

Report on compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice in Denmark, June 2017

The following report provides information on the implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP) in accordance with the reporting requirements specified in the revised EU Regulation No 223/2009 on European statistics, Article 11 (4).

The report includes information on: 1) the efforts taken to implement the improvement actions identified in relation to the EU peer review in 2015, 2) implementation of national quality guidelines for European statistics in accordance with EU 223/2009 and 3) the status and efforts related to the preparation of a new law for official statistics in Denmark.

Implementation of EU peer review improvement actions

In the last round of ESS peer reviews 2013-2015 regarding compliance with the CoP in EU and EFTA Member States, the peer reviewers concluded in their final report for Denmark that the CoP is largely complied with in Denmark and within Statistics Denmark. At the same time, the peer reviewers gave a total of 23 recommendations for further improvements related to four main areas: 1) *Strengthen the institutional environment*, 2) *Ensure the sustainability of the national statistical system*, 3) *Continue efforts on quality and efficiency*, 4) *Enhance analysis and dissemination*.

Based on the peer reviewers' recommendations, Statistics Denmark has identified 27 improvement actions aimed at implementing the recommendations of the peer reviewers and thereby further implementing the CoP in Denmark. 16 of these improvement actions were completed by 31 December 2016 when the latest round of reporting to Eurostat took place. Overall progress on implementing the recommendations of the peer reviewers can be summarized as follows:

- 1) *Institutional environment*: A new law on Danish official statistics is under preparation replacing the existing legal framework from 1966 and containing specific provisions on professional independence, statistical confidentiality as well as coordination of official statistics in Denmark (see below).
- 2) *Sustainability of the national statistical system*: In order to ensure transparency regarding Statistics Denmark's financial resources, the Ministry for Economic Affairs and the Interior is informed on a regular basis on the budgets for financing of new EU demands. Furthermore, efforts are taken to establish formal agreements with key administrative data providers, including a standard contract governing the delivery of administrative data to Statistics Denmark in order to ensure stability and quality in administrative data sources used for statistics production.
- 3) *Efforts on quality and efficiency*: To further strengthen quality management as well as efficiency, Statistics Denmark is undergoing a number of

organizational changes also reflecting the peer reviewer's recommendations. One key milestone has been the centralization of IT-resources and personnel, which was implemented in 2016 and which is expected to lead to a reduction in the use of IT resources and a rise in the quality of the produced IT products and processes due to increased standardization, development of IT-skills and enhanced prioritization of IT-resources. Another key project is under implementation establishing work processes to handle information from large, complex enterprise groups. Furthermore, a procedure for systematic quality audits of Statistics Denmark's statistical products has been implemented.

- 4) *Analysis and dissemination:* It is a key strategic priority for Statistics Denmark to be a relevant, reliable and widely used source of information on the Danish society and to further develop this role. This is spelled out in Statistics Denmark's Strategy 2020 and several activities have been implemented also in line with the recommendations of the peer reviewers. This includes the establishment of an analysis-team working together with statistical experts to release statistical analyses across different statistical topics as well as an increased use of interactive tools in the dissemination of statistics.

A further description of the implementation of the 27 improvement actions is given in Annex 1 in line with the latest reporting to Eurostat.

Implementation of national guidelines for European statistics

In accordance with Article 5a of the revised Regulation on European Statistics EU 2003/2009, Statistics Denmark has developed and published a first version of national guidelines concerning the development, production and dissemination of European Statistics. The guidelines are based on the European CoP and are targeted other national authorities (ONAs) producing European statistics. The guidelines therefore aim to translate the principles of the CoP into a Danish context and make them more practically applicable for Danish authorities who do not have statistics production as a core task. The 12 Danish ONAs have been consulted during the process of drafting the guidelines.

In 2016, all Danish ONAs carried out for the first time a self-evaluation regarding compliance with the guidelines. Based on the results and the experience of this first pilot monitoring exercise, Statistics Denmark is in the process of refining the guidelines and the self-assessment questionnaire in order to make them even more suitable for ONAs and useful as an instrument for strengthening compliance with the CoP in Denmark. As part of this process, we are carrying out a round of consultations with all ONAs with the purpose of increasing the mutual understanding of the guidelines and enhancing Statistics Denmark's insight into the statistics production in ONAs. We also plan to facilitate/organise seminars for employees working with statistics production in Danish ONAs with the aim to strengthen professional development and exchange of best practices within the community of producers of European statistics in Denmark.

The self-assessment questionnaires will be followed-up by 'mini'-peer reviews carried out in each ONA every 3-5 years. The information gained from the self-assessment as well as the peer review exercises will form the basis of an annual report on the compliance with the CoP in Denmark.

Preparation of a new statistical law

A new law on Danish official statistics is under preparation. The legal text has been drafted and the proposal is expected to be put forward to Parliament within the next year or so. The legislative proposal includes provisions regarding professional independence, data confidentiality, requirements to minimize as much as possible the burden put on respondents as well as coordination of the Danish statistical system.

The legislative proposal contains clear procedures for quality assurance of Danish official statistics (which will include all European Statistics), including a mechanism for monitoring and enforcement of a set of official national guidelines based on the CoP identical to the guidelines for European statistics established in accordance with Regulation on European Statistics EU 2003/2009 Article 5a as described above. According to the draft legal act, yearly self-assessments and periodic peer reviews will be carried out in all Danish authorities producing official statistics, including all ONAs producing European statistics. Statistics Denmark will then present a yearly report to the Government on the compliance with the guidelines for official statistics in those authorities, including recommendations for improvement activities.

Once adopted, the new law will provide a strong reassurance of the commitment to maintain confidence in European Statistics in Denmark as it contains clear procedures on monitoring and enforcement of the official quality guidelines. The yearly report for the government will constitute a mechanism by which the government will assess on a yearly basis the compliance with the CoP in all national authorities producing official statistics in Denmark.

ANNEX 1: Status on the Danish peer review improvements actions by 31 December 2016.