics, European Central Bank
Heinrich BRÜNGGER	Director, Statistics Division, UNECE
Ralf HUSSMANN	ILO, Bureau of Statistics
Jan STRUPCZEWSKI	REUTERS