

**STATEC**

Institut national de la statistique  
et des études économiques

Luxembourg

**PEER REVIEWERS' RECOMMENDATIONS AND *STATEC*<sup>1</sup> IMPROVEMENT  
ACTIONS IN RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

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<sup>1</sup> STATEC - Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques, LUXEMBOURG

## Peer reviewer's recommendations and improvement actions in response to the recommendations

### **Governance**

**1. The National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies should develop a detailed description of the National Statistical System clarifying what it encompasses and what is not within it, identify the staff related to those activities and take steps to enhance their understanding of the National Statistical System and the interpretation of the European statistics Code of Practice in the context of their work. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 1 to 6, and coordination)**

#### **Current situation:**

Although the concept of a National Statistical System is in STATEC's law, it is not defined in a comprehensive manner. All bodies producing statistics and detaining data that might be used for statistical purposes are part of the Committee for Official Statistics.

#### **Improvement action 1.1 *Defining the National Statistical System***

Together with the relevant stakeholders, STATEC will define the National Statistical System and identify the staff related to these activities.

#### **Timeline:**

12/2015

#### **Improvement action 1.2 *Enhancing understanding of European statistics Code of Practice***

Presentation and discussion on European statistics Code of Practice in the Committee for Official Statistics. Training on CoP for members of the National Statistical System.

#### **Timeline:**

From 2016 onwards.

**2. The National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies should find ways to communicate in a user-friendly manner the concept of the National Statistical System, so that public administrations, the media and the public can better understand what it is and why it is valuable. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 1 to 6, and coordination)**

**Current situation:**

Due to the fact that most statistics are produced by STATEC, other producers are not that well known.

**Improvement actions 2.1 and 2.2 *Enhancing visibility of the National Statistical System***

2.1 The Statistics Portal describing the National Statistical System will be reorganised and improved.

2.2 STATEC will try to incorporate statistical results from other producers in its publication policy.

**Timeline:**

06/2016: Statistics Portal describing the National Statistical System reorganised and improved

12/2016: Incorporate all relevant statistical results from other producers in STATEC publication policy

**3. The National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies should establish and lead a system of permanent sub-committees and ad-hoc working groups reporting to the Committee for Official Statistics such that these committees and working groups collectively serve as the primary forum of the National Statistical System, addressing matters that require agreement across the System. The sub-committees should include one on the development of statistical planning across the National Statistical System and the ad-hoc working groups should include one on the interpretation and implementation of the European statistics Code of Practice. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 1 to 6, and coordination)**

**Current situation:**

The Committee for Official Statistics has already permanent sub-committees (environmental, energy, public finance, dwelling prices), so that for the time being no other than these and the new subcommittee on the development of statistical planning across the National Statistical System, which will be created before March 2016, are needed.

**Improvement action 3.1 *Creation of a sub-committee on statistical programming***

A subcommittee on the development of statistical planning across the National Statistical System will be created within the framework of the Committee for Official Statistics. Due to the fact that Luxembourg will have the Presidency in the second semester of 2015, we foresee this action for the first half of 2016.

**Timeline:**

03/2016

**Improvement action 3.2 *Creation of task-force on interpretation and implementation of the CoP***

A task-force on interpretation and implementation of the CoP will be created. This task-force will deal with particularities of interpretation and implementation of the CoP for very small ONAs, as well as with recommendation 11.

**Timeline:**

06/2016

**4. The National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies should actively contribute to the work programme of topics to be addressed by the Committee for Official Statistics' working groups and foster such groups in a systematic way as resources allow. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 1 to 6, and coordination)**

**Current situation:**

STATEC contributes already very actively to the work of the Committee for Official Statistics. In order to better organize the work in advance STATEC will try to establish a tentative calendar of meetings of sub-committees and task-forces.

**Improvement action 4.1 *Meeting calendar for the Committee for Official Statistics and its sub-committees.***

Establish the meeting calendar for the Committee for Official Statistics.

**Timeline:**

12/2015

**Improvement action 4.2 *Fostering working groups in a systematic way as resources allow.***

Issuing regularly an appeal at the Committee for Official Statistics' meetings to examine potential needs for such working groups

**Timeline:**

12/2015

## **Sustainability**

**5. On the advice of the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies and of the Supreme Council of Statistics, the relevant authorities should address the adequacy of the resources available to the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies with a view to ensuring that European obligations in respect of official statistics are adequately funded. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 3)**

### **Current situation:**

In certain particular fields there is a lack of resources to comply with requirements of the European statistical programme. This is well documented and communicated in a regular manner to the government, but financial restrictions do not allow covering these lacks at the moment.

### **Improvement action 5 *Address regular demands on the lack of resources to the competent national institutions***

STATEC sends a list of priorities of recruitment to the “Commission d’économies et de rationalisation” in parallel to the annual budgetary proposals.

### **Timeline:**

Yearly

**6. The relevant authorities should take the necessary steps to give the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies maximum flexibility in the use of financial resources to employ staff on both permanent and short-term bases and full authority to transfer budgets between functions as necessary to meet its agreed priorities and commitments. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 1 and 10)**

**Current situation:**

It is true that the current laws and rules might be more flexible, but this is a general problem which is beyond the scope of a particular administration. Recommendation 6, the way it stands, goes beyond what is legally possible from budgetary policy and from an engagement of human staff point of view. Therefore, we would like to change it in the following sense:

“6. The relevant authorities should take the necessary steps to give the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies maximum flexibility **that is possible within the system of public administration** in the use of financial resources to employ staff on both permanent and short-term bases and full authority to transfer budgets between functions as necessary to meet its agreed priorities and commitments. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 1 and 10)”

**Improvement action**

STATEC has a divergent view on this recommendation and therefore no improvement action is envisaged.

**Timeline:**

N.A.

**7. The relevant authorities should, on the advice of the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies, identify staff working within the National Statistical System in other national authorities and introduce explicit arrangements for them to be personally accountable to the Director of the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies in relation to their work on the production of European statistics and their responsibilities under the European statistics Code of Practice. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 1 to 6, 10 and coordination)**

**Current situation:**

At the time being, other producers of national statistics are not personally accountable to the Director of STATEC for the statistical work, although there are bilateral contacts and common discussions in the Committee for Official Statistics.

**Improvement action 7 *Take juridical advice on the accountability of staff from ONAs to the Director of STATEC***

Before trying to establish explicit arrangements, STATEC starts contacting lawyers of the Ministry of Public Administration to explore to which extent explicit arrangements for statistical accountability of staff from ONAs to the Director of STATEC could be set up.

**Timeline:**

01/2016: STATEC contacts lawyers

06/2017: Tentative date for the arrangements to be established

**8. The National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies should plan to appoint a full-time quality manager with a remit to establish a systematic approach to quality, based on international best practice; and to progress evaluation of statistical processes and outputs; and to establish an effective system of communication across the National Statistical System in relation to quality issues. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 4)**

**Current situation:**

At the beginning of 2015, STATEC did not have a full-time quality manager.

**Improvement action 8 *Appoint a full time quality manager***

In May 2015, STATEC will have a person engaged who will deal more explicitly with quality issues, but it will surely take some time before this person will be fully operational.

**Timeline:**

Engagement of a person dealing with quality issues: 05/2015

Quality manager fully operational: 01/2017

**9. The relevant authorities should ensure full compliance with Article 13 of the 2011 statistics Law, which requires authorities to provide full access to administrative records, and in particular ensure that the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies has full access to tax records that it judges necessary to do its work efficiently. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 2.2, 8.8 and 9.4)**

**Current situation:**

Generally, STATEC has very good access to administrative data. Access to fiscal data (individual tax records and anonymised records) should be better.

**Improvement action 9 *Improve access to fiscal data***

In order to improve access to revenue tax records, STATEC will have to clarify conflicting legal provisions with relevant lawyers and with the input received STATEC will propose measures to the relevant authorities in order to fully comply with the recommendation. In the meantime STATEC will contact the Revenue tax authority to have a better view on available data.

**Timeline:**

10/2015: STATEC contacts the Revenue tax authority to have a better view on available data

01/2016: STATEC starts to clarify conflicting legal provisions with relevant lawyers

## **Reputation and Users**

**10. The National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies should make proposals to the relevant authorities regarding the arrangements for the appointment, and termination of appointment, of the Director to be set out more specifically and distinctly. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 1.8)**

### **Current situation:**

Directors of public administrations are appointed following a transparent policy established by law. The same is true for termination.

### **Improvement action 10 *Proposals for the appointment and termination of appointment of the Director***

Although the law fixes the general rules, STATEC plans to make suggestions to the relevant authorities for the appointment and dismissal in line with the CoP.

### **Timeline:**

First semester 2016.

**11. The National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies should put forward proposals for the principles of the European statistics Code of Practice to be formally recognised as applying equally to all its functions including economic forecasting and research; and to other parts of the National Statistical System responsible for European statistics. The interpretation of the Code of Practice in these contexts should be agreed with the Supreme Council of Statistics. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 4 and 6)**

**Current situation:**

Recommendation 11 states that the Code of Practice should apply to all functions on STATEC (including economic forecasting and applied research). After intense discussions with different stakeholders, STATEC believes that principle 1 “professional independence” would not be appropriate in these two areas. For forecasting, the statistical law foresees that it should comply with international standards and the monitoring of applied research is to be done by a high-level independent scientific committee.

**Improvement action 11 *Put forward proposals on the interpretation and the implementation of the CoP***

STATEC will try to establish the equivalence of these safeguards with the Code of Practice (CoP) in the task-force on interpretation of the CoP mentioned in improvement action 3.2.

**Timeline:**

06/2016

**12. The Supreme Council of Statistics should take the lead in defining a more transparent and efficient system covering the whole of the National Statistical System for stimulating and evaluating proposals for statistical outputs (and access to microdata) taking account of all user needs. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 11 and 15)**

**Current situation:**

In our view and knowledge most requests for statistical outputs are answered unless they imply a huge new workload. The Supreme Council of Statistics plays already today a very important role in the field of prioritization of the statistical work-programme. Some criticism was raised on access to micro-data. It is true that STATEC gives access to microdata, but there is no formal procedure yet.

**Improvement action 12 *Establishing a procedure for microdata access***

The Supreme Council of Statistics will put this topic on its meeting's agenda with the objective of writing formally down the rules and procedure for microdata access within the NSS, which is particularly sensitive in a very small country. The rules and procedures will be published on the Internet site.

**Timeline:**

06/2016.