

## Progress Report on Commitments on Confidence in Statistics (period 2020-2021)

### 1. Compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice

The Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat) together with Eurostat, the National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) and the Other National Authorities (ONA) is part of the European Statistical System (ESS), which develops, produces and disseminates European statistics as established by the European statistical law<sup>1</sup>. In accordance with this law<sup>2</sup>, this progress report provides information on the implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice in Italy, and on the efforts undertaken towards the establishment of a Commitment on Confidence.

According to the Italian statistical law<sup>3</sup>, Istat is a legal person under public law. It is a public body with scientific, organisational, financial, and accounting independence and carries out its activities according to the principles of scientific independence, impartiality, objectivity, reliability, quality, and confidentiality of statistical information, as laid down at European and international levels.

In Italy the appropriate institutional environment for implementing official statistics is provided by the principles set out in the Italian statistical law complemented by the Presidential Decree (D.P.R) n. 166/2010 and the Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers of 28 April 2011. The D.P.R. provides rules on Istat reorganization and establishes among others, that Istat performs its duties to implement the provisions contained in the European statistical law as well as to transpose the principles on independence, integrity and responsibilities of the national statistical authorities as set out in the Commission Recommendation (COM (2005) 217) of May 2005 (art. 2(2)). The second of April 2011, that has implemented the reorganization process, states that Istat framework is also inspired by principles and provisions stated at European level, in particular by the European Statistics Code of Practice (art. 1(1)). These legal acts provide a solid official basis for the implementation of the principles of the ESCoP.

As member of the European Statistical System, Istat has to be compliant with the European Statistics Code of Practice (ES CoP), adopted in 2005 and revised for the second time in 2017. Its main purpose is to improve trust and confidence in official statistics and to enhance the quality of European Statistics.

The application of the ES CoP principles is monitored by Eurostat through the peer reviews taking place every five years in the EU Member States; the last one was conducted in Italy in 2015. Following the annual monitoring by Eurostat, all the Improvement Actions planned for Italy, taking into accounts the Recommendation received in the Peer Review, were fully implemented and completed according to the timeframe. A new round of peer reviews is going on in European Statistical System Member States in 2021-2023. In Italy the peer review visit will take place in November/December 2022. Istat has already started the preparation and the involvement of the ONAs in the process. Starting from October 2021 online workshops dedicated to ONAs have been organized for supporting their participation in the peer review and for compiling the Self Assessment Questionnaire.

In October 2021 Istat has updated its quality policy which is consistent with the European quality framework developed by Eurostat and transposes its main principles and definitions: process quality; product quality; documentation; respect for respondents; strengthening of statistical literacy; users' orientation; confidentiality. The new quality policy for statistical production is a strategic document containing concrete and operative actions to relaunch and update quality policy consistently with new productive context and

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EC) No. 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009 on European Statistics, amended by Regulation (EU) 2015/759 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Article 11 (4) of the revised (EC) Regulation No 223/2009 on European statistics

<sup>3</sup> Art 14 of Legislative decree no. 322/1989

challenges to face. Actions are organized by area and follow a defined schedule, according to available resources and the demanding needs in which Istat is already involved in 2021, such as the Censuses, also considering the difficulties due to the COVID 19 emergency. The actions relating to the "Evaluation of statistical processes" for the different types of processes are described in detail as they represent the core activities in the implementation of the quality policy.

With the aim of strengthening the commitment to quality and to better coordinate the many activities already underway in the institute, in September 2020 was reconstituted the Quality Committee, with the objective of overseeing all quality initiatives in Istat (this body had already been active from 2010 to 2016). At the same time, the role of the Quality Manager has been created with the main task of coordinating the implementation of the quality policy.

Furthermore, the implementation of the audit procedure (2018-2021) for assessing the quality of European statistics produced by ONAs ended in November 2021. Since 2018, 14 statistical processes have been audited by Istat experts. All the ONAs were involved and they put forward improvement actions agreed with Istat. One of the tools developed to implement the assessment program are the National Statistical System's Guidelines for Quality Statistics. These guidelines provide guidance for proper development of the steps and activities of the statistical process itself.

The strong commitment to quality has been further developed by the approval of the second edition of Italian Statistics Code of Practice in November 2021 (first edition adopted in March 2010). The Italian Code is an important tool of the National Statistical System (Sistan) policy to strengthen the governance and quality of official statistics and is fully inspired by the principles of the ES CoP.

In line with the European Quality Standards, Istat makes available and disseminates detailed data quality reports for all statistical processes. Each report includes quantitative indicators on the quality of the statistical process and the data produced. The structure of the reports follows the standard of the European Statistical System SIMS (Single Integrated Metadata Structure).

Finally, in the last National Statistical Conference NSC14 that took place the 30th of November and the 1st of December 2021, the specific session on "Strengthen focus on quality and resources" was organized within which a part was dedicated to the next round of peer reviews and the implementation of the ESCoP.

## **1. Efforts undertaken towards the establishment of a Commitment**

With reference to the compliance with the provision established in Article 11, paragraph 4, of the revised (EC) Regulation No 223/2009 on European statistics, the inclusion of a Commitment on Confidence has been put forward for the updating of the years 2021-22 of the National Statistical Program.

The approval procedure establishes that the PSN is adopted by the Council of Ministers on a proposal from the President of the Council and enacted by a decree of the President of the Republic.