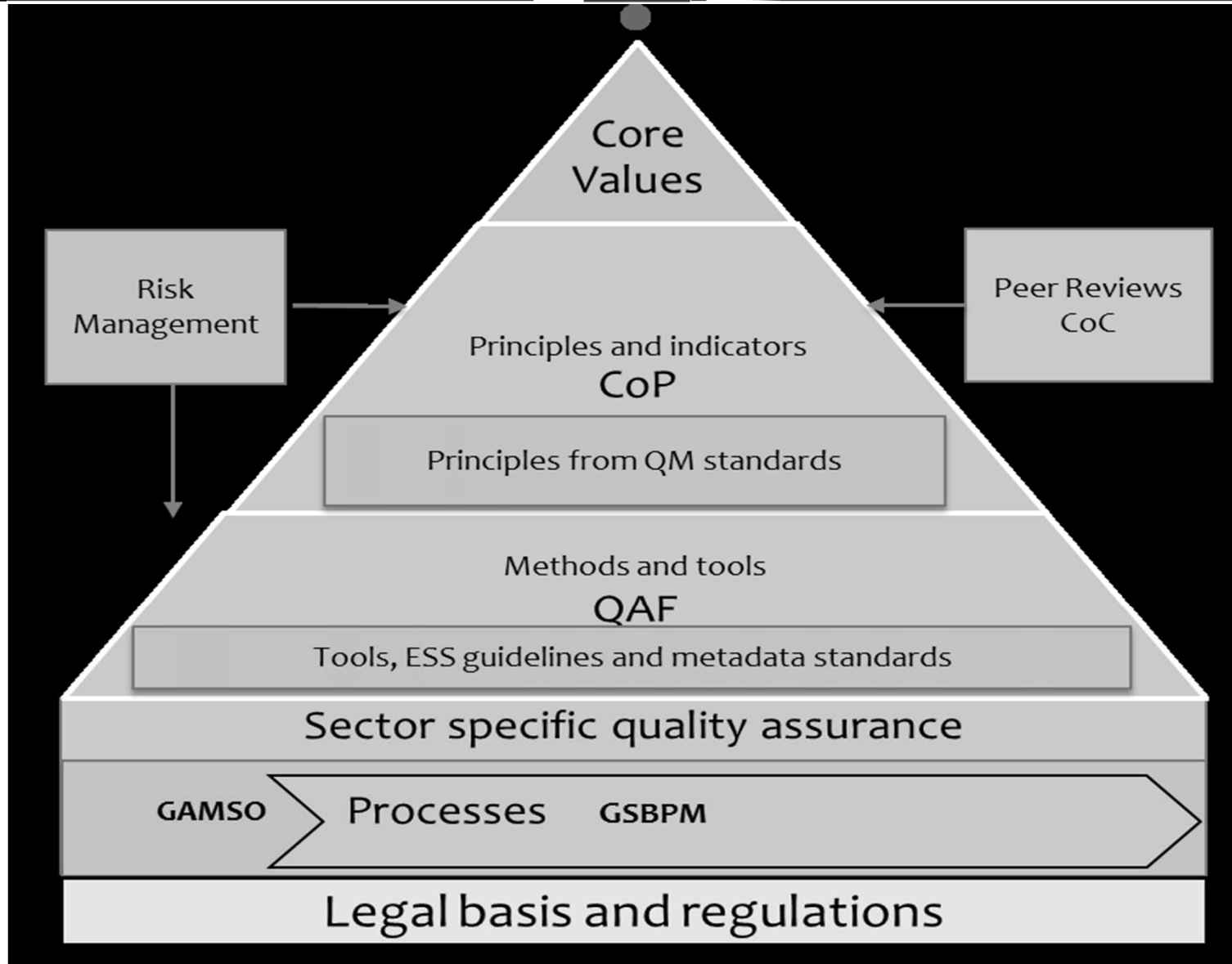# Quality Assurance Framework of the ESS

Task Force on peer reviews and quality, Eurostat

10/12/2019

Overview

- European statistics Code of Practice

- ESS Quality Assurance Framework - revision

- ESS Peer Reviews

- Quality conferences

ES Code of Practice

- Aim: to ensure **public trust** in European statistics **by establishing how to develop, produce and disseminate European statistics** in line with the statistical principles set out in Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 and best international statistical practice

- **Self-regulatory**, applies to Eurostat, to National Statistical Institutes of the ESS and to other national authorities producing European statistics

- **Revised in 2017**, contains 16 Principles and 84 indicators

  http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/quality/european-statistics-code-of-practice

Main changes

- Rewritten **Preamble**

- A **new Glossary** explaining the main terms was published

- **New Principle 1bis** on Coordination and cooperation

- **Alignment** of wording/terminology and approach to that of the **revised Regulation 223/2009**

- Adding the aspects of **new data sources**: 'other data'

- Emphasising the importance of **data protection**

- Further **precisions on the pre-release access arrangements**

- Adding aspects of **innovation and value of statistics** as well as **new communication technologies and platforms**

- **Generalising and merging** some indicators, making the CoP less survey-oriented

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Some changes in detail (1)

- Community → European (based on the European statistical law, regulation 223/2009)

- Preamble describes the quality framework of the European Statistical System

- The Quality declaration of the ESS is included – as a sign of commitment to quality

- P1, indicator 8 – recruitment procedures to be also transparent and based on professional criteria (previously: competence)

- Entirely new principle on coordination and cooperation – the coordination role of the NSI in the NSS and the definition/identification of other producers of official statistics were major issues in the 2nd round of peer reviews

- P2 – more emphasize on the access to data (previously: collect data), access and collection from multiple sources, inclusion of privately held data, involvement in the design, changes and discontinuation of administrative records

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Eurostat

Some changes in detail (2)

- P4 – product quality → output quality, reflects a change towards users, add the notion of improve the quality (previously: plan and monitor) to indicator 4.2

- P5 – for protection of confidentiality and security – also regulatory and administrative measures need to be in place (on top of physical, technical and organisational provisions)

- P6 - ***Statistical authorities independently decide on the time and content of statistical releases, while taking into account the goal of providing complete and timely statistical information.*** *All users have equal access to statistical releases at the same time. Any privileged pre-release access to any outside user is limited,* ***well-justified,*** *controlled and publicised.* ***In case of breach,*** *pre-release arrangements are* ***reviewed*** *so as to ensure impartiality*.

- P8 – less survey orientation of the indicators

- P15 – focus on output and metadata for output (rather than products)

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Quality Assurance Framework of the ESS (QAF)

- Provides **good practice, methods, tools** at institutional and process/output level

- Collection of good practices

- **was revised:**

  - **to reflect the revised Code**

  - **and to cover the Code Principles 1-3 as well**

  - **Adopted by ESSC in May 2019**

Quality Assurance Framework of the
European Statistical System

EUROPEAN STATISTICAL SYSTEM

Version 1.1

8
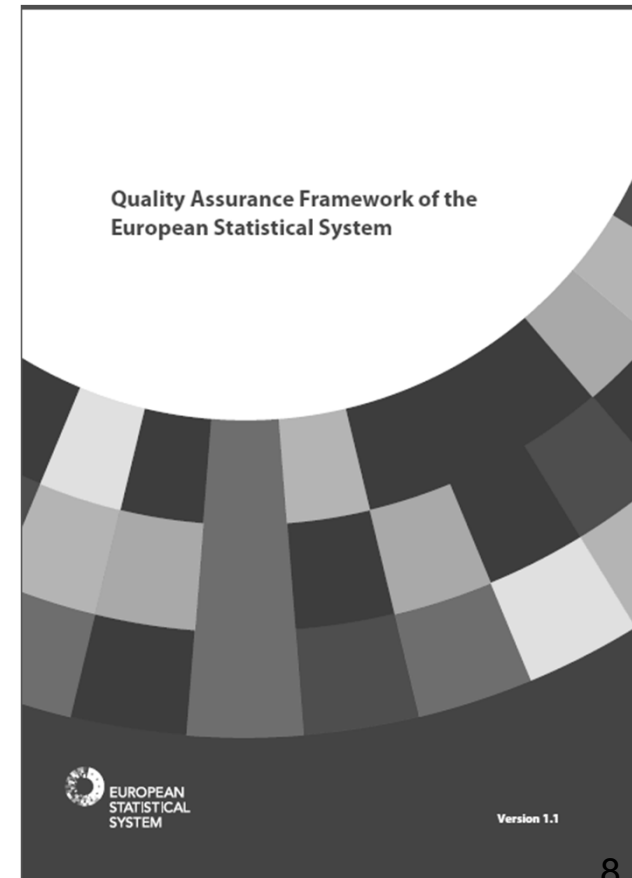
Quality Assurance Framework of the ESS (QAF)

- Includes
  - **principles of the ESCoP**
  - **indicators from the ESCoP (for assessing compliance with the ESCoP)**
  - **Methods, tools, good practices to implement the ESCoP**
- Is a reference document but not a benchmark (not all methods and practices need to be implemented to comply with the indicator)
- Developed in 15 month discussion process with MS

Quality Assurance Framework of the ESS (QAF)

- Principle 1 – examples
  - **Professional independence is mentioned in the law (1.1)**
  - **Using international practice for drafting legislation (1.1)**
  - **Legislative advocacy (1.1)**
  - **Awareness of staff is raised (1.1)**
  - **Position and hierarchical standing of NSI (1.2)**
  - **Status of head of ONA (1.2)**
  - **Responsibilities of heads of NSI and ONA stated in the law (1.3)**
  - **Sole responsibility of heads of NSI/ONAs on methodology and timing/content of statistical releases (1.4)**
  - **Release calendar (1.4)**

Quality Assurance Framework of the ESS (QAF)

- Principle 1 – examples (cont.)
  - **Strategy and statistical work programmes (1.5)**
  - **Reports on the implementation of programmes (1.5)**
  - **Training and description on how to issue news releases and how to communicate statistics (1.6)**
  - **Definition of a brand(1.6)**
  - **Monitoring the use of statistics (1.7)**
  - **Analysing the misuse and reactions to misuse (1.7)**
  - **Terms of appointment for heads of NSI/ONA (1.8)**
  - **Procedures for appointment and dismissal of head (1.8)**

Quality Assurance Framework of the ESS (QAF)

- Principle 1bis – examples
  - **Legal basis for coordination role (1bis.1)**
  - **Inventory of ONAs (1bis.1)**
  - **Governance body(1bis.1)**
  - **Coordination instruments(1bis.1)**
  - **Procedures for coordination (1bis.1)**
  - **Instruments for sole contact point (1bis.1)**
  - **Written agreements with other authorities (1bis.1)**
  - **Coordinated training programme (1bis.1)**
  - **Information platform (1bis.1)**

Quality Assurance Framework of the ESS (QAF)

- Principle 1bis – examples (cont)
  - **National quality guidelines (1bis.2)**
  - **Monitoring of their implementation (1bis.2)**
  - **Sharing quality assessment tools (1bis.2)**
  - **Data sharing policy (1bis.3)**
  - **Cooperation with advisory bodies, scientific community, international bodies (1bis.3)**
  - **Promotion of innovation through agreements (1bis.3)**
  - **Partnerships between statistical authorities (1bis.3)**

Quality Assurance Framework of the ESS (QAF)

- Principle 2 – examples
  - **Mandate of statistical authorities mentioned in the law (2.1)**
  - **Availability of legislation (2.1)**
  - **Justification of statistical needs (2.1)**
  - **Right to access administrative data (2.1)**
  - **Legislation for administrative data holders and its monitoring (2.2)**
  - **Agreements with administrative data holders (2.2)**
  - **Awareness raising (2.2)**
  - **Delivery procedures (2.2)**
  - **Access management is centralised (2.2)**

Quality Assurance Framework of the ESS (QAF)

- Principle 2 – examples (cont.)
  - **Legal basis for compulsory replies (2.3)**
  - **Information to respondents (2.3)**
  - **Sanctions (2.3)**
  - **Measures to encourage response (2.3)**
  - **Agreements and partnerships with private data holders (2.4)**
  - **Engagement by senior management (2.4)**
  - **Guidelines for cooperation for staff (2.4)**
  - **Access procedures (2.4)**
  - **Data protection procedures (2.4)**

Quality Assurance Framework of the ESS (QAF)

- Principle 3 – examples
  - **HR, FR, IT policies (3.1)**
  - **Flexibility in allocation of resources (3.1)**
  - **Risk management (3.1)**
  - **Training and job descriptions (3.1)**
  - **Planning procedures (3.2)**
  - **Costs awareness and cost accounting (3.2)**
  - **Assessment of new demands against costs (3.3)**
  - **Definition of priorities (3.3)**
  - **Review procedures (3.4)**

Quality Assurance Framework of the ESS (QAF)

- Principle 4-15 – new/revised methods
  - **Quality culture (4.1)**
  - **Risk management (4.1)**
  - **Availability of the ESCoP and reference to it (4.1)**
  - **Culture of continuous improvement (4.2)**
  - **Quality assurance and improvement plan (4.2)**
  - **Producer and user oriented quality reports (4.3)**
  - **Plan for implementing quality reviews and organisational structure (4.4)**
  - **Mandatory confidentiality commitments (5.2)**
  - **Statistical confidentiality policy available as well as organisational structure (5.4)**

Quality Assurance Framework of the ESS (QAF)

- Principle 4-15 – new/revised methods (cont.)
  - **Information to users and respondents regarding commitments to confidentiality (5.4)**
  - **Information security policy and security audits (5.5)**
  - **Conditions for access to microdata, control and monitoring their use (5.6)**
  - **Procedures on selection of data sources (6.2)**
  - **Replacement of data sources (6.2)**
  - **Error treatment policy (6.3)**
  - **Transparency of processes (6.4)**
  - **Release calendar availability and stability (6.5)**

Quality Assurance Framework of the ESS (QAF)

- Principle 4-15 – new/revised methods
  - **Announcement of revisions (6.6)**
  - **Pre-release accesses (6.7)**
  - **Guidelines for press releases (6.8)**
  - **Striving for innovation and innovative methods (7.1)**
  - **Statistical services (7.1)**
  - **Methodological organisational structure (7.2)**
  - **Updated and quality assessment of registers ad frames (7.3)**
  - **Changes in administrative data sources (7.3)**

Quality Assurance Framework of the ESS (QAF)

- Principle 4-15 – new/revised methods (cont.)
  - **Cooperation with universities (7.5)**
  - **Continuous training (7.6)**
  - **Distinction between statistical, administrative and other data processing (8.1)**
  - **Promotion and sharing of good practices and standards (8.3)**
  - **Metadata on statistical processes (8.4)**
  - **Calendar of revisions and revision policy (8.5)**
  - **Guidance on new data sources (8.6)**
  - **Balancing response burden (9.2)**

Quality Assurance Framework of the ESS (QAF)

- Principle 4-15 – new/revised methods (cont.)
  - **Data extraction from business accounting systems (9.3)**
  - **Agreements and tools for data sharing (9.5)**
  - **Monitoring and reporting indicators on resources (10.1)**
  - **Investigation of the statistical potential of new data sources (10.3)**
  - **Standardisation (10.4)**
  - **User consultation in legislation and analysed and sued (11.1)**

Quality Assurance Framework of the ESS (QAF)

- Principle 4-15 – new/revised methods (cont.)
  - **User satisfaction measurement and follow-up (11.3)**
  - **Practices on the 4 quality dimensions (accuracy and reliability, timeliness and punctuality, coherence and comparability, accessibility and clarity) – quality indicators are monitored and published**
  - **Dissemination policy (15.1)**
  - **Metadata for output – quality assurance and dissemination (15.5)**
  - **Quality reports (15.7)**

Next step: ESS Peer Reviews to monitor implementation (general)

- To assess **compliance with and implementation of the ES Code of Practice** in the ESS

- **First round** in 2006-2008 and the **second round** in 2013-2015; **final reports** to the European Parliament and the Council; **third round** under discussion (2021-2022)

- **Reports and improvement actions** per country and Eurostat, followed by **annual progress reports**; implementation deadline end 2019

- http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/quality/peer-reviews

Next step: ESS Peer Reviews - details

- General methodology was adopted by the ESSC in October 2019

- Includes:

  - **Agreement on the objectives (compliance and improvements)**

  - **Agreement on scope (all principles in SA phase, no statistical domains, selected number of ONAs chosen by NSI, differentiated focus per country in peer review phase)**

  - **Agreement on combination of audit-like with peer review approach**

  - **Teams of 4 experts (1 senior manager from NSI, 1 external, 1 Eurostat +1)**

- QWG – sub-groups to develop:
  - **Self-assessment questionnaires for the NSIs and ONAs**
  - **Guidelines for peer reviewers and NSIs**
  - **Templates for agenda, reports, recommendations and improvement actions and other tools**

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European conferences on Quality in official statistics

- **Exchange of methods and good practices** between statistical offices, international organisations, researchers and academics

- **Biannual**, organised by Eurostat and a NSI of the ESS

- Q2016 in **Madrid**: www.q2016.es

- Q2018 in **Krakow**: www.q2018.pl

- Q2020 in **Budapest**: www.Q2020.hu

More information at:

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/quality/overview

Thank you for your attention!

Eurostat