



## TWINNING CONTRACT

CRIS 2015/370-467



# Support to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics in Improving the Quality of Official Statistics

## MISSION REPORT

on

### Component A Quality Management of Official Statistics

### Activity A.2 Introduction to tools and processes supporting the Code of Practice (CoP)

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**Jerusalem**

June 19-23 2016

Version: Final

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**List of Abbreviations**

BC	Beneficiary country
CoP	European Statistics Code of Practice
DDI	The Data Documentation Initiative
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EU	European Union
GAMSO	Generic Activity Model for Statistical Organisations
GSBPM	The Generic Statistical Business Process Model
ICBS	Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics
MS	Member State (of the EU)
NSS	National statistical system
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
QAF	Quality Assurance Framework of the European Statistical System
SIMS	Single Integrated Metadata Structure
ToR	Terms of Reference

## **Executive Summary**

During the mission presentations were given on quality management, the quality assurance framework and self-assessment. There was especially an interest to talk about the organisation of quality management in Statistics Denmark. Presentations were also given on the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM), the role of metadata in the quality management of official statistics and finally on the aim and function of audit reports in quality management. These presentations were given to the five teams that had been selected for the self-assessment exercise of this mission.

Self-assessment questionnaire based on the Code of Practice (CoP) were filled in for five selected statistics. Test audits were performed by an audit team of the two Danish experts on two ICBS statistics. The ICBS experts participated as observers.

The statistics in the test audit were:

1. *Follow up of high school students to higher education*
2. *The consumer price index (CPI)*

The first and main part of the audits was dedicated to the production process, roughly following the GSBPM. The review team followed up on the parts of the self-assessment questionnaire that had not been covered in the course of the interview or required additional clarification (typically for the ten last minutes of the meeting).

The three additional statistics for which the self-assessment questionnaire were filled:

3. *Quarterly Estimates of Households Expenditure on Food and Beverages*
4. *Births and Fertility*
5. *The Financial Literacy Survey*

For those statistics not participating in the test audit with Danish experts, the audit was planned to be performed by the ICBS experts in the weeks following the mission.

## 1. General comments

This mission report was prepared as part of the Twinning Project "Support to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS) in Enhancing the Quality of Official Statistics". This was the second mission devoted to vision, mission, policy and strategy for quality within Component A: Quality Management of Official Statistics.

The main purpose of this activity was to get practical "hands-on" experiences and feedback on tools supporting the implementation of the Code of Practice in National Statistical Institutions.

The activity included presentation of guidelines and procedures, specifically:

- Self-Assessment including the review process
- Quality Assurance Framework (QAF)
- The Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM),
- Metadata Management – in the context of the production of quality reports

The position analysis assisted the ICBS and the Twinning Project experts in getting an overview of the present situation regarding Quality Management of Official Statistics in Israel.

The experts would like to express their thanks to all officials and individuals met for their kind support and for the valuable information they provided, which highly facilitated the experts' work.

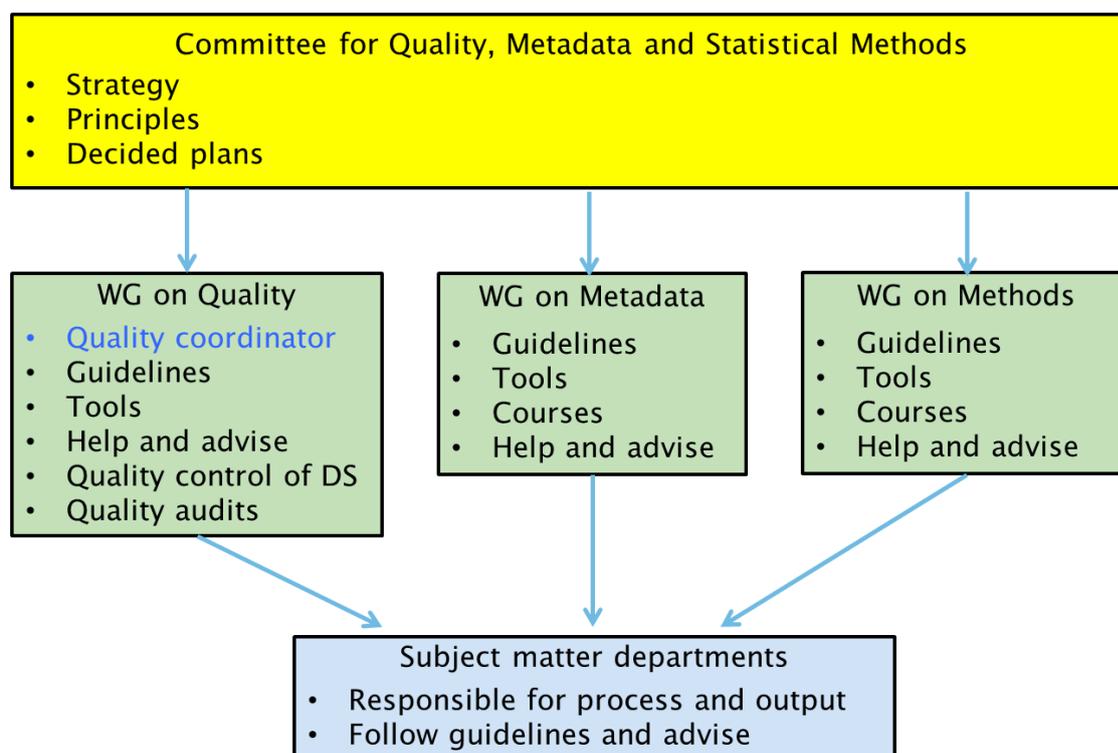
The views and observations stated in this report are those of the consultants and do not necessarily represent the views of EU, ICBS or Statistics Denmark.

## 2. Assessment and results

From the course of the present mission it is clear that the ICBS are working intensely on several of the recommendations given at the first Mission and it will follow naturally to follow up on them in a later stage of this component.

**In the first day** of this mission presentations were given on quality management, the quality assurance framework and self-assessment. There was especially an interest to talk about the organisation of quality management in Statistics Denmark.

Statistics Denmark has for many years dedicatedly worked with quality and metadata. The systematic work with an integrated metadata system started in 2009 when also the first pilots on using GSBPM (Annex A2 – 10) for documenting production processes started. An actual quality managing position was created in 2014 when the position of quality coordinator was established. In 2013, prior to the position of quality coordinator, a steering committee for quality was in place. In 2015 a new organisational structure for quality management was in place. This is illustrated in the figure below:



The day ended with an introduction to the hands-on exercise planned for the week.

**On the second day** the first presentations was given on the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) (Annex A2 – 6). As part of the presentation it was also shown how Enterprise Architect (EA) is used as a supporting tool for GSBPM at Statistics Denmark. Secondly, the role of metadata in the quality management of official statistics was presented (Annex A2 – 7) and finally a presentation was given on the aim and function of audit reports in quality management (Annex A2 – 8). These presentations were given to the five teams that had been selected for the self-assessment exercise of this mission. The outline of the quality audit can be seen in figure 1.

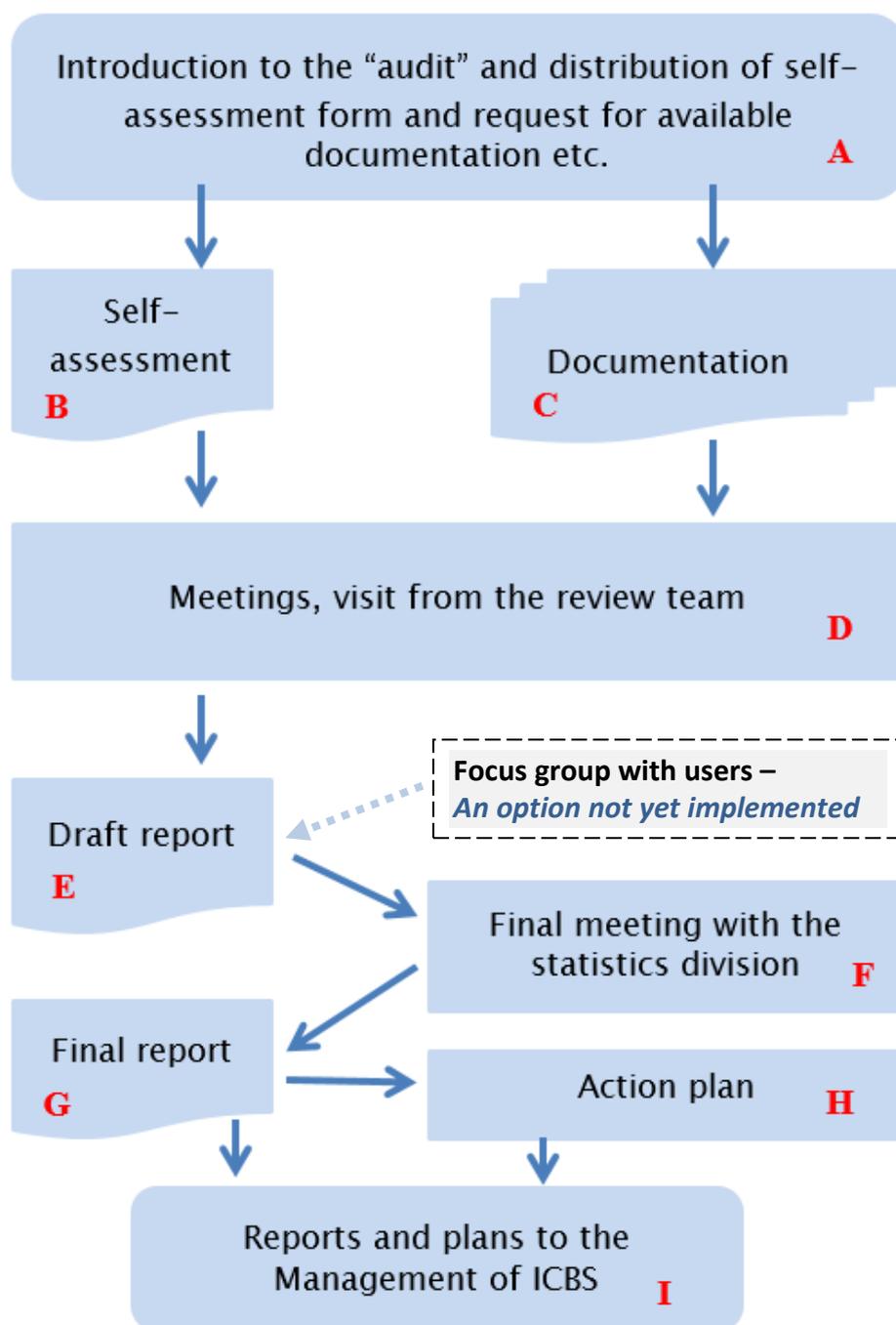


Figure 1: Road map for self-assessment

**People to met in the process:**

A: In the introductory meeting the person responsible from the audit team meets with the head of the unit and the person in charge of the statistical activity (this is not the head of unit, but the person responsible for the daily running of the statistics – working on solving the everyday tasks) and other persons having an active part in producing the statistics if the head of the unit finds this convenient. This meeting is set to be half an hour.

B and C: The person in charge of the statistical activity is expected to fill in the questionnaire – in cooperation with the head of unit and under supervision of the person responsible from the audit team. The person in charge of the statistical activity is given two weeks to fill in the questionnaire.

D: In the audit meeting the person responsible from the audit team and the audit experts meet with the head of unit and the person in charge of the statistical activity (this is not the head of unit, but the person responsible for the daily running of the statistics – working on solving the everyday tasks) and other persons having an active part in producing the statistics if the head of the unit finds this convenient. This meeting is set to two hours.

E: The audit team drafts the report. This will usually be done within a week.

F: In the final meeting the person responsible from the audit team and the audit experts meet with the head of unit and the person in charge of the statistical activity and other persons having an active part in producing the statistics if the head of the unit finds this convenient. This meeting is set to 0,5-1 hour.

G: The audit team finalises the audit report. This will be done within a couple of days.

H: The head of unit and the production team produce an action plan on the basis of the recommendations given in the audit report. This action plan should be cleared with the director responsible for the unit. The unit is given three weeks to finalise the action plan.

In agreement with the terms of reference for this mission self-evaluation based on the self-assessment questionnaires (Annex A2 – 11) and the QAF translated into Hebrew (Annex A2 – 12), was filled out for five selected statistics with assistance from the experts from Statistics Denmark and ICBS (steps A – C). Two selected statistics performed together steps D – H during the activity, in the form of bullet points, while the three other units have carried out step D – H in the week following activity A2 (with assistance of the ICBS experts only).

The five selected Statistics were:

- *Follow up of high school students to higher education*
- *The consumer price index (CPI)*
- *Quarterly estimates of households expenditure on food and beverages*
- *Births and Fertility*
- *The Financial Literacy Survey*

The session was initiated with an introduction to the audit process as well as the demonstration of an audit meeting for an audience of managers and workers from the ICBS, so that they could learn how the process was conducted. This proved to be an effective teaching mechanism.

Following the introduction the five teams undertook the exercise of filling out the self-assessment questionnaires. The exercise proved a challenge for most of the participants. The Code of Practice - CoP (Annex A2 – 9) is in many cases not easy to relate to the everyday work in a statistical institution. This is mostly due to the fact that the wording of the CoP is different from the wording used in the everyday production of statistics. Some of the problems might be related to the Hebrew translation of the CoP, but in most cases it is just another way of describing what is already done in the statistical production processes.

After the exercise of filling the self-assessment questionnaires, two of the teams were selected to be part of a test quality audit.

The statistics in the test audit were:

- *Follow up of high school students to higher education*
- *The consumer price index (CPI)*

The audit team consisted of two Danish experts and an ICBS team. The ICBS team consisted of the persons responsible for the everyday running of the statistics and their manager (Head of unit). The ICBS experts participated as observers.

During the audit meeting (D) the audit team used the GSBPM (Annex A2 – 10) as a frame for the interview. The interview is basically a conversation where the production team explains the production processes of the statistics. The idea is for the review team to understand how the interaction with users takes place, especially how the needs of the users are met and how the flow of the production takes place. While using the GSBPM as a frame, the review team strives to have a relatively unstructured approach to the review of the production process.

The section following the interview was devoted to the production process. The review team followed up on the parts of the self-assessment questionnaire that had not been covered in the course of the interview or required additional clarification (typically for the ten last minutes of the meeting).

When the audit meeting was over, the review team drafted a quality audit report (E) using the template that Statistics Denmark used for their audits in 2015 (Annex A2 – 13). In the follow up meeting (F) with the teams, misunderstandings and unclear sections were corrected and improved. The draft recommendations were discussed and the recommendations were adjusted. On the basis of these recommendations, actions plans were discussed (H), but not drafted.

The two quality audit reports can be found in Annex 15 - Follow up of high school students to higher education ) and Annex 16 - The consumer price index (Both annexes for internal use only).

### **3. Conclusions and Recommendations**

#### **3.1. General Observations**

The activities on quality in ICBS have been ongoing since the last twinning project, and the participating staff is highly motivated and engaged. There is an increase in awareness on quality, and progress is being made in many areas. Great plans are in place.

There is a tendency for subject matter domains to be like islands, each working in their own way and thus, are little inclined to follow overall institutional standards.

However, during and after the mission a great deal of positive feedback was received and participants expressed that the exercise gave them a much better understanding of the CoP principles and what they, as a unit, can do in order to meet the principles of the CoP.

**Recommendation:**

- It is recommended to work further on the Hebrew translation of the CoP and the QAF.
- The experts recommend that the five pilot teams, in collaboration with the quality team of the ICBS, complete the self-assessment questionnaires.
- It is recommended to have a sixth quality audit pilot for statistics that will cover all the steps from A to H.
- It is recommended that, based the experience from the six pilots, the quality team draw up an action plan for implementing quality audits in the ICBS.
- It is recommended to translate the GSBPM into Hebrew, supplementing the descriptions of the processes with examples of good practices or standards from the ICBS.