

## PROGRESS REPORT

### 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 (ESCoP) 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 above said Italian statistical law complemented by the Presidential Decree (D.P.R) n. 166/2010 and Istat Council Resolution No. CDXLIV of December 7, 2017 (Istat Statute) as amended in 2019. The first 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 regulates the organisation and functioning of the National Institute of Statistics in accordance with the current European and national legislation on official statistics.

As member of the European Statistical System, Istat has to be compliant with the ESCoP, 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. Since its adoption Istat has been committed to comply with its principles and by promoting and monitoring its implementation by the Other national authorities - ONAs, responsible for the development, production and dissemination 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. Two rounds were already conducted and currently the process of the third round of peer review for the period 2021-23 is being finalized at ESS level. This last round differs from the previous ones as it paid greater focus on the involvement of the ONAs; on more future oriented recommendations; on the progress made in the last five years in implementing the ESCoP; on the collection of information on innovative practices and on the development of an ESS peer review communication campaign.

In Italy, the peer review visit took place in Rome from 28 November to 2 December 2022. Representatives from Istat and ONAs participated in the discussions, which also included users, data providers, media and academia, among others. The peer reviewers also met with representatives from the Commission for Quality Assurance of Statistical Information (COGIS), and Comstat, the governing body of the National statistical system (Sistan). These meetings allowed the peer review expert team to explore Istat and ONAs compliance with the ESCoP in detail and to identify examples of good/innovative/forward-looking practices. Moreover, Istat, apart from organising two online workshops dedicated to ONAs, during the 2022, organised several bilateral meetings with the ONAs for supporting their participation in the peer review.

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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> Article 14 of Legislative decree no. 322/1989

The Peer review mechanism represents for the NSI and ONAs a great opportunity to make visible all the progresses achieved to better respond to issues arising from new information demands. At the same time this exercise implies a strong commitment by the Member state to identify potential shortcomings, to agree in implementing the relevant improvement actions and monitor their impact. In Italy the peer review served to focus Istat and ONAs attention on their internal practices, through a self-reflection process, and on their compliance with the principles of the ESCoP

One of the main lessons learned from the previous rounds is the utmost importance of continuous and targeted internal and external communication of practices and results. To this end, Istat implemented specific actions targeting its staff, such as the creation of a new intranet area devoted to enhance ES CoP awareness and, on a broader perspective, by promoting the value of EU statistics among users, stakeholders and academia.

Furthermore, the 2023 [Report on the activity of Istat and the offices of the national statistical system and on the status of implementation of the national statistical program](#) was presented by the Italian government transmits to the Parliament as foreseen by law. In this Report a specific Focus was made on the Peer Review Round 2021-2023 on the compliance of the ESCoP in Italy and all efforts made to implement the code.

Istat is highly committed to quality and its quality management system is developed in agreement with the European Statistical System Common Quality Framework including the ES Code of Practice. Within Istat quality commitment, its new quality policy (approved in 2021) provides for the evaluation of the compliance of traditional processes, such as surveys, with sound methodologies and practices. To this end, a checklist was administered to all Istat traditional processes between October 2022 and January 2023, using an electronic questionnaire. The checklist structure follows the phases of the GSBPM (Generic Statistical Business Process Model), and it is based on the existing quality guidelines. The checklist is quality-oriented, therefore, it records quality actions, availability of specific quality indicators for each phase, any risks that may affect quality, innovations and standardization processes. Each element of the checklist serves to identify weaknesses, and therefore to tailor improvement actions to be implemented. Afterwards, a limited number of statistical processes will undergo a specific quality review through an audit-like approach, following the audit procedure for statistical processes, approved in October 2023. The audits are scheduled annually within a three-year period, since the checklist should be repeated every three years.