

ESS peer review - Self-assessment questionnaire on the implementation of the European Statistics Code of practice

Identification	
0. This questionnaire contains the replies of the National Statistical Institute of: -single choice reply- (compulsory)	Bulgaria
Principle 1 - Professional independence	
Professional independence of statistical authorities from other policy, regulatory or administrative departments and bodies, as well as from private sector operators, ensures the credibility of European Statistics.	
Indicator 1.1: The independence of the National Statistical Institutes and Eurostat from political and other external interference in developing, producing and disseminating statistics is specified in law and assured for other statistical authorities. 1. The independence of the NSI, from political and other external interference in developing, producing and disseminating official statistics is laid down in law. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. citation of the relevant law, any other support documentation and related content, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Law on Statistics - Chapter Two National Statistical Institute Article 6. (1) The National Statistical Institute shall carry out independent statistical activity of the State and other activities assigned by law. Article 2 (2) Statistical activity shall be carried out in compliance with the following principles: professional independence, impartiality, objectivity, reliability, statistical secret and cost efficiency. In the Law the independence is defined as a principle according to which statistical information shall be developed, produced and disseminated regardless of any pressure from political or interested parties (Supplementary Provision, § 1 of the Law on Statistics). http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/StatisticsAct_en.pdf Organization Rules of the National Statistical Institute - Chapter One, Part I General Provisions Art. 1. The National Statistical Institute shall carry out independent statistical activity of the State and other activities assigned by law.	
Indicator 1.2: The heads of the National Statistical Institutes and of Eurostat and, where appropriate, the heads of other statistical authorities have sufficiently high hierarchical standing to ensure senior level access to policy authorities and administrative public bodies. They are of the highest professional caliber. 2. The head of the NSI is at the level of the highest (non-political) public servants in your country. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. title and ranking, nomination/selection criteria, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The title is President of State Agency. Law on Statistics - Chapter Two National Statistical Institute Article 8 (2) The President and the Deputy Presidents of the National Statistical Institute shall be appointed by the Prime Minister. http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/StatisticsAct_en.pdf	
Indicator 1.3: The heads of the National Statistical Institutes and, where appropriate, the heads of other	Yes, fully

<p>statistical authorities have responsibility for ensuring that statistics are developed, produced and disseminated in an independent manner.</p> <p>3. The head of the NSI has responsibility for ensuring that statistics are developed, produced and disseminated in an independent manner. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. support documentation and related content, obstacles and difficulties to implementation) -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Law on Statistics - Chapter One General Provisions, Article 2 (2) Statistical activity shall be carried out in compliance with the following principles: professional independence, impartiality, objectivity, reliability, statistical secret and cost efficiency. In the Law the independence is defined as a principle according to which statistical information shall be developed, produced and disseminated regardless of any pressure from political or interested parties (Supplementary Provision, § 1 of the Law on Statistics). http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/StatisticsAct_en.pdf</p>	
<p>4. Such independence is ensured by Law. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. citation of the relevant law, any other support documentation and related content, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Law on Statistics - Chapter One General Provisions, Article 2 (2) Statistical activity shall be carried out in compliance with the following principles: professional independence, impartiality, objectivity, reliability, statistical secret and cost efficiency. Chapter Two National Statistical Institute Article 6. (1) The National Statistical Institute shall carry out independent statistical activity of the State and other activities assigned by law. In the Law the independence is defined as a principle according to which statistical information shall be developed, produced and disseminated regardless of any pressure from political or interested parties (Supplementary Provision, § 1 of the Law on Statistics). http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/StatisticsAct_en.pdf</p>	
<p>Indicator 1.4: The heads of the National Statistical Institutes and, where appropriate, the heads of other statistical authorities have the sole responsibility for deciding on statistical methods, standards and procedures, and on the content and timing of statistical releases.</p> <p>5. The responsibility of the head of the NSI for deciding on statistical methods, standards and procedures, and on the content and timing of statistical releases is set up in law -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. citation of the relevant law, any other support documentation of evidence, procedures of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Law on Statistics - Chapter Two National Statistical Institute Article 9. The President of the National Statistical Institute shall: 1. organise and manage the activity of the National Statistical Institute; 9. approve, either independently or with the bodies stipulated by a normative act, the national statistical classifications, nomenclatures, regulations for their implementation, as well as statistical methods. http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/StatisticsAct_en.pdf The content and timing of statistical releases are described in the Release Calendar, which is approved by the President of the NSI.</p>	
<p>6. The choice of statistical methods, standards and procedures is free of Ministerial approval / interference. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. support documentation of evidence, procedures of implementation, examples of interference if not implemented). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Law on Statistics - Chapter Two National Statistical Institute Article 6. (1) The National Statistical Institute shall carry out independent statistical activity of the State and other activities assigned by law. In the Law the independence is defined as a principle according to which statistical information shall be developed, produced and disseminated regardless of any pressure from political or interested parties (Supplementary Provision, § 1 of the Law on Statistics). http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/StatisticsAct_en.pdf</p>	

7. The content of statistical releases is free of Ministerial approval . -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. support documentation of evidence, procedures of implementation, examples of interference if not implemented). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Law on Statistics - Chapter Two National Statistical Institute Article 6. (1) The National Statistical Institute shall carry out independent statistical activity of the State and other activities assigned by law. In the Law the independence is defined as a principle according to which statistical information shall be developed, produced and disseminated regardless of any pressure from political or interested parties (Supplementary Provision, § 1 of the Law on Statistics). http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/StatisticsAct_en.pdf The rules and procedures of creating the press releases of the National Statistical Institute and logistics until their public announcement are defined in Internal Rules for dissemination of information, statistical products and services and publication activities of the NSI approved by the President of the NSI.	
8. The timing of statistical press releases is free of Ministerial approval / interference. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. support documentation of evidence, procedures of implementation, examples of interference if not implemented). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Law on Statistics - Chapter Two National Statistical Institute Article 6. (1) The National Statistical Institute shall carry out independent statistical activity of the State and other activities assigned by law. In the Law the independence is defined as a principle according to which statistical information shall be developed, produced and disseminated regardless of any pressure from political or interested parties (Supplementary Provision, § 1 of the Law on Statistics). http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/StatisticsAct_en.pdf	
Indicator 1.5: The statistical work programmes are published and periodic reports describe progress made.	Yes, fully implemented
9. The NSI has an annual statistical work programme which is made public. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify (e.g. documentation stating this provision - by law, by procedures-, link to annual Programme if available in the website, obstacles if not implemented). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Law on Statistics - Chapter Two National Statistical Institute Article 9. The President of the National Statistical Institute shall: item 6. prepare and submit to the Council of Ministers on an annual basis a draft national statistical programme for the next year not later than 14 days after promulgation of the State Budget of the Republic of Bulgaria Act for the respective year Chapter Three National Statistical Council and National Statistical Programme Article 15. (1) The National Statistical Programme shall be adopted annually by the Council of Ministers on a proposal from the President of the National Statistical Institute within one month after submission of the draft. The Programme shall be promulgated in the State Gazette. http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/StatisticsAct_en.pdf http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/uplf_e/NSP2014_en.pdf The timing of statistical press releases is defined in Art. 6, paragraphs 1- 4 of "Internal Rules for dissemination of information, statistical products and services and publication activities of the NSI" approved by the President of the NSI.	
10. The NSI has a progress report on the statistical work programme which is made public. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. documentation that states this provision and periodicity - by law, by procedures-, link to Report if available in the website, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Law on Statistics - Chapter Two National Statistical Institute Article 9. The President of the National Statistical Institute shall: item 6. prepare and submit to the Council of Ministers on an annual basis a report on the implementation of the national statistical programme and on the activity of the National Statistical Institute for the previous year. http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/uplf/Otchet_2013.pdf (available in Bulgarian only)	

<p>Indicator 1.6: Statistical releases are clearly distinguished and issued separately from political/policy statements.</p> <p>11. Statistical releases (e.g., press releases, press conferences, reports), are clearly identified as products of the NSI. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. type of product, recognizable logo design and format associated exclusively to NSI, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>Rules for Dissemination of Statistical Products and Services - Chapter One: General Provisions Article 5. When using the statistical information, the user shall be obliged to indicate the NSI as a source of information, which owns the copyright within the meaning of Article 3 (2) item 3 of the Law on copyright and related rights. Statistical releases are identified as products of the NSI because they are published on the official website of the NSI and all general and specialized printed and electronic publications always carry the name and the logo of the NSI. The statistical releases are prepared according to both "Rules for dissemination of statistical products and services of the NSI" and Internal "Rules for dissemination of information, statistical products and services and publication activities of the NSI", which are approved by the President of the NSI. Separate chapters are available for the preparation of Press releases, as well as Press conferences and Public relation. http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564/ - (available in Bulgarian only)</p>	
<p>12. Statistical releases are issued separately from political/policy statements. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. procedures and pre-announced calendar practice, examples if not implemented/reasons why, bottlenecks). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>Statistical releases include only statistical data – tables, diagrams, in some cases - short statistical comments, and are free of political statements.</p>	
<p>Indicator 1.7: The National Statistical Institute and, where appropriate, other statistical authorities, comment publicly on statistical issues, including criticisms and misuses of statistics as far as considered suitable.</p> <p>13. The NSI has a policy to intervene publicly on statistical issues.</p> <p>13a. In cases of criticism of official statistics. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. support documentation and related content, examples, if not implemented reasons why, bottlenecks). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>The National Statistical Institute prepares a disclaimer, which is published on the website of the NSI. http://www.nsi.bg/node/623</p>	
<p>13.b. In cases of misuses of official statistics. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. support documentation and related content, examples, if not implemented reasons why, bottlenecks). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>The National Statistical Institute prepares a disclaimer, which is published on the website of the NSI. http://www.nsi.bg/node/623</p>	
<p>13.c. In cases of misinterpretation of official statistics. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. support documentation and related content, examples, if not implemented reasons why, bottlenecks). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>The National Statistical Institute prepares a disclaimer, which is published on the website of the NSI. http://www.nsi.bg/node/623</p>	

<p>Indicator 1.8: The appointment of the heads of the National Statistical Institutes and, where appropriate, of other statistical authorities, is based on professional competence only. The reasons on the basis of which the incumbency can be terminated are specified in the legal framework. These cannot include reasons compromising professional or scientific independence.</p> <p>14. The selection process for recruitment of the head of NSI is established in Law. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. statistical law/general law for all civil servants, obstacles and difficulties to implementation, and description of the process otherwise). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>Law on Statistics - Chapter Two National Statistical Institute Article 8. (1) The National Statistical Institute shall be managed by a President and three Deputy Presidents who shall be appointed by a decision of the Council of Ministers for a term of 7 years, but for no more than two mandates. (2) The President and the Deputy Presidents of the National Statistical Institute shall be appointed by the Prime Minister.</p>	
<p>15. The selection process for recruitment of the head of NSI is transparent, rigorous and appropriate. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, partly implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. process and responsible body, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>The selection process for recruitment of the head of NSI is stipulated in Art. 8, par. 1 & 2 of the Law on Statistics: Article 8. (1) The National Statistical Institute shall be managed by a Chairperson and three Deputy Chairpersons who shall be appointed by a decision of the Council of Ministers for a term of 7 years, but for no more than two mandates. (2) The Chairperson and the Deputy Chairpersons of the National Statistical Institute shall be appointed by the Prime Minister. Law on Statistics does not define a clear procedure for nomination and election of Chairman and Deputy President of the NSI. Appointment shall be made on other grounds. The Council of Ministers shall act without holding a competition for President of NSI with a competitive nature.</p>	
<p>16. The head of the NSI is appointed for a fixed term. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. contract terms, procedures, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>Law on Statistics - Chapter Two National Statistical Institute Article 8. (1) The National Statistical Institute shall be managed by a President and three Deputy Presidents who shall be appointed by a decision of the Council of Ministers for a term of 7 years, but for no more than two mandates.</p>	
<p>17. The appointment of the head of the NSI is renewable. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. contract terms, procedures, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>Law on Statistics - Chapter Two National Statistical Institute Article 8. (1) The National Statistical Institute shall be managed by a President and three Deputy Presidents who shall be appointed by a decision of the Council of Ministers for a term of 7 years, but for no more than two mandates.</p>	
<p>18. The reasons on the basis of which the incumbency can be terminated are specified in the legal framework. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. support documentation, legal framework, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>Law on Statistics - Chapter Two National Statistical Institute Article 8. (3) The President and the Deputy Presidents of the National Statistical Institute shall be discharged ahead of term: 1. where they have so requested; 2. in case of gross violation of this Act; 3. in case</p>	

of premeditated crime of a public nature adjudged by a conviction having the force of res judicata; 4. where incapable to perform their duties for a period of more than 6 months. 5. upon entry into force of an act which ascertains any conflict of interest under the Conflict of Interest Prevention and Ascertainment Act.

19. The reasons on the basis of which the incumbency can be terminated never compromise professional or scientific independence. -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Not implemented

Please specify (e.g. support documentation, legal framework, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

There are no specific criteria devoted to compromising professional or scientific independence of the President of the NSI laid down in the Law on Statistics.

Strengths and weaknesses:

20. Please state below the main area of *strength* with regard to your organization's Professional Independence. -open reply-(compulsory)

• Independence laid down in the Law on Statistics http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/StatisticsAct_en.pdf • Appointment of the head of NSI based on a fixed term.

21. Please state below the main area of *weakness* with regard to your organization's Professional Independence. -open reply-(compulsory)

• Lack of clearly defined selection criteria for the head of NSI; • Lack of specific document devoted to the policy to intervene on statistical issues in cases of criticism, misuses and misinterpretation of official statistics.

Innovative practices:

22. Please state below the innovative practices, i.e. genuinely new ways which have made a difference in implementing the CoP, with regard to Professional Independence within your organisation. -open reply-(compulsory)

None

Development since the previous peer review:

23. How do you assess the compliance with this Principle of your organization compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

The situation with the compliance with this principle is the same since the previous peer review.

24. How do you assess the compliance with this Principle of the national statistical system as a whole compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

The situation with the compliance with this principle of the whole NSS is the same since the previous peer review.

Follow-up:

25. On the basis of the above mentioned indicators please list below actions you would like to take which are suited to improve your organization's Professional Independence.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

Elaboration of specific policy to intervene on statistical issues in cases of criticism, misuses and misinterpretation of official statistics.

26. Please identify below possible actions at European level suited to improve your organization's Professional Independence.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

None.

Principle 2 - Mandate for Data Collection

Statistical authorities have a clear legal mandate to collect information for European statistical purposes. Administrations, enterprises and households, and the public at large may be compelled by law to allow access to or deliver data for European statistical purposes at the request of statistical authorities.

Indicator 2.1: The mandate of the statistical authorities to collect information for the development, production and dissemination of European Statistics is specified in law.	Yes, fully implemented
1. The mandate of the NSI to collect information for the development, production and dissemination of European Statistics is specified in law. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify (e.g. legal framework and related content, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The public relations related to carrying out statistical activity by the National Statistical System are specified in the Law on Statistics. This legal act cover development of methodology and planning of statistical surveys, receiving, collecting, processing, storing of individual data and statistical information, analysis, provision and dissemination of statistical information.	
Indicator 2.2: The statistical authorities are allowed by law to use administrative data for statistical purposes.	Yes, fully implemented
2. The NSI is allowed by law to use administrative data for statistical purposes . -single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify (e.g. legal framework and related content, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Under the provisions of the Law on Statistics, the NSI is allowed to use administrative data for statistical purposes.	
3. Public institutions are mandated to provide data on the basis of their specific legislation. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. legal framework and related content, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The public institutions engaged in statistical activities have obligations for provision of data for statistical surveys on the basis of their specific legislation – Law on Statistics.	
4. The NSI shall have free access to administrative data for statistical purposes. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. legal framework and related content, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
According to the provision of the Law on Statistics, central and local government authorities, other central government institutions, the Bulgarian National Bank and the bodies keeping registers and information systems as stipulated by a law, shall have the obligation, upon written request and free of charge, to provide the National Statistical Institute and statistical authorities with the individual data collected by them and/or statistical information that is necessary for conducting the statistical surveys included in the National Statistical Programme. The Law on Statistics also governs for the purposes of keeping the registers referred to in Article 28 /institutional statistical registers, statistical information systems and national registers/ government authorities and other institutions administering information	

systems and registers set up by law shall provide the National Statistical Institute or the relevant statistical authorities with free of charge access to required information kept in the registers and information systems kept by them.

Indicator 2.3:

On the basis of a legal act, the statistical authorities may compel response to statistical surveys.

Yes, fully implemented

5. The obligation to reply to surveys is stipulated by law.

-single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify (e.g. legal framework and related content, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

According to the Law on Statistics provisions, the statistical authorities have the right to carry out statistical surveys which are included or not included in the National Statistical Programme. In Chapter Four of the legal act is arranged the legal provisions which govern the obligations for provision of data for statistical surveys.

6. In case of refusal to reply to a survey, there is a system of sanctions in place. -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. legal framework and related content, procedures for sanctioning, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

Chapter nine of the Law on Statistics stipulate Administrative penalty provisions. According to Article 52, par. 1 If a person having an obligation under this Act does not provide in time or refuses to provide data to the National Statistical Institute and statistical authorities or provides false data, shall be liable to pay a fine of BGN 100 to BGN 1,000 and for repeated offence - from BGN 1,000 to BGN 3,000. Law on Statistics refers to the Administrative Violations and Sanctions Act, which ultimately makes ineffective the imposition of financial penalties on legal entities, i.e. Law on Statistics is applicable only in the part for penalties of sole proprietors, who are fined as physical persons.

Strengths and weaknesses.

7. Please state below the main area of *strength* with regard to your organization's Mandate for Data Collection. -open reply-(compulsory)

• The procedures for data collection for statistical purposes are detailed in the Law on Statistics and other legal regulations; • In the sample surveys, owners of enterprises are notified in writing that their company has selected for monitoring in a particular sample; • Each sample is to be approved by order of the President of the NSI. For reasons of transparency, the approved samples are available to the respondents on the NSI's website.

8. Please state below the main area of *weakness* with regard to your organization's Mandate for Data Collection. -open reply-(compulsory)

There are no areas of weakness with regard to our organisation's Mandate for Data Collection.

Innovative practices.

9. Please state below the innovative practices, i.e. genuinely new ways which have made a difference in implementing the CoP, with regard to Mandate for Data Collection within your organisation. -open reply-(compulsory)

None.

Development since the previous peer review.

10. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of your organization compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

Five years ago the statistical authorities collected less administrative data for statistical purposes.

11. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of the national statistical system as a whole compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

Compared to five years ago, the compliance with this principle today is better arranged.

Follow-up:

12. On the basis of the above mentioned indicators please list below actions you would like to take which are suited to improve your organization's Mandate for Data Collection.

Actions and time frame. -open reply-(compulsory)

None

13. Please identify below possible actions at European level suited to improve your organization's Mandate for Data Collection.

Actions and time frame.

-open reply-(compulsory)

None

Principle 3 - Adequacy of Resources

The resources available to statistical authorities are sufficient to meet European Statistics requirements.

Indicator 3.1:

Staff, financial, and computing resources, adequate both in magnitude and in quality, are available to meet current statistical needs.

1. Please provide the following measures for 2012 (in real terms, i.e. adjusted for inflation and special occurrences or tasks - e.g. population census)

a. Total permanent staff (average person's year): -open reply-(compulsory)

1119

b. Temporary field interviewers (average person's year): -open reply-(compulsory)

836

c. Total annual budget including administrative expenses (in Euros): -open reply-(compulsory)

9 119 038

d1. Total annual budget including administrative expenses (in Euros) per 100.000 population (in Euros). -open reply-(compulsory)

125 183,2

d2. Total annual budget including administrative expenses (in Euros) per GDP. -open reply-(compulsory)

0,02 %

e. Comparison of total budget for 2012 with 2007: -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Lower

2. Adequacy of the resources to meet current national statistics needs. -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, partly implemented

Please specify (e.g. magnitude of staff resources, quality of staff resources, magnitude of financial resources, magnitude of computing resources, quality of computing resources, bottlenecks). -open reply-(compulsory)

Insufficient financial resources to provide modern computing resources. 1. The magnitude of staff resources is proper although constantly decreasing. 2. The average age of staff is growing: • Up to 29 years of age – 68 people • Up to 44 years of age – 323 people • Up to 59 years of age – 602 people • Over 60 years of age – 86 people 3. The educational standards for the staff employed are very high: • 752 employees have master university degrees, 108 – bachelors, 4 – doctors of Science. • The main academic fields are economics/628 people/, Science and Mathematics/34/, Sociology/18/, Technical studies/64/ /Data taken from SA report 2013/ Limited resources for back-up and lack of back-up center at another location. Lack of funds for the creation of the virtual environment. Lack of qualified staff to work with the latest information technology.

3. Adequacy of the resources to meet current European Statistical Programme. -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, partly implemented

Please specify (e.g. magnitude of staff resources, quality of staff resources, magnitude of financial resources, magnitude of computing resources, quality of computing resources, bottlenecks). -open reply-(compulsory)

1. The magnitude of staff resources is proper although constantly decreasing. 2. The educational standards for employing staff are very high/see 3 - 3.1 - 2/ Additional information: • 63 employees speak foreign languages fluently • 579 can use a foreign language in the accomplishment of their daily tasks • 273 have two master degrees • 306 have both bachelor and master degrees in different scientific fields • computer skills are highly developed and new constantly improving Outdated technical equipment and irregular replacement of the equipment.

Strengths and weaknesses.

4. Please state below the main area of *strength* with regard to your organization's Adequacy of Resources. -open reply-(compulsory)

• Intensive training of the NSI staff; • Stability of the civil-service relationship; • Evaluation of execution encourages communication between superiors as evaluators and other staff; • Annual targets are set in advance and their fulfillment can be measured correctly; • Self-control of execution of the immediate duties is improved; • Staff is motivated to improve personal educational levels.

5. Please state below the main area of *weakness* with regard to your organization's Adequacy of Resources. -open reply-(compulsory)

• Low payment levels; • Lack of HR strategy; • Subjective estimation in the evaluation of execution; • HR sector is not actively participating in the process of evaluation; • Lack of specific statistical markers for evaluating statistical staff; • The magnitude of HR sector is not sufficient; • Statistical staff is not orientated to develop stable career paths; • Rotation of staff is not popular; • Experienced experts do not tend to cooperate with young ones; • Staff is unaware of the connection among competency, training and rank promotion.

Innovative practices.

6. Please state below the innovative practices, i.e. genuinely new ways which have made a difference in implementing the CoP, with regard to Adequacy of Resources within your organisation. -open reply-(compulsory)

1. Indicators were created to evaluate the fulfillment of annual strategic goals in the as far as Human Resources are concerned. 2. Development and implementation of initial training programs for new employees at the NSI. 3. Development of INTERNAL RULES FOR HR MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT/IRHRMD/ to meet the Civil Servants Act requirements. 4. Development of special training programs for the statistical staff of the NSI.

Development since the previous peer review.

7. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of your organization compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

1. Training of staff is bases on the real demands of the NSI. 2. Training achievements are measured in quantity and quality to estimate

their contribution to meeting annual statistical goals.

8. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of the national statistical system as a whole compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

There has been some progress in developing human resources – training programs for the staff are largely introduced and there is a growing cooperation with the scientific community and universities.

Follow-up:

9. On the basis of the above mentioned indicators please list below actions you would like to take which are suited to improve your organization's Adequacy of Resources.

Actions and time frame.

-open reply-(compulsory)

1. Strong will of the Leadership to improve the managing of the NSI. 2. Improving cooperation with international organizations and academic societies. 3. Improving and adjusting existing procedures for the development of the staff.

10. Please identify below possible actions at European level suited to improve your organization's Adequacy of Resources.

Actions and time frame.

-open reply-(compulsory)

1. Creating a mechanism for implementation of European statistics strategy in Bulgaria. 2. Incorporating practical statistical exercises in the training program of the NSI. 3. Implementation of the European model of competency in the NSI.

Principle 4 - Commitment to Quality

Statistical authorities are committed to quality. They systematically and regularly identify strengths and weaknesses to continuously improve process and product quality.

Indicator 4.1:

Quality policy is defined and made available to the public. An organizational structure and tools are in place to deal with quality management.

1a. A Quality Commitment Statement is made publicly available.

QAF Method: 4.1.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. support documentation, link to website if publicly available, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

Quality Declaration of the National Statistical System of the Republic of Bulgaria is available on the NSI's Internet site.
http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/Quality_e/QUALITY_NSI_Declaration_en.pdf

1b. The Quality Commitment Statement lays out the principles and commitments related to quality in statistics which are consistent with the goals set out in the Mission and Vision statements.

QAF Method: 4.1.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. support documentation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation).

-open reply-(compulsory)

The principles laid down in the Quality Declaration of the National Statistical System of the Republic of Bulgaria are completely consistent with the goals set out in the Mission and Vision statements, which are as follows: The mission of the NSS of the Republic of Bulgaria is to provide impartial, objective, timely and accurate information about the state and directions for development of economic, social,

demographic and environmental field. Vision for development of the NSS in the period 2013-2017: "The National Statistical System to produce and provide to all user groups high quality statistical products and services, produced based on harmonized European methodologies and standards". The Mission and the Vision are set out in the Strategy for Development of the National Statistical System, 2013 - 2017

2. There is a clear organizational structure for managing quality within the NSI. QAF Method: 4.1.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
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Please specify (e.g. type – central/decentralized unit - and function of such organization, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

There is central unit called "Planning, Quality, Metadata and Projects" Department. Some of its functions are: coordination and exchange of information with Bodies of Statistics and Bulgarian National Bank in the field of quality management in the National Statistical System (NSS); organization and coordination of the activities on monitoring the implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice in the NSS; carrying out internal quality audits of the statistical processes and products.

3. Guidelines are in place on how to implement quality management within the statistical production process. QAF Method: 4.1.3 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
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Please specify (e.g. support documentation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

The National Statistical Institute has elaborated the following documents related to Quality management: Quality Management Policy, Quality Management Programme, Guidelines on quality criteria in the NSS of Bulgaria, Guidelines for quality assessment in the NSI, Handbook on Internal Quality Audit in the NSI, Glossary of Quality Terms.

4. Quality guidelines, as defined above, are made available to all users at least in a summary version. QAF Method: 4.1.4 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
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Please specify (e.g. support documentation, link to Website if publicly available, obstacles and difficulties to implementation).
-open reply-(compulsory)

All of the documents mentioned above are available to all users in plain version on the NSI's Internet site: Quality Management Policy, Quality Management Programme, Guidelines on quality criteria in the NSS of Bulgaria, Guidelines for quality assessment in the NSI, Handbook on Internal Quality Audit in the NSI, Glossary of Quality Terms.

5. An appropriate infrastructure is in place in order to ensure updated documentation on quality. QAF Method: 4.1.5 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
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Please specify (e.g. functions of such infrastructure and related procedures, IT solutions if applicable, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

The updated documentation on quality is available on the Internet and Intranet sites of the NSI.

6. Specific training courses support the quality policy and are available to relevant staff QAF Method: 4.1.6 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
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Please specify (e.g. indicators of training plan on quality and selection criteria, regularity, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

NSI organizes presentations, discussions and consultations relating to the training of staff in terms of quality, as well as workshops on the European Statistics Code of Practice. As part of a project, granted by Eurostat the NSI developed "Guidelines on quality criteria in the National Statistical System of Bulgaria" and "Guidelines for quality assessment in the NSI" outlining the framework for quality assurance in the National Statistical System.

Indicator 4.2: Procedures are in place to plan and monitor the quality of the statistical production	Yes, partly implemented
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<p>process.</p> <p>7. Methodological and technical support and general tools are provided by specialized / dedicated units, namely Quality, Methodology and IT, for implementing process quality monitoring/quality assurance plan.</p> <p>QAF Method: 4.2.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>		
<p>Please specify (e.g. functions of such organization, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>The Planning, Quality, Metadata and Projects Department provides methodological support and general tools by two main guidelines (Guidelines on quality criteria in the NSS of Bulgaria and Guidelines for quality assessment in the NSI), resulted from the quality related project "Quality Assurance in the National Statistical System".</p>		
<p>8. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?</p> <p>Examples of those activities, methods and tools:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Procedures are in place to monitor the quality of different stages of the statistical production. (QAF Method: 4.2.2 at product/survey level) 2. A quality assurance plan, or any other similar and elaborated scheme, is in place. (describing the working standards, the formal obligations, such as laws and internal rules, and the set of quality control actions to prevent and monitor errors, to evaluate quality indicators and to control different points at each stage of the statistical process). (QAF Method: 4.2.3 at product/survey level) <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>		<p>Yes</p>
<p>Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>National Statistical Institute carries out the monitoring for the most statistical processes through various quality assessment activities – quality indicators, self-assessments, quality reports, which are available by different statistical domains on the Internet site of the NSI. They cover mainly the stages: planning, survey design, data collection, processing, analysis and dissemination.</p>		
<p>Indicator 4.3:</p> <p>Product quality is regularly monitored, assessed with regard to possible trade-offs, and reported according to the quality criteria for European Statistics.</p> <p>9a. Procedures based on quality reporting are in place to internally monitor product quality.</p> <p>QAF Method: 4.3.1 at institutional level</p> <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>		<p>Yes, partly implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. support documentation/procedures, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>The product quality is monitored only by conducting internal audits on some of the statistical surveys included in the National Statistical Programme.</p>		
<p>9b. Results are analyzed and senior management is informed in order to decide on improving actions.</p> <p>QAF Method: 4.3.1 at institutional level.</p> <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>		<p>Yes, partly implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. support documentation/procedures, regularity of analyses, obstacles and difficulties to implementation).</p> <p>-open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>The senior management is informed about the results and improvement actions included in the Action Plan which is part of the Report from the conducted internal audits.</p>		

<p>10. User Satisfaction Surveys or other indirect methods are implemented. QAF Method: 4.3.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. describe approach, periodicity, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>The NSI conducts annually User Satisfaction Survey since 2009 by a questionnaire. The survey is carrying out by electronic or paper form completed by users on the NSI website or at NSI Head Office and Regional Statistical Offices. A new questionnaire, in which the survey's scope was broadened, was elaborated in 2013. The survey was conducted only on-line for the first time. Quality, Dissemination and Metadata was investigated for the first time in 2013. The questionnaire is published on the website of the NSI. In 2014 the survey will be conducted during the period June-November. http://www.nsi.bg/node/11744/ - (available in Bulgarian only) A User's Charter was adopted in 2014 and is published on the website of NSI. http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/USS/Harta_na_klienta.pdf - (available in Bulgarian only)</p>	
<p>10b. The results of User Satisfaction surveys are made public and lessons learnt are incorporated where useful in Quality Reports. QAF Method: 4.3.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. support documentation, link to website if publicly available, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>The results from the User Satisfaction survey are summarized and analyzed every year and are publicly available. The results of the survey are analyzed and a report is prepared. The reports are published on the website of the NSI. http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/USS/user_satisfaction_survey_nsi_2009.pdf - (available in Bulgarian only) http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/USS/user_satisfaction_survey_nsi_2010.pdf - (available in Bulgarian only) http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/USS/user_satisfaction_survey_nsi_2011.pdf - (available in Bulgarian only) http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/USS/user_satisfaction_survey_nsi_2012.pdf - (available in Bulgarian only) http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/USS/user_satisfaction_survey_nsi_2013.pdf - (available in Bulgarian only)</p>	
<p>11. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?</p> <p>Examples of those activities, methods and tools:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. User-oriented quality reports are made available to the public. (QAF Method: 4.3.3 at product/survey level) 2. Producer-oriented quality reports are published, bearing in mind the standards for reference metadata and quality indicators, in particular the Single Integrated Metadata Structure (SIMS). (QAF Method: 4.3.4 at product/survey level) 3. Users and producers' quality reports are used for quality monitoring over time. (QAF Method: 4.3.5 at product/survey level) <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>There are examples related to issue 2. Some of the Producer-oriented quality reports are published on the Internet site in English: http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/475/basic-page/quality The NSI foresees to implement on the Internet site the Single Integrated Metadata Structure (SIMS) for all statistical domains.</p>	
<p>Indicator 4.4: There is a regular and thorough review of the key statistical outputs using also external experts where appropriate.</p> <p>12a. An appropriate Plan for implementing Quality Reviews (such as Auditing and Self-Assessment) is defined. QAF Method: 4.4.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, partly implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. support documentation, describe approach, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-</p>	

(compulsory)	
There is an annual Plan for implementing internal quality audits, which cover statistical surveys from different statistical domains.	
12b. Quality Reviews (such as Auditing and Self-Assessment) are implemented for key statistical outputs and systematically in the case of processes reengineering. QAF Method: 4.4.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. support documentation, periodicity, statistical processes/domains, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Some of key statistical outputs covered by the internal quality audits conducted in 2013 were those on LFS and SILC.	
13. An appropriate structure for carrying out Quality Reviews is in place for internal audits and self-assessments. QAF Method: 4.4.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. describe approach/structure, selection of reviewers/auditors, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The internal quality audits and Self-assessment are carried out by "Planning, Quality, Metadata and Projects" Department. There is insufficient staff to conduct the necessary number of Quality reviews.	
14. Internal auditors are trained in auditing techniques and behavior. QAF Method: 4.4.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Not implemented
Please specify (e.g. support documentation of training, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The auditors did not attend such specific training courses for auditing techniques. They just respect the Handbook on Internal Quality Audit in the NSI.	
15. Quality reviews have reference documentation. QAF Method: 4.4.4 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. of reference documentation: quality guidelines/quality assurance plan, or a similar scheme; producer oriented quality reports and/or user oriented quality reports; self-assessment questionnaires filled by producers; reports from audit interviews; questionnaires completed by respondents and/or users; any other satisfaction survey; obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
1. Quality guidelines: Guidelines on quality criteria in the NSS of Bulgaria, Guidelines for quality assessment in the NSI; 2. Producer oriented quality reports: http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/475/basic-page/quality ; Quality Self-assessment Checklist for the National Statistical System (2012), Quality Self Assessment Checklist for National Statistical System (2010), Self-assessment questionnaire on quality of statistical product (2008); 3. Reports from internal quality audit interviews of LFS, SILC and Wastes surveys 4. User Satisfaction survey – results available for 2008-2013: http://www.nsi.bg/node/11744/ http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/Quality_e/2.3.%20Component1_Analysis_ISS.pdf	
16. The findings of the quality reviews result in action plans. QAF Method: 4.4.5 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. support documentation, examples of action plans, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The findings of the internal quality audits result in the Action Plan which is part of the Report from the conducted internal audits. The findings of the Quality Self-assessments do not result in Action Plan.	
17. Feedback from different users is used as input to action plans (making use of User Satisfaction Surveys or Focus groups). QAF Method: 4.4.6 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Not implemented
Please specify (e.g. support documentation, examples of such an approach, obstacles and difficulties to implementation)	

-open reply-(compulsory)	
None.	
18. Outside experts are deployed to review key statistical domains (e.g., Data Review of Standards and Codes (ROSC) by the IMF). QAF Method: 4.4.7 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. support documentation, statistical processes/domains, specify outside experts, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
<p>Review of the methodology for data production is done at providing data and indicators to ministries, institutions and organisations. Review of methodology, definitions and the overall data collection system is done under different projects. Experts from other ministries and departments, as well as from non-profit organizations commit overview of the results. In certain cases examination of the methodology and the operations of data collection is performed. For example in development of analyzes, examination of droppings out from the educational system (developed by UNICEF), was carried out comprehensive review of the indicator "left education", as was regarded the methodology, statistical tools, ways of data collection and others. Quality of the developed indicator was valued highly. The Indicators - Industrial production index and Producer price indexes are included in IMF Report on the Observance of Standards and Codes (ROSCs) that summarize the extent to which NSI observes certain standards.</p>	
19. Benchmarking on key statistical processes with other statistical authorities is carried out to identify good practices. QAF Method: 4.4.8 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. support documentation, statistical processes/domains, periodicity, counterparts, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
<p>Inter-institutional working groups are established and the practices are discussed. For improvement of the statistical methodology one of the purposes of the pilot projects is the investigation of other statistical bodies' best practices. In the area of transport statistics a close contact with the two main statistical bodies that provide information is held in order to exchange information on quality of the used statistical methods and best practices for data treatment. The statistical activity in the field of public health is performed by the National Statistical Institute and the "National Health Care Data and e-Health" Directorate of National Center for Public Health and Analyses (NCPHA) at the Ministry of health which are Bodies of Statistics. There is good cooperation between the two institutions in respect to the non-monetary health care statistics data producing. The process of the data producing is consistent with a view to finding good practices. Yes, as a general rule it is carried out monitoring of the main statistical authorities, as well as other data collecting organizations. For example there is a monitoring of the type, the structure, methods of data collection, methods of processing and aggregation of the data in information system of Ministry of Education and Science. Leading, however, is the comparison of the processes carried out by statistical institutes in other member states of EU and the implementation of the good practices.</p>	
Strengths and weaknesses:	
20. Please state below the main area of <i>strength</i> with regard to your organization's Commitment to Quality. -open reply-(compulsory)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in Eurostat project related to Quality in Statistics - European Statistics Code of Practice follow-up and quality methodology; • The reference documentation is available for Quality reviews. 	
21. Please state below the main area of <i>weakness</i> with regard to your organization's Commitment to Quality. -open reply-(compulsory)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EFQM model – decision is still not taken; • Insufficient number of internal quality audits conducted; • The magnitude of staff involved in Quality reviews is not enough; • An Action plan for Self-assessments is not in place. 	
Innovative practices:	
22. Please state below the innovative practices, i.e. genuinely new ways which have made a difference in implementing the CoP, with regard to Commitment to Quality within your organisation and/or other initiatives beyond the QAF. -open reply-(compulsory)	
None	

Development since the previous peer review:

23. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of your organization compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-
(compulsory)

The situation is better since the previous peer review. Some of the strategic and methodological documents are already in place. The uploading the quality reports on the Internet and Intranet sites is in progress. The regular Internal quality audits are in place after the successful implementation of the pilot internal quality audit in 2012. The Quality Self-assessment within the whole National Statistical System was realized for the first time. User Satisfaction Surveys have been successfully conducted since 2008.

24. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of the national statistical system as a whole compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

The situation for the whole National Statistical System has been improved for the last 5 years. For the first time all Other National Authorities have been involved in the initiative undertaken by NSI: Quality Self-Assessment of the NSS. The general assessment related to the implementation of the CoP principles is positive.

Follow up:

25. On the basis of the above mentioned indicators please list below actions you would like to take which are suited to improve your organization's Commitment to Quality.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

The NSI intends to implement the Single Integrated Metadata Structure on the Internet site for all statistical domains – short term.

26. Please identify below possible actions at European level suited to improve your organization's Commitment to Quality.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

None

Principle 5 - Statistical Confidentiality

The privacy of data providers (households, enterprises, administrations and other respondents), the confidentiality of the information they provide and its use only for statistical purposes are absolutely guaranteed.

Indicator 5.1:

Statistical confidentiality is guaranteed in law.

1. Clear provisions exist in the statistical law, as regards the observance of statistical confidentiality.

Method: 5.1.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. Citation of relevant law, main obstacles for creating legal provisions). -open reply-(compulsory)

The rules of statistical confidentiality are established by: Law on Statistics – Chapter Six – Protection of Secrecy (Art. 25 to Art. 27a) http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/StatisticsAct_en.pdf Rules for dissemination of statistical products and services of the NSI approved by the President of the NSI – Chapter Three – Protection of Secrecy (Art. 10 to Art. 15). <http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564/> The information provided to users, which is confidential, is protected by a confidential symbol.

Indicator 5.2:

Staff sign legal confidentiality commitments on appointment.

2a. Commitments for the observance of statistical confidentiality exist within the statistical authorities and are signed by all staff.

QAF Method: 5.2.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. Description and legal nature of commitments, who signs and when, obstacles for bringing commitments in force). -open reply-(compulsory)	
According to Law on Statistics, Art 27 all statistical staff members of the NSI are required to sign a sworn declaration on confidentiality. The sworn declaration includes a statement that the staff member has received a printed version of all the relevant legal texts and that she/he is aware of the legal consequences of violating the rules for confidentiality. The text of the sworn declaration also contains a commitment to keep all information confidential even after ceasing to be a staff member of the NSI. Such a phrasing is in accordance to Art 27 which requires keeping statistical confidentiality in a period of 5 years after the finalization of a job at the NSI.	
2b. Commitments for the observance of statistical confidentiality exist within the statistical authorities and are signed by external parties who undertake work on behalf of the statistical authority. QAF Method: 5.2.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. Description and legal nature of commitments, who signs and when, obstacles for bringing commitments in force). -open reply-(compulsory)	
According to Law on Statistics, Art 27 (4) natural persons assigned with collecting, receipt, processing or storage of data representing statistical secret shall sign an affidavit to protect such secrecy in the performance of their duties and for a period of 5 years thereafter.	
2c. In case of modification, such agreements should be updated and signed again by all staff or parties concerned. Method 5.2.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. description of updated procedures, periodicity of renewing, bottlenecks). -open reply-(compulsory)	
At current moment such agreements don't have periodicity of renewing. If Law on statistics is changed then a sworn declaration on confidentiality should be updated and signed again by Order of the President of NSI.	
Indicator 5.3: Penalties are prescribed for any willful breaches of statistical confidentiality. 3. There are national provisions in place in the statistical law or other legal provisions on administrative, penal and disciplinary sanctions for violation of statistical confidentiality. Method: 5.3.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. Citation of relevant laws, obstacles to create such laws, trade-off to other laws). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The rules as they are stated in the Law on Statistics are quite clear. According to Art 53. a person, who uses, provides or discloses statistical data to the public, if the case does not constitute a crime, shall be liable to a fine of 1 000 BGN up to 2 000 BGN. Any official, who has an access to individual and personal data and provides or uses them for non-statistical purposes, shall be liable to pay a fine of 2 000 BGN up to 6 000 BGN, if the case does not constitute a crime. (Art 55).	
4. Users of confidential information are aware of the existing provisions on sanctions for violation of statistical confidentiality as this information is publicly available and accessible to them. Method: 5.3.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. Link to information, relevant documents, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The Law on Statistics and "Rules for Dissemination of the statistical products and services" are publicly available and accessible to the user of confidential information. They are published on the Internet site of the NSI.	
Indicator 5.4: Guidelines and instructions are provided to staff on the protection of statistical confidentiality in the production and dissemination processes. The confidentiality policy is made known to the public. 5. A confidentiality policy is made publicly available, laying out principles and commitments related to statistical confidentiality which are consistent with the goals set out in the Mission and	Yes, fully implemented

<p>Vision statements.</p> <p>Method: 5.4.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Please specify (e.g. Link to policy, relevant statements in mission and/or vision statement, deficiencies in vision/mission statements). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>A confidentiality policy is available and is published on the website of the NSI http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/107/basic-page/protection-statistical-secrecy The NSI internal document "Rules on dissemination of statistical products and services" contains a special section III in which the rules for applying the Law on Statistics (in its part dealing with protection of confidential data) are described in detail (See: http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564). The internal document "Instructions for measures and means for the protection of personal data" clearly defined the procedures and internal rules in the NSI as administrator of personal data. (See: http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/566). The mission statement of the NSI includes an explicit reference to the value of keeping individual information strictly confidential and quote the relevant legal provisions. This mission statement and the instructions and guidelines used for the protection of statistical confidentiality in the NSI are available to the public on the website. (See: http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/107/basic-page/protection-statistical-secrecy).</p>	
<p>6. An appropriate organizational structure provides guidelines, recommends appropriate methodologies and periodically examines the methods used for data protection and to ensure confidentiality.</p> <p>Method:5.4.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, partly implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. description of the structure, work place descriptions, coverage if not fully implemented). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>The Commission for provision of anonymised individual data for scientific and research purposes was established according to Art. 11 of the RULES FOR PROVISION OF ANONYMISED INDIVIDUAL DATA FOR SCIENTIFIC AND RESEARCH PURPOSES (See: http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/575).</p>	
<p>7. The statistical authority prepares and provides the staff with written instructions and guidelines in order to preserve statistical confidentiality when dissemination of disaggregated statistical data occurs.</p> <p>Method: 5.4.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, partly implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. relevant documents, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>There have apparently been no cases of leak of statistical data by staff members in the recent past. The NSI considers the penalties high enough to protect confidentiality.</p>	
<p>8a. The ongoing research in the field of confidentiality is observed permanently.</p> <p>Method: 5.4.4 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, partly implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. groups or persons involved in these activities, resource problems, deficiencies in qualification of staff). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>The Commission for provision of anonymised individual data for scientific and research purposes was established according to Art. 11 of the RULES FOR PROVISION OF ANONYMISED INDIVIDUAL DATA FOR SCIENTIFIC AND RESEARCH PURPOSES. (See http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/12152/basic-page/rules-provision-anonymised-individual-data-scientific-and-research-purposes) The TF group was established by Order of the President of NSI for the implementation the Regulation (EC) 557/2013 at national level.</p>	
<p>8b. The methods in use are selected in a way to counteract the trade-off between the risk of identification and the loss of information in an optimal way.</p> <p>Method: 5.4.4 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. Description of methods in use, work flows, resource problems). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>There is not a risk of identification because we treat all data with a primary and a secondary confidentiality. The data are protected for national users, but they are sent to Eurostat and use for computing of the all European aggregates.</p>	
<p>9. Respondents are informed prior to or during data collection that the statistical authority commits fully to data protection and statistical confidentiality and that the data are only used for</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>

<p>statistical purposes and personal data are put forward under no circumstances.</p> <p>Method: 5.4.5 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Please specify (e.g. Accompanying letters to surveys, information policy, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>Art. 25, paragraph 1 of Law on Statistics - Individual data received and collected through statistical surveys shall constitute a statistical secret and may be used only for statistical purposes. Individual data received for the purposes of statistical surveys may not be used as evidence before the bodies of the executive and the judiciary. http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/StatisticsAct_en.pdf In the production process confidential data are marked to avoid dissemination of confidential data. Most questionnaires have a statement on the cover page (sometimes in the accompanying letter) that data is only for statistical purposes. At present the documents dealing with the protection of statistical confidentiality are made known to the public through Internet site of the NSI.</p>	
<p>10. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?</p> <p>Examples of those activities, methods and tools:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provisions, including a clear definition of responsibilities, are in place to ensure that prior to the release of statistical information (aggregate data and microdata), requisite statistical disclosure control methods are applied. (Method: 5.4.6 at product level) 2. Whenever access to statistical information takes place in a secure environment (e.g. remote access, safe centre, remote execution), all output is checked for disclosure before release. Processes are in place preventing the release of researcher output without checking for disclosure. (Method: 5.4.7 at product level) <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>Both methods are applied. We use the primary confidentiality type A and B: Type A - the indicator is formed by 1 or 2 enterprises. Type B – 85% or more of the indicator is formed by one enterprise. All confidential indicators are secondary protected.</p>	
<p>Indicator 5.5: Physical, technological and organizational provisions are in place to protect the security and integrity of statistical databases.</p> <p>11. The statistical authority has appropriate physical and logical security measures and processes in place to check that data security is ensured and to prevent data breaches and violation of statistical confidentiality.</p> <p>Method: 5.5.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. Description of the measures/processes, resource problems). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>Access to the information systems for collection of micro data is only through digital signature and the link between respondents' computers and NSIs' servers is secured. The primary confidentiality is calculated by specialized software and secondary confidentiality is calculated with programme CIF and Tau Argus and then is corrected manually by statistical experts.</p>	
<p>12. An IT security "policy" for the protection and security of personal data is in place, covering the whole business, technical, legal, and regulatory environment in which the statistical authority operates. The "policy" is widely known to the staff of the statistical authority.</p> <p>Method: 5.5.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. Relevant documents, accessibility of policy, internal dissemination, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>Confidentiality and data protection are regulated in the Law on Statistics. On the base of the Law on Statistics are developed IT tools for protection of the micro and aggregated data. All instruments (technical, legal, and regulatory environment) are well known.</p>	
<p>13. Systematic security audits on the data security system of the statistical authority are carried</p>	<p>Not implemented</p>

<p>out. The audit evaluates every tool and safeguard there is to protect the security and integrity of statistical databases.</p> <p>Method: 5.5.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Please specify (e.g. description of audit procedures, protocols of audits, periodicity, legal and other obstacles for performing such audits). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>None.</p>	
<p>14a. All statistical data is stored in secured environments that prevent access by unauthorized persons.</p> <p>Method: 5.5.4 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. Description of IT security, technical problems). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Statistical databases are protected from unauthorized access by means of relational databases and operating system. The sensitive data are placed on servers which are located in a separate network segment. A corporate network is built isolated from the WAN and active directory. Access to data is controlled by the assigned roles in the IS of individual users. The respondents' access to public applications of NSI is implemented with a digital signature. Separate databases are located on computers accessible only by certain individuals.</p>	
<p>14b. All access to statistical databases is strictly monitored and recorded.</p> <p>Method: 5.5.4 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, partly implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. Description of relevant procedures, technical problems). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Any unauthorized access to the system is automatically registered in logs of the information systems. All records containing statistical information shall be marked with the dates of creation and last modification, showing consumers committed to these acts. In most centralized information systems are created and maintained all historical records (records that are out of date now, but were such at a certain point of time).</p>	
<p>14c. User rights are recorded and kept up-to-date to prevent unauthorized access.</p> <p>Method: 5.5.4 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. Description of relevant procedures, technical problems). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>User rights are registered and differentiated depending on level of access. User rights are regularly reviewed and updated. User rights are assigned by administrators after written approval of the owner (responsible) for the statistical data.</p>	
<p>14d. Names and addresses or other personal identifiers are deleted as early as possible.</p> <p>Method: 5.5.4 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, partly implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. relevant guidelines, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Only the identification number for the data is retained to allow respondents to identify if case additional information is needed from it. If data for regional referral are necessary, the address is transformed to the village (or municipality).</p>	
<p>Indicator 5.6:</p> <p>Strict protocols apply to external users accessing statistical microdata for research purposes.</p> <p>The answers to the methods related to this indicator maybe close to that under 15.4.</p> <p>15. Clear conditions for granting researcher access to confidential data for scientific purposes are set in the statistical law or relevant regulations.</p> <p>Method: 5.6.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. Citation of relevant laws, obstacles for creating such provisions). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Art. 26a of Law on Statistics - Individual anonymous data under Article 25 may be provided for the purposes of scientific research to higher schools or legal entities, whose main activity is scientific research, with a permission of the Chairperson of the National Statistical</p>	

Institute. The rules for granting of anonymised individual data for scientific and research purposes and the order of their receipt are defined in Rules for provision of anonymised individual data for scientific and research purposes approved by the President of the NSI. <http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/575/> - (available in Bulgarian only)

15b. These conditions are publicly available on the website of the statistical authority.

Method: 5.6.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. Relevant links). -open reply-(compulsory)

Law on Statistics and Rules for provision of anonymised individual data for scientific and research purposes are published on the website of NSI http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/StatisticsAct_en.pdf <http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/575/> - (available in Bulgarian only)

16a. The statistical authority assures that all legal, technical and logical safeguards are in place to protect confidential information.

Method: 5.6.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. relevant procedures/measures, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

The statistical confidentiality is guaranteed by the Law on Statistics – Chapter Six – Protection of Secrecy. http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/StatisticsAct_en.pdf A Commission for access to anonymised data for scientific purposes is determined by an Order of the NSI President. The rules for provision of anonymised data are defined in Chapter Four of Rules for provision of anonymised individual data for scientific and research purposes According to Art.15 of the Rules - The performance of the request starts upon signing of the contract by both parties. The delivery of the accomplished informational product is carried out when an acceptance protocol is signed between authorized persons by the Contractor and the Employer, as well as an affidavit for protection of statistical confidentiality is sign by every researcher who will use the data. <http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/575/> - (available in Bulgarian only)

16b. Users have to sign an agreement on rules of usage of microdata. These rules include measures to prevent duplication of data (data illegally copied or not deleted after use).

Method: 5.6.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. Legal status of relevant agreements, legal obstacles to create such agreements, description of measures). -open reply-(compulsory)

The users of anonymised data conclude an agreement for an information product/service with the President of NSI (Appendix I of Rules for provision of anonymised individual data for scientific and research purposes). <http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/575/> - (available in Bulgarian only)

17. Are there other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?

Yes

Example of those activities, methods and tools:

1. The use of microdata sets is monitored, to identify any circumstance in which data confidentiality may be breached. Procedures are in place to ensure immediate corrective action (Method:5.6.4 at product level)

-single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)

Different specialized software/computer packages (Argus, CIF etc.) for risk identification of direct or indirect violation of confidentiality are applied.

Strengths and weaknesses:

18. Please state below the main area of *strength* with regard to Statistical Confidentiality within your organization. -open reply-(compulsory)

- Confidentiality and data protection are regulated in the Law on Statistics and other legislative documents;
- Statistical data are stored in the security IT environments;
- Confidentiality policy is made publicly available;
- User access is differentiated depending on level of access.

19. Please state below the main area of *weakness* with regard to Statistical Confidentiality within your organization. -open reply-(compulsory)

• Appropriate organizational structure is missing; • Systematic security audits on the data security system of the statistical authority are not carried out; • IT security officer is missing.

Innovative practices:

20. Please state below the innovative practices, i.e. genuinely new ways which have made a difference in implementing the CoP, with regard to Statistical Confidentiality within your organisation and/or other initiatives. -open reply-(compulsory)

None.

Development since the previous peer review:

21. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of your organization compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

The confidentiality policy has significantly improved over the last 5 years: IT systems for collecting and storing micro data in a secure environment are implemented.

22. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of the national statistical system as a whole compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

Progress in the privacy has been achieved - developed new rules for the provision of anonymised individual data for scientific and research purposes; Statistics Act is updated; Information systems "Business Statistics" and "Short-term business statistics" are created."

Follow-up:

23. On the basis of the above mentioned indicators please list below actions you would like to take which are suited to improve the situation concerning Statistical Confidentiality within your organization.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

IT security officer have to be appointed as soon as possible.

24. Please identify below possible actions at European level suited to improve the situation concerning Statistical Confidentiality within your organization.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

None.

Principle 6 - Impartiality and Objectivity

Statistical authorities develop, produce and disseminate European Statistics respecting scientific independence and in an objective, professional and transparent manner in which all users are treated equitably.

Indicator 6.1:

Statistics are compiled on an objective basis determined by statistical considerations.

Yes, fully implemented

1. Guidelines for assuring impartiality and objectivity exist at the statistical authority and are made known to statistical staff.

Method: 6.1.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify (e.g. link to relevant documents, resource problems). -open reply-(compulsory)

This principle of objectivity is laid down in the Law on Statistics (Art 2, Supplementary provision § 1, 12. and 13): Statistical activity have to be carried out without interference of political or other interest groups as far as the selection of the most appropriate techniques,

definitions and methodologies are concerned. Only scientific criteria have to be used for the selection of sources, methods and procedures.	
1b. The implementation of the guidelines is monitored. Method: 6.1.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Not implemented
Please specify (e.g. monitoring procedures, periodicity, bottlenecks, resource problems). -open reply-(compulsory)	
None.	
2a. The criteria for the selection of external partners to conduct statistical surveys/work of the statistical authority are objective. Method: 6.1.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. relevant laws, procedures, any other relevant documents, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Law on Statistics, the Public Procurement Act and open procedures on the selection of external contractors under Bulgarian law.	
2b. The criteria for the selection of external partners to conduct statistical surveys/work of the statistical authority are made public. Method: 6.1.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. dissemination procedures, relevant links, legal obstacles to publish). -open reply-(compulsory)	
All calls for selection of external contractors are public by announcements on the NSI's website and at least one print media.	
3. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator? Example of those activities, methods and tools: 1. Sources, concepts, methods, processes and data dissemination channels are chosen on the basis of statistical considerations and national and international principles and good practices (Method: 6.1.3 at product level) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	No
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
None.	
Indicator 6.2: Choices of sources and statistical methods as well as decisions about the dissemination of statistics are informed by statistical considerations. 4. Procedures on selection of sources of statistical information are in place. Method: 6.2.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. work flows, organizational structures, , legal obstacles to access some sources, resource problems). -open reply-(compulsory)	
As an example can be mentioned the built entry point for data collection between the NRA and the NSI. Inclusion of the Registry Agency to the single entry point is pending. In its activities NSI uses other administrative sources, e.g. Register NSSI, ESGRAO. The National legislation creates legal barriers to full access to some administrative records that are owned by other institutions.	
4b. Procedures on selection of sources of statistical information are made public. Method: 6.2.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. dissemination policy, legal obstacles for publishing). -open reply-(compulsory)	
All data sources are clearly described in the methodology of each survey and are published on the website of NSI.	

5. Choices of sources and statistical methods as well as decisions about the dissemination of statistics are based on generally agreed methodology and best practices. Method: 6.2.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. relevant guidelines, work flows). -open reply-(compulsory)	
All of the surveys included in the NSP are based on generally established methodologies, European regulations and good statistical practice.	
6a. The choices of sources and statistical methods are explained in quality reports of statistical surveys/works. Method: 6.2.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. structure of quality reports, resource problems). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The structure of the quality reports is in accordance with the requirements of regulations for the relevant statistical surveys or ESQRS.	
6b. Regular assessments statistically validate the collection mode and the methodology used. Method: 6.2.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. work flows, periodicity, bottlenecks, resource problems). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Regular internal audits on quality of statistical processes and products according to "Guidelines for internal quality audits of statistical processes and products in the NSI" are carried out since 2013. Last year, audits of SILC and LFS were carried out.	
7. Non-disclosure of data is only permitted for reasons of statistical confidentiality. In case of quality concerns, the data may be published with limitations clearly identified. Method: 6.2.4 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. dissemination policy, relevant laws, counter-examples). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Statistical confidentiality and data protection are regulated in the Law on Statistics and dissemination policy is specified in the "Rules for Dissemination of the statistical products and services".	
Indicator 6.3: Errors discovered in published statistics are corrected at the earliest possible date and publicised.	Yes, fully implemented
8. The statistical authority has a clear policy as to how to deal with errors, how to react when they are discovered and how they are corrected. The error treatment policy is publicly accessible. Method: 6.3.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify (e.g. link to policy, relevant documents). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The NSI has a clear and publicly accessible policy for treatment of errors – section I, art. 8 (1) "Rules on dissemination of statistical products and services" (See: http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564).	
9. Processes are in place to declare an error when found in published statistics. Method: 6.3.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. work flows, responsibilities). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Rules for declaration the errors are clearly defined In the document "Rules on dissemination of statistical products and services".	
10. Processes are in place for announcing and informing users promptly on substantial errors identified in published statistics and about when and how they will be / have been corrected. Errors are corrected as soon as possible. Method: 6.3.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. work flows, relevant parts of error treatment or revision policy). -open reply-(compulsory)	

See answer to question 9.

Indicator 6.4:

Information on the methods and procedures used is publicly available.

Yes

11. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?

Examples of those activities, methods and tools:

1. All statistics are accompanied by relevant product and process-oriented metainformation. Methodological notes and metadata on methods and procedures used are available in databases (Method: 6.4.1 at product level)
2. All statistics are accompanied by relevant product and process-oriented metainformation. Methodological notes and metadata on methods and procedures used are published on the website of the statistical authority. (Method: 6.4.1 at product level)
3. The statistical authority documents its production processes. Documentation on these processes is available both for staff and users. (Method: 6.4.2 at product level)

-single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)

There are well described methodological notes and metadata on methods and procedures used, which are publicly available on the website of the NSI. However, there is no written documentation of production processes and various procedures for production of statistical data.

Indicator 6.5:

Statistical release dates and times are pre-announced.

Yes, fully implemented

12. A publicly released and easily accessible release calendar is issued and made known to users in advance.

Method: 6.5.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify (e.g. link to release calendar, work flow, resource problems, technical deficiencies.) -open reply-(compulsory)

After the approval of the National Statistical Programme by the Council of Ministers, a Calendar presenting the results of the statistical surveys carried out by the National Statistical Institute (by months and by themes) is prepared. The Calendar is approved by the President of NSI and published on the website of the NSI. <http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/79/basic-page/release-calendar>

13. Changes to the dissemination schedule, when deemed absolutely necessary, are publicly and promptly announced in advance and duly accounted for. The original schedule remains public.

Method: 6.5.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. procedures, work flows, responsibilities, resource problems, bottlenecks). -open reply-(compulsory)

Changes to the dissemination schedule are defined in the section I, art. 6 (3) "Rules on dissemination of statistical products and services" (See: <http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564>).

Indicator 6.6:

Advance notice is given on major revisions or changes in methodologies.

Yes, partly implemented

14. A calendar of the regular major revisions is issued and published by the statistical authority.

Method: 6.6.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify (e.g. link to Revision calendar, revision policy, revision policy not up to date). -open reply-(compulsory)

The type of data (preliminary, final or revised) is defined in the Calendar presenting the results of the statistical surveys carried out by the

National Statistical Institute. (See: <http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/79/basic-page/release-calendar>) For separate statistical domains there is information (See: <http://www.nsi.bg/node/624>) In NSI there is no specific Revision calendar of regular major revisions developed, but practice of public announcement of the upcoming revisions through messages on the NSI's website.

15. Major revisions or changes in methodology are communicated, e.g., in a calendar of revisions, in the statistical work programme, on a webpage, by a letter to specific users and/or in a user meeting.

Method: 6.6.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, partly implemented

Please specify (e.g. description of the channels, bottlenecks, resource problems). -open reply-(compulsory)

Major revisions and changes to methodologies are described in metadata to each survey and published on the website of NSI. If necessary, letters are sent to the primary users of statistical information.

Indicator 6.7:

All users have equal access to statistical releases at the same time. Any privileged pre-release access to any outside user is limited, controlled and publicised. In the event that leaks occur, pre-release arrangements are revised so as to ensure impartiality.

Yes, fully implemented

16a. A formal provision is in force which specifies that statistical authorities should develop, produce and disseminate statistics in an impartial, objective, professional and transparent manner in which all users are treated equitably.

Method: 6.7.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify (e.g. relevant laws, dissemination strategy, obstacles to create such provisions). -open reply-(compulsory)

Art. 23 of the Law on Statistics - National Statistical Institute and statistical authorities shall announce to the public the results from the statistical surveys through the mass media, their websites, in own publications or by other means, in compliance with the provisions of Chapter Six. (See: http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/StatisticsAct_en.pdf) Art. 2 of the Rules for disseminating of statistical products and services of the NSI determines the principles for dissemination of statistical products and services of NSI <http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564/> - (available in Bulgarian only) All users are treated equitably according to "Rules on dissemination of statistical products and services", section I, art. 6 (2) (See: <http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564>).

16b. All pre-release accesses are publicized.

Method: 6.7.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. pre-release strategy or policy, link to relevant web-contents). -open reply-(compulsory)

Art.6, paragraph 3 of Internal Rules for dissemination of information, statistical products and services and publication activities of the NSI – On the data announced in the Calendar presenting the results of the statistical surveys carried out by the National Statistical Institute, the press release with a covering letter is sent to a list of recipients of the respective ministries and administrations by e-mail with an electronic signature and/or on a printed copy by a courier from Security of Information and DM Department one hour earlier before it is published on the website of the NSI. The pre-release accesses is defined in the "Rules on dissemination of statistical products and services", section I, art. 6 (5) (See: <http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564>).

17. Mechanisms are in place in the statistical authority to ensure equal access of all users to statistics at predetermined times.

Method:6.7.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. publication strategy, fixed release time). -open reply-(compulsory)

Art.6, paragraph 1 of Internal Rules for dissemination of information, statistical products and services and publication activities of the NSI – On the data announced in the Calendar presenting the results of the statistical surveys carried out by the National Statistical Institute, the press release is published at 11 a.m. on the website of the NSI by the Dissemination of Information and Publications Department. See answer to question 16a.

18. If processes for embargo exist, they are known to the public.

Method: 6.7.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. embargo times, link to relevant web pages). -open reply-(compulsory)	
See answer to question 16b.	
19. Processes are in place to prevent leaks from happening and to deal with them when they occur. Method: 6.7.4 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. work flows, responsibilities, security deficiencies). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Art.6, paragraph 3 of Internal Rules for dissemination of information, statistical products and services and publication activities of NSI – On the data announced in the Calendar presenting the results of the statistical surveys carried out by the National Statistical Institute, the press release with a covering letter is sent to a list of recipients of the respective ministries and administrations by e-mail with an electronic signature and/or on a printed copy by a courier from Security of Information and DM Department one hour earlier before it is published on the website of NSI.	
Indicator 6.8: Statistical releases and statements made in press conferences are objective and non-partisan. 20. Statistical releases issued and statements made by the statistical authority are solely based on statistical findings and results. Method: 6.8.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. guidelines for release statements). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Chapter Four of Rules for dissemination of statistical product and services of the NSI (See: http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564/) - (available in Bulgarian only). Chapter Two (Art. 2 to Art.4) of Internal Rules for dissemination of information, statistical products and services and publication activities of the NSI Both Rules are approved by the President of NSI.	
21. Statistical press releases are compiled following clear and standard guidelines. Method: 6.8.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. guidelines for press releases). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The guidelines for preparing of the statistical press releases are established by: Chapter Four of Rules for dissemination of statistical product and services of the NSI - Press releases (See: http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564/) - (available in Bulgarian only). Chapter Two of Internal Rules for dissemination of information, statistical products and services and publication activities of the NSI – Press releases. Both Rules are approved by the President of NSI.	
22. There is a policy available to the staff on norms and rules for press conferences, including guidance on objectivity and non-partisanship. Method: 6.8.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. guidelines for press conferences, training courses). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The guidelines for press conferences are established by: Chapter Five of Rules for dissemination of statistical product and services of the NSI - Press conferences (See: http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564/) - (available in Bulgarian only). Chapter Three of Internal Rules for dissemination of information, statistical products and services and publication activities of the NSI – Press conferences. Both Rules are approved by the President of NSI.	
23. Press conferences take place independently of political events and are exempt from comments on political statements. Method: 6.8.4 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. press conference calendar, selection process, external influence, guidelines for press conferences). -open reply-(compulsory)	
See answer to question 22.	
Strengths and weaknesses:	

24. Please state below the main area of *strength* with regard to your organization's Impartiality and Objectivity. -open reply-
(compulsory)

• Existence of rules on dissemination of statistical products and services to ensure impartiality and objectivity of statistical activities; • Availability of internal written procedures governing the dissemination of information, statistical products and services and publication activity of NSI and procedures for working with the media and Internet distribution of press releases and news related to the activities of the NSI; • Major revisions and changes to methodologies are described in metadata to each survey and published on the website of NSI; Selection of the sources of statistical information is independent.

25. Please state below the main area of *weakness* with regard to your organization's Impartiality and Objectivity. -open reply-
(compulsory)

• National legislation creates legal barriers to full access to some administrative records that are owned by other institutions; • Revision calendar of regular major revisions is not developed.

Innovative practices:

26. Please state below the innovative practices, i.e. genuinely new ways which have made a difference in implementing the CoP, with regard to Impartiality and Objectivity within your organisation and/or other initiatives. -open reply-(compulsory)

None

Development since de previous peer review:

27. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of your organization compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-
(compulsory)

Objectivity and impartiality has improved significantly over the last 5 years: rules for dissemination of statistical products and services are updated; internal written procedures governing the dissemination of information are developed, statistical products and services and publication activity of NSI and procedures for working with the media and Internet distribution of press releases and news related to the activities of the NSI are developed.

28. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of the national statistical system as a whole compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

A single entry point for data collection in conjunction with the NRA is built.

Follow-up:

29. On the basis of the above mentioned indicators please list below actions you would like to take which are suited to improve the situation concerning your organizations Impartiality and Objectivity.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

Inclusion to the Registry Agency to the single entry point between NSI and the NRA is pending.

30. Please identify below possible actions at European level suited to improve the situation concerning your organizations Impartiality and Objectivity.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

None

Principle 7 - Sound methodology

Sound methodology underpins quality statistics. This requires adequate tools, procedures and expertise.

Indicator 7.1:

The overall methodological framework used for European statistics follows European and

Yes, fully
implemented

<p>other international standards, guidelines, and good practices.</p> <p>1. A standard methodological document containing guidelines for statistical operations and describing the methodological framework is in place. QAF Method: 7.1.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Please specify (e.g. scope, content, accessibility, coverage if not fully implemented, resource problems). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>General methodological documents exist, describing in details the surveys conducted based on unified European methodology. The methodological documents are available for data users.</p>	
<p>1b. The standard methodological document is reviewed and updated periodically. QAF Method: 7.1.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. frequency of update, work flows, responsibilities, bottlenecks, resource problems). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>The methodological documents are updated in a due time. The regulations are changed and adapted according to changes in economic conditions. The NSI of Bulgaria actively involved in the coordination of the proposed changes in the form of written consultations.</p>	
<p>2. Divergences from existing European and international methodological recommendations are explained and justified. QAF Method: 7.1.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g., documentation standards, accessibility, coverage if not fully implemented, counter-examples). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>No deviations exist from the European and international recommendations. Exclusions are: In respect to the Causes of death statistics - The implementation of the COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 328/2011 of 5 April 2011 implementing Regulation (EC) No 1338/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on Community statistics on public health and health and safety at work, as regards statistics on causes of death is in accordance with the COMMISSION DECISION of 5 April 2011 granting derogations to certain Member States with respect to the transmission of statistics pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1338/2008. For Bulgaria the derogation is for a period of two years (until 31.12.2012) and refers to the provision of data on deaths by cause using the 4 - digit code of underlying cause according to the ICD – X revision. Due to the peculiarities of the national educational system, deviations are described in the quality report.</p>	
<p>Indicator 7.2: Procedures are in place to ensure that standard concepts, definitions and classifications are consistently applied throughout the statistical authority.</p> <p>3a. The concepts, definitions and classifications defined by the NSI are applied in accordance with European or national legislation. QAF Method: 7.2.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. description of processes, counterexamples, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>All concepts, definitions and classifications used by NSI are fully harmonised with European legislation.</p>	
<p>3b. Concepts, definitions and classifications are documented. QAF Method: 7.2.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. documentation standards, where is it documented, resource problems). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>Surveys methodological notes as well the applied definitions and classifications are published on the NSI official website and updated regularly.</p>	
<p>4. A methodological infrastructure, defining the statistical methods, monitoring their</p>	

implementation and validating the results, is in place. QAF Method: 7.2.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. description of the structure, number of persons involved, responsibilities, description of alternative approach, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Annual quality reports for monitoring of the implementation of the methodological requirements and Eurostat's 'Edit validation tool' for checking the SBS data.	
4b. Standard tools for every stage of the business process (e.g., sampling, data collection, processing) are provided by the methodological infrastructure. QAF Method: 7.2.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. description of the tools, situation different for various statistical domains, description of alternative approach, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
There is control and validation rules at each data processing stage which are strictly applied. Online based information systems for collection of the annual accounting and statistical information and short term information and for data processing are exists (Information system Business statistics - ISBS and information system Short Term Statistics - ISSTS).	
5. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator? Examples of those activities, methods and tools: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Surveys or statistical operations benefit from the views of relevant experts and users where appropriate. (QAF Method: 7.2.3 at product level) 2. Statistical operations are covered by methodological documentation containing all pertinent information on metadata, namely concepts, methods and classifications. (QAF Method: 7.2.4 at product level) 3. The methodological documentation is made public, at least in summary form. (QAF Method: 7.2.4 at survey/product level) 4. Staff attend seminars and workshops on standards, methods and classifications at a national or international level on the application of standards, classifications, etc. (QAF Method: 7.2.5 at survey/product level) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
Methodological documentation is prepared for each statistical indicator, containing information on metadata in terms of concepts, methods, classifications, calculations, adjustments and is made public. All statistical activities are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the European regulations and all regulations are freely available. National experts attend the working group meetings in all concerned fields - concepts, definitions, standards and classifications and take part in the discussions connected to the amendments of the existing regulations.	
Indicator 7.3: The business register and the frame for population surveys are regularly evaluated and adjusted if necessary in order to ensure high quality. 6. Are any activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator? Examples of those activities, methods and tools: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are standard and continuous update procedures covering all relevant changes in the population of businesses mapped in the business register (i.e. change of activity, births, deaths, mergers, and acquisitions and other structural changes as well as changes 	Yes

<p>of main variables). (QAF Method: 7.3.1 at product level)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Methods to evaluate the quality of the business register are available. (QAF Method: 7.3.2 at product level.) 3. Tools implementing those methods are available. (QAF Method: 7.3.2 at product level) 4. The quality of samples of household/population surveys is enhanced by regularly updating the population frame. (QAF Method: 7.3.3 at product level) 5. Information gathered from conducted surveys based on the business register or the population frame is used to assess the quality of the sampling frames (especially coverage). (QAF Method: 7.3.4 at product level) <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>In Bulgarian statistical business register (SBR) are implemented standard and continuous update procedures covering all relevant changes in the population of legal units and enterprises. Variables as changing of activity, enterprise births, deaths, mergers, takeovers, acquisitions and other structural changes as well as changes of main variables as activity codes (NACE Rev.2), number of persons employed, number of employees, turnover, type of ownership, communication variables, etc. Methods for evaluation the quality of the business register and tools for their implementation are in place into SBR as business rules. The information gathered from conducted surveys based on the business register (business surveys) is used to assess the quality of the sampling frames and feedback from the business survey feeds the SBR. The framework for the surveys in households is updated annually with the occurred demographical events, as well as with the acquired information from the current sample surveys.</p>	
<p>Indicator 7.4:</p> <p>Detailed concordance exists between national classifications systems and the corresponding European systems.</p> <p>7. Are any activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?</p> <p>Examples of those activities, methods and tools:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National classifications are consistent with the corresponding European classification systems. (QAF Method: 7.4.1 at product level) 2. Correspondence tables are available and up to date. (QAF Method: 7.4.2 at product level) 3. Explanatory notes and/or comments for correspondence tables are publicly available. (QAF Method: 7.4.2 at product level) <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>All national classifications, explanatory notes and correspondence tables are fully harmonized with European ones.</p>	
<p>Indicator 7.5:</p> <p>Graduates in the relevant academic disciplines are recruited.</p> <p>8. Staff is recruited openly with appropriate qualifications from relevant disciplines. QAF Method: 7.5.1. at institutional level</p> <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. description of recruitment procedures, strategic plans, lack of financial resources). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>There is a legal frame in Bulgaria that guarantees staff is recruited openly. 1. Civil Servants Act - Chapter 2 - Article 10 - 10g • entry of civil service in the relevant administration shall mandatory be preceded by a competitive procedure; • the notice of the procedure shall be published in one national or local daily newspapers and displayed at a general accessible place; • the competition shall be based on</p>	

professional accomplishments and proper qualification. 2. In 2013 The NSI has developed a procedure which is incorporated in the document INTERNAL RULES FOR HR MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT/IRHRMD/ to meet the Civil Servants Act requirements. • Procedure № 2 and Procedure 3 of IRHRMD. 3. The NSI specialized administration staff consists of almost 90% people with statistical, mathematical or IT qualification. 4. Low levels of payment can become a reason for losing specialists.

9. Appropriate qualifications requirements are specified for all posts. QAF Method: 7.5.2. at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
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Please specify (e.g. description of recruitment procedures, work place descriptions, lack of financial resources).
-open reply-(compulsory)

IRHRMD specifies the appropriate qualifications requirements for all posts in Procedure № 4, regarding work place descriptions and based on the Civil Servants Act.

Indicator 7.6: Statistical authorities implement a policy of continuous vocational training for their staff.	Yes, fully implemented
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10a. Continuous vocational training is an integral part of the human resource policy. QAF Method: 7.6.1. at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	
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Please specify (e.g. description of relevant parts of human resource policy, training programs, resource problems, overburdening of staff). -open reply-(compulsory)

The NSI has a policy of improving the staff qualification through continuous vocational training and therefor has developed internal regulations, based on the Civil Servants Act and other acts included in the legal frame; IRHRMD specifies the path, the needs and the training plan in Procedure №7.

10b. An adequate structure and relevant processes are in place for continuous vocational training. QAF Method: 7.6.1. at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
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Please specify (e.g. description of structure, responsibilities, alternative approach, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

1. All the staff of HR are involved in the process of organizing and evaluating the vocational training. 2. The goals and the range are strictly described. 3. A process chart is created in order make the path understandable for staff outside HR: STEP 1 - Recommendations after annual staff evaluation are taken into consideration personal training plans are made. STEP 2 - Summary of the needs of training of the NSI staff. STEP 3 - Annual training plan of NSI. 4. The obstacles which usually appear are connected with insufficient financial resources.

11a. Continuous vocational training is encouraged. QAF Method: 7.6.2. at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
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Please specify (e.g. strategic plans, statistics on attendance, obstacles, overburdening of staff). -open reply-(compulsory)

1. The NSI has a training plan approved by the Leadership which is strictly conducted through the year. 2. Statistics of attendance is easily observed because training usually takes part during the working hours and it's obligatory to the staff appointed to attend it. 3. Financial resources are often critical or even quite insufficient to organize trainings more frequently at a larger scale. 4. Training is a common reason for overburdening of staff. Daily tasks may fall behind schedule.

11b. Continuous vocational training is valued in the career path. QAF Method: 7.6.2. at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
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Please specify (e.g. description of handling of career path, career models, obstacles and difficulties to implementation)
-open reply-(compulsory)

Career path and career models are developed in IRHRMD Chapter 3, Sections from I to III and point the connection among the continuous training, evaluation and career development.

12. Staff skills are updated concerning new tools and fields of study. QAF Method: 7.6.3. at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. update procedure for training programme, number of staff which has followed training courses on new tools and fields of study, overburdening of staff) -open reply-(compulsory)	
1. The training program is made on the basis of the professional needs of the staff and quite often it comes to getting acquainted with new tools and studies. 2. In 2013 29 training courses were made in this field with 619 participants /SEE SA Report NSI 2013/	
13a. Attendance of staff at relevant training courses is encouraged. QAF Method: 7.6.4. at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. ways to advertise, accessibility of relevant information, lack of communication). -open reply-(compulsory)	
1. Training program and additional courses are advertised and presented to the staff through their superiors. 2. The training plan is send by e-mail to directors, heads of department, heads of sectors and TSB directors. 3. Attendance of staff at relevant courses is confirmed by filling in an application form.	
13b. Attendance of staff at European and other international conferences is encouraged. QAF Method: 7.6.4. at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. accessibility to information, ways to participate, overburdening of staff) -open reply-(compulsory)	
BNSI receives official invitations for international events and conferences where Bulgarian experts are encouraged to participate with reports and presentations. Information about European and other international events is duly provided to the relevant subject matter directorate/department for consideration and access to conference papers. Attendance is organized depending on the availability of resources, both human and financial.	
Indicator 7.7: Co-operation with the scientific community is organized to improve methodology, the effectiveness of the methods implemented and to promote better tools, when feasible. 14. There is contact with the scientific community to discuss methodological, IT and innovation developments. QAF Method: 7.7.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. description of information exchange, committees, forms of collaboration, possibilities for common scientific articles, periodicity, lack of contact with scientific community, handicaps to access to scientific material) -open reply-(compulsory)	
Agreement for cooperation and exchange of information between the National Statistical Institute and the Bulgarian Academy of Science was signed by the President of NSI and the President of the Bulgarian Academy of Science in 2013. Annex for cooperation and exchange of information between the National Statistical Institute and the Institute of Mathematics and Informatics at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences was signed by the President of the National Statistical Institute and Director of the Institute of Mathematics and Informatics in 2013. Representatives of the science community are included in the National Statistical Council (advisory board to the President of NSI). Experts from NSI take active participation in joint workshops, scientific conferences, working groups and etc.	
15. Staff collaborates on methodological issues with colleagues at international level. QAF Method: 7.7.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. international groups, meetings, lack of contact with scientific community, handicaps to access scientific material) -open reply-(compulsory)	
Collaboration in network groups within ESS and with international organizations (e.g. IMF on gender statistics, and etc.).	
16. Regular participation and presentations at relevant national and international conferences is	Yes, fully

encouraged for exchange of knowledge and experiences. (QAF Method: 7.7.3 at institutional level)	implemented
-single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify (e.g. number of staff participating at national and international conferences per year, number of staff making presentations at national and international conferences per year, examples of conferences). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The number of participants with presentations at national and international level in 2013 was 17. Examples of conferences: INOGATE Conference; European Forum for Geostatistics Sofia Conference; International Year of Statistics; SEEMIG Project Conference; Joint UNECE/ EUROSTAT/ OECD Work Session on Statistical Metadata in Geneva; Celebrating 20 Years of Russian Statistics "Modernization: Experience and Perspectives", Moscow; Joint UNECE /EUROSTAT/ OECD /ESCAP Meeting on the Management of Statistical Information Systems (MSIS), Paris; The 5th International Workshop on Internet Survey and Survey Methodology, Daejeon, South Korea.	
17. National and international conferences are organised by the NSI. QAF Method: 7.7.4 at institutional level.	Yes, fully implemented
-single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify (e.g. examples of such conferences, strategic plans, resource problems, lack of know how). -open reply-(compulsory)	
In 2013 BNSI organized and provided lecturers for several conferences: INOGATE Conference (provision of expertise on energy statistics); European Forum for Geostatistics Sofia Conference, SEEMIG Project Conference. A celebration on the occasion of the International Year of Statistics was held on 26 November 2013 in the Great Hall of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS). Organizers of the celebration were the Institute of Mathematics and Informatics - BAS, the National Statistical Institute, jointly with the Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics - Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", and the Bulgarian Statistical Society.	
17b. The participation of ESS statistical authorities at conferences is encouraged. QAF Method: 7.7.4 at institutional level	Yes, fully implemented
-single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify (e.g. information policies related to other ESS authorities, obstacles and difficulties to implementation) -open reply-(compulsory)	
Information received about upcoming conferences is made available to the relevant NSI staff and participation is organized depending on availability of experts. The Agenda items are considered and when appropriate, other national authorities are contacted for participation.	
18. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?	Yes
Example of those activities, methods and tools:	
1. Evaluations/assessments/audits of the methods used are requested from external experts where appropriate (QAF Method: 7.7.5 at product level)	
-single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
Eurostat visits to Bulgaria in specific statistical areas. At present external experts have not been involved in conducting quality audits of statistical products and processes and quality self-assessment within NSI and NSS. In 2009, NSI participated in a project initiated by Eurostat in order to introduce a consultative approach (coaching approach) between MSs to support the implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice and implementation of recommendations for quality audits. The project activities were implemented through continuous collaboration with the Statistical Office of Portugal (INE), defined as a consultant as well as using the experience of the statistical offices of Ireland and the Netherlands. As a result, guidance for internal quality audits of statistical processes and products was	

developed for the first time at the NSI. The Internal quality audits are part of the system of quality management. The guidance presents the audit process, the organization, procedure for conducting, activities on different phases, the obligations of the participants and the tools for implementation. In 2009, NSI began work on a new project - Quality Assurance in the National Statistical System. The first seminar was held with representatives of other national authorities and users of statistical information. In the next year the quality self-assessment of statistical information was conducted within the National Statistical System and guidelines on quality criteria in the NSS were developed as well as some methodological quality documents were updated.

Strengths and weaknesses

19. Please state below the main area of *strength* with regard to the soundness of the methodology within your organization. -open reply-(compulsory)

Strict apply of the European methodology and the national regulations for the conducted surveys and full compliance with the basic principles of European code of practice. The main strengths of the SBS and STS methodology, which is based on the European regulations are: 1. Comparability of the results between the member states through using the unified concepts, definitions, coverage and classifications; 2. Comparability of the time series.

20. Please state below the main area of *weakness* with regard to the soundness of the methodology within your organization. -open reply-(compulsory)

No weaknesses.

Innovative practices

21. Please state below the innovative practices, i.e. genuinely new ways which have made a difference in implementing the CoP, with regard to Sound Methodology within your organisation and/or other initiatives beyond the QAF. -open reply-(compulsory)

Development and implementation of Information System 'Business Statistics' for collecting accounting and statistical information and data processing and also Information System 'Short Term Statistics' as main factors for increasing the quality of the SBS and STS data due to the strong arithmetic and logical input control.

Development since the previous peer review:

22. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of your organization compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

The compliance with the requirements of the SBS and STS regulations reached 100%. Improvement.

23. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of the national statistical system as a whole compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

Very good.

Follow up:

24. On the basis of the above mentioned indicators please list below actions you would like to take which are suited to improve the soundness of the methodology within your organization.

Actions and time frame.

-open reply-(compulsory)

None

25. Please identify below possible actions at European level suited to improve the soundness of the methodology within your organization.

Actions and time frame. -open reply-(compulsory)

Participation in the discussions on proposals for amending the European regulations – regularly.

Principle 8 - Appropriate statistical procedures

Appropriate statistical procedures, implemented from data collection to data validation, must underpin quality statistics.

Indicator 8.1:

When European Statistics are based on administrative data, the definitions and concepts used for the administrative purpose are a good approximation to those required for statistical purposes.

Yes, partly implemented

1. The NSI is responsible for the statistical processing of administrative data used for European Statistics.

QAF Method: 8.1.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(**compulsory**)

Please specify (e.g. relevant legal aspects, responsibilities, legal obstacles, missing information). -open reply-(**compulsory**)

No full compliance exists in definitions and nomenclatures used by administrative registers. To ensure such, NSI should participate in development or updating of administrative registers. In particular in the macroeconomic statistics the high quality administrative data suitable for statistical purposes are processed further in order to approve the quality of statistical information reported to Eurostat.

2a. Statistical processing is clearly distinguished from administrative data processing.

QAF Method: 8.1.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(**compulsory**)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. description of procedures, missing information). -open reply-(**compulsory**)

Yes, completely. Administrative data is in form of data base with individual data, which is processed by NSI and are prepared aggregated output tables.

2b. Procedures and appropriate validation rules are in place for assessing and checking the quality of administrative data.

QAF Method: 8.1.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(**compulsory**)

Yes, partly implemented

Please specify (e.g. work flows, responsibilities, control mechanisms, lack of knowhow, counterexamples). -open reply-(**compulsory**)

In receipt of administrative data additional logical control is carried out, check for completeness and accuracy. For example, in presence of extreme values and inaccuracies, marked records are sent back to NAVET for clarifications and establishment the actual condition with the respondents. In some cases due to insufficient information, registers and links between NSI and registers, some indicators cannot be fully checked, for instance education of mother at birth.

3. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?

Yes

Examples of those activities, methods and tools:

1. The differences between administrative and statistical processes in terms of definitions, concepts, coverage, etc. are documented. (QAF Method: 8.1.3 at product level)
2. Differences between administrative and statistical concepts are thoroughly studied. (QAF Method: 8.1.4 at product level)
3. Measures to deal with these differences are taken, when appropriate. (QAF Method: 8.1.4 at product level)

-single choice reply-(**compulsory**)

Please specify. -open reply-(**compulsory**)

Yes, in development of the structure and the type of the data collected from administrative sources there is a consistency check with the overall methodological frame used by NSI. The differences are studied in depth. Different procedures and subsequent statistical processing are applied in order to ensure harmonized statistical information. In presence of differences, our methodology is applied. The

differences between administrative and statistical data are studied and documented. Measures to overcome these differences are difficult to be undertaken due to fact that production of statistical data is not the main purpose of administrative registers and in some cases NSI experts are very little involved in the creation and maintenance of administrative registers.

Indicator 8.2:

In case of statistical surveys, questionnaires are systematically tested prior to the data collection.

Yes, fully implemented

4. Procedures are in place for assessing and validating new questionnaires and they involve relevant experts.

QAF Method: 8.2.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify (e.g. description of procedures, percentage of surveys for which questionnaire testing is performed , examples who is testing, counterexamples, lack of knowhow). -open reply-(compulsory)

All questionnaires related to collection of annual accounting and statistical data for compilation the SBS indicators are part of information system 'Business statistics'. All questionnaires related to collection of monthly and quarterly data for compilation the STS indices are part of information system 'Short Term statistics'. All questionnaires are completed online. They are previously tested before activating the systems (1 January for ISBS and respective terms for ISSTS). Each cell and rule should cover the required parameters. The expert staff is fully competent and trained for testing and working with the systems. The sample survey questionnaires in the demographic and social statistics are tested. In the development of questions is carrying out initial coordination with experts responsible for other surveys for review and comments. After that, the project for questionnaire is sent for cognitive test and experimentally interviews to experts from TSB. For example in the preparation of new questionnaire for survey of use of ICT by households and individuals, it was coordinated with the experts leading the main household surveys in NSI – LFS and SILC, after that it is sent to TSB experts for testing. Testing of questionnaires is carried out regarding to all surveys in the field of environment and energy statistics.

5. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?

Yes

Examples of those activities, methods and tools:

1. Prior to data collection survey questionnaires are tested using appropriate methods and if necessary, response time is estimated. (QAF Method: 8.2.2 at product level)
2. Results of questionnaire testing are documented. (QAF Method: 8.2.3 at product level)
3. Results of questionnaire testing are taken into account when implementing the final questionnaire. (QAF Method: 8.2.3 at product level)

-single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)

Prior to data collection, survey questionnaire is tested, usually by pilot survey in real situation. The test results are taken into account in the process of implementation of the final questionnaire. The results from the test of the questionnaire in CU are discussed in work meeting, and pleadings from the experts from TSB are considered in development of final version. The time of completing one questionnaire is also calculated in advance.

Indicator 8.3:

Survey designs, sample selections, and estimation methods are well based and regularly reviewed and revised as required.

Yes, fully implemented

6. An appropriate organizational structure provides guidelines, recommends appropriate methodologies and periodically examines the methods used for survey sampling, sample selections and estimation methods.

QAF Method: 8.3.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify (e.g. description of the organizational structure, work flows, responsibilities, reference to guidelines, description of alternative approach, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

Methodology for sampling and evaluating methods are in general implicated in the requirements of the specific regulations due to which

surveys are carried out (there are implicated specific requirements for allowable standard error). The team carrying out the relevant surveys determines the sample size and the method for sample selection and methods for calculation of errors, in accordance of the implicated requirements. The organisational structure of Directorate 'Business Statistics' covers the main activities - Industry, Trade, Services, Enterprise Statistics, Labour Statistics, Business Trends and Tourism and Business Register. Each department is responsible for compilation the statistical data in its specific area.

7. The statistical authority reports publicly on sample selection and estimation methods when they occur. QAF Method: 8.3.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
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Please specify (e.g. publication standards, documentation standards, resource problems). -open reply-(compulsory)

The detailed methodology on statistical indicators posted in the NSI internet page provides information to the public on survey design, sample selections, and estimation methods. These methodologies are reviewed and revised when necessary.

8. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?	Yes
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Examples of those activities, methods and tools:

1. Survey designs and sample selections are developed according to standard methods. (QAF Method: 8.3.3 at product level)
2. Sample designs are periodically renewed for recurrent surveys. (QAF Method: 8.3.4 at product level)
3. Methods for calculating the accuracy of statistical data allow for the accuracy of European Statistics to be compared. (QAF Method: 8.3.5 at product level)
4. Sampling precision is properly measured. (QAF Method: 8.3.6 at product level)
5. Sampling precision is reported to users in an adequate way. (QAF Method: 8.3.6 at product level)
6. Estimation methods, including the correction of non-response, data calibration and seasonal adjustment follow transparent methodological rules. (QAF Method: 8.3.7 at product level)

-single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)

All points are applicable to the statistical surveys and are strictly followed The samples of STS surveys are updated at the beginning of the year to reflect the changes in the sectors of the economy, ensuring the continuity of the time series. Estimation methods, including the correction of non-response, seasonal adjustment procedures are described in the detailed methodologies of the STS indicators.

Indicator 8.4: Data collection, data entry, and coding are routinely monitored and revised as required.	Yes, partially implemented
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9. An appropriate organizational structure provides guidelines, recommends appropriate methodologies and periodically examines the methods used for data collection, data entry and coding.

QAF Method: 8.4.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify (e.g. description of organizational structure, responsibilities, work flows, frequency of updates, description of alternative approach). -open reply-(compulsory)

These activities are carried out within each statistical department.

10. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?	Yes
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Examples of those activities, methods and tools:

1. Data collection is optimized in order to reduce costs and response burden. (QAF Method:

8.4.2 at product level)

2. Data collection is optimized in order to improve accuracy and reduce non-sampling errors. (QAF Method: 8.4.2 at product level)
3. Respondents of surveys are provided with all necessary documents (leaflets, letters, guidelines etc.). (QAF Method: 8.4.3 at product level)
4. These documents are regularly reviewed and updated (QAF Method: 8.4.3 at product level)
5. Data collection techniques are monitored periodically. (QAF Method: 8.4.4 at product level)
6. Interviewers are trained in dedicated training sessions. (QAF Method: 8.4.5 at product level)
7. An interviewer manual/handbook for each survey is available. (QAF Method: 8.4.5 at product level)
8. Follow-up procedures are in place and implemented in case of non-response (QAF Method: 8.4.6 at product level)
9. Data coding methods are documented and stored (QAF Method: 8.4.7 at product level)
10. Automated coding methods are reviewed periodically and revised if necessary. (QAF Method: 8.4.8 at product level)
11. Quality indicators related to data collection and coding are produced and analysed according to quality assurance plan or any similar scheme. (QAF Method: 8.4.9 at product level)
12. Respondents are given support with filling in the questionnaires (help on-line, free toll number, support from statisticians). (QAF Method: 8.4.10 at product level)
13. Procedures are in place to answer to respondents' requests and complaints. (QAF Method: 8.4.10 at product level)

-single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)

All points are applicable to the statistical surveys and are strictly followed. In 2012 was developed and implemented an online Information system for data collection, data editing and data processing of STS information. Information system "Short-term statistics" (IS STS) provides more efficient way of collecting data from enterprises. This new system save recourses, reduce the burden of the reporting units and the quality of short term indicators is improved. Technical assistance as well as methodological assistance is provided continually in order to help the respondents in filling the online questionnaires. For the most surveys are prepared electronic questionnaires in purpose to facilitate the respondents and to improve the accuracy. For respondents have been provided official letters, containing purposes for the specific survey, importance of the collected data and issues related with the confidentiality. For the regional coordinators in TSB are conducted training seminars (training of trainers), and they train the interviewers. For each survey there are prepare instructions (manuals) for the interviewers. Respondents are assisted by an expert methodologists in NSI (by phone and e-mail), and also there we are accepting signals about actions of interviewers. Reducing the administrative burden on business pertaining to the submission of primary data on trade in goods with countries - the EU member continues to be a priority in the work of the NSI. Measures that the NSI has taken in this area in previous years will be in force in 2014. Apart of applying a threshold for simplified declaration of deals with low values which reduced the respondents' burden was reduced and the number of indicators to be declared by the Intrastat operators since 2011, and the required completion of the field "statistical procedure" was dropped out in the Intrastat declaration. Intrastat respondents who previously had to provide a separate report in NSI for special movement of goods, from 2011 on submit the data directly to the NRA through Intrastat declarations, together with other data for trade in goods within the EU. After obtaining permission from the NRA, part of the Intrastat operators benefit from valid since 2011 opportunity for a simplified declaration of spare parts for motor vehicles and aircraft, which facilitates business in the performance of its monthly obligations. Last but not least are the measures taken from the NSI to optimize the statistical tools and the use of reliable statistical methods for estimation of flows not covered, which allowed to reduce the scope of data on intra-Community trade and contributed to reducing the number of firms that are required to submit Intrastat declarations.

Indicator 8.5:

Yes, fully

<p>Appropriate editing and imputation methods are used and regularly reviewed, revised or updated as required.</p> <p>11. An appropriate organizational structure provides guidelines, recommends appropriate methodologies and periodically examines editing and imputation methods.</p> <p>QAF Method: 8.5.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. description of organizational structure, responsibilities , work flows, description of alternative approach). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>See answer to question 9. The methodology requirements according to the legal basis are applied by the experts in each specific area. Concerning EHIS – imputation is not applied. Editing in the conducted by department SOIO surveys take place only in logical controls, which are set up in advance in accordance with the international requirements. Imputations are not allowed.</p>	
<p>12. Procedures for editing and imputation techniques are promoted and shared in order to encourage their harmonization.</p> <p>QAF Method: 8.5.2. at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. information platforms, strategic plans, training programs, resource problems). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>All developed procedures for editing and imputation techniques are included in ISBS and ISSTS and are performed in a specific order. Concerning EHIS - Activities and procedures for editing records in accordance with the methodological requirements are applied. Imputation is not applied. In the field of consumer price statistics: the procedures for validation and imputation reflect the requirements in relevant regulations and the high degree of harmonization has been achieved.</p>	
<p>13. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?</p> <p>Examples of those activities, methods and tools:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The effects of editing and imputations are analyzed. (QAF Method: 8.5.3 at product level) 2. The results of the analysis are used for assessing the quality of data collection (QAF Method: 8.5.3 at product level) 3. Editing and imputation techniques follow standard methodological rules. (QAF Method: 8.5.4 at product level.) 4. Editing and imputation techniques are documented (QAF Method: 8.5.4 at product level) <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>All points are applicable to the statistical surveys and are strictly followed. Editing and imputation techniques follow standard methodological rules. Concerning EHIS - Activities and procedures for editing records in accordance with the methodological requirements are applied and documented. Imputation is not applied. It is analyzed the amount, the frequency and the type of the logical mismatches. Results are used for evaluating of the quality, as in presence of certain errors, the whole record (interview) is rejected. Analysis of the results shows, that the number of edited records is not significant. Imputation is not allowed.</p>	
<p>Indicator 8.6:</p> <p>Revisions follow standard, well-established and transparent procedures.</p> <p>14. Guidelines and principles relating to the revisions of published statistics exist and are applied routinely.</p> <p>QAF Method: 8.6.1. at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. reference to guidelines, work flow, publication strategy, areas/domains where not implemented). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>Revisions of data, if it is necessary, are carried out in accordance with EU and national legislation in the field of statistics. The revision of data is determined by the normative or the methodological change. For example in implementation of the new international standard</p>	

classification of education is required recalculation of the back trend data.	
14b. Those guidelines and principles are made known to users. QAF Method: 8.6.1. at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. publication standards, accessibility, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Yes, it is disseminated with a corresponding note in the dynamic rows and it is stated in the main methodological document.	
15. There are permanent and regular actions to promote methodological improvements for revision procedures. QAF Method: 8.6.2. at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. strategic plans, responsibilities, resource problems). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Revision procedures are performed under established rules.	
16. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator? Examples of those activities, methods and tools: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revisions are accompanied by all necessary explanations and made available to users. (QAF Method: 8.6.3 at product level) 2. Quality indicators on the revisions made are calculated regularly in accordance with current standards. (QAF Method: 8.6.4 at product level) 3. Quality indicators on the revisions made are made known to users. (QAF Method: 8.6.4 at product level) 	Yes
-single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
All points are applicable and are strictly followed. Revisions are accompanied with the necessary explanations and made available to users. It is disseminated with a corresponding note in the dynamic rows and it is stated in the main methodological document.	
Indicator 8.7: Statistical authorities are involved in the design of administrative data in order to make administrative data more suitable for statistical purposes. 17. A procedure is in place to monitor developments concerning regulations/legal acts which involve the use of administrative data. QAF Method: 8.7.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. description of procedures, work flow, internal coverage, obstacles to be involved in legal developments, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The NSI implements monitoring concerning developments regulations/legal acts which involve the use of administrative data but procedures are not fully implemented. Improvement of coordination and cooperation is needed between different national institutions in development of administrative registers.	
18a. The NSI is consulted when administrative forms or files are created, reviewed or revised. QAF Method: 8.7.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented

Please specify (e.g. ways of communication, regular meetings, committees, obstacles to foster contact with relevant instances). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The NSI coordinates its statistical forms with all concerned institutions. Some other administrations form working groups with experts from NSI for developing or updating their administrative forms. The coordination with the NSI is voluntary but most administrations prefer to do it because they want to benefit from the experience of NSI.	
18b. The NSI is involved in changes to the design or processing of administrative records in order to assess the continuity of the series. QAF Method: 8.7.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. ways of communication, regular meetings, committees, obstacles to foster contact with relevant instances). -open reply-(compulsory)	
NSI experts are very little involved in the creation and maintenance of administrative registers.	
19. A procedure is in place to investigate the potential for statistical purposes of available administrative data sources. QAF Method: 8.7.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. description of procedures, responsibilities, resource problems, lack of knowhow). -open reply-(compulsory)	
See answer to question 18.	
20. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator? Example of those activities, methods and tools: 1. There are regular discussions and meetings with administrative data owners in order to be kept informed about amendments to the administrative data. (QAF Method: 8.7.4 at product level) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
At request of data from administrative registers, checks for compliance are done. Regular meetings are conducted to discuss all aspects of continuing vocational training.	
Indicator 8.8: Agreements are made with owners of administrative data which set out their shared commitment to the use of these data for statistical purposes. 21. Arrangements between owners of administrative data and the NSI to facilitate the use of administrative data for statistical purposes are in place. QAF Method: 8.8.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. examples, policies, responsibilities, obstacles for creating such arrangements). -open reply-(compulsory)	
There are agreements, but the last do not cover the necessary set of registers. Often agreements are signed for separate statistical surveys and not in general for the NSI.	
22. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator? Examples of those activities, methods and tools: 1. Documentation describing the structure and content of administrative data is available to	Yes

<p>the NSI. (QAF Method: 8.8.2 at product level)</p> <p>2. Documentation describing the production process of administrative data is available to the NSI. (QAF Method: 8.8.2 at product level)</p> <p>3. Joint agreements concerning security of the data, the provision of files of individual data and delivery deadlines are jointly developed by the NSI and the owner of administrative data (QAF Method: 8.8.3 at product level)</p> <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
Agreements about security of the data, provision of files with an individual data and deadlines have been developed jointly by the NSI and the holders of the administrative data.	
<p>Indicator 8.9:</p> <p>Satistical authorities co-operate with owners of administrative data in assuring data quality.</p> <p>23a. Administrative data owners are kept informed about the statistical use of their data. QAF Method: 8.9.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. ways of communication, regular meetings, committees, obstacles to foster contact with relevant instances). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Regular working meetings are organised to keep informed the data owners. As well official letters and e-mails correspondence are done.	
<p>23b. Administrative data owners are made aware of all issues related to the quality of their data. QAF Method: 8.9.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. ways of communication, regular meetings, committees, obstacles to foster contact with relevant instances). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Regular working meetings are organised to keep informed the data owners. As well official letters and e-mails correspondence are done.	
<p>24. The NSI has arrangements to deliver feedback about data quality to administrative data owners while respecting confidentiality. QAF Method: 8.9.2 at institutional level</p> <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	Not implemented
Please specify (e.g. ways of communication, regular meetings, committees, work flow, obstacles to foster contact with relevant instances). -open reply-(compulsory)	
None	
<p>Strengths and weaknesses:</p> <p>25. Please state below the main area of <i>strength</i> with regard to the appropriateness of the statistical procedures within your organization. -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>• All questionnaires related to collection of statistical data are tested; • The test results are taken into account in the process of implementation of the final questionnaire; • Survey designs, sample selections, and estimation methods are well based and regularly reviewed and revised as required; • Appropriate editing and imputation methods are used and regularly reviewed, revised or updated as required.</p>	
<p>26. Please state below the main area of <i>weakness</i> with regard to the appropriateness of the statistical procedures within your organization. -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>• No full compliance exists in definitions and nomenclatures used by administrative registers; • The NSI does not have arrangements to</p>	

deliver feedback about data quality to administrative data owners while respecting confidentiality.

Innovative practices:

27. Please state below the innovative practices, i.e. genuinely new ways which have made a difference in implementing the CoP, with regard to Appropriate Statistical Procedures within your organization and/or other initiatives beyond the QAF -open reply-(compulsory)

Implementation of information systems.

Development since the previous peer review:

28. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of your organization compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

Editing and imputation procedure is implemented.

29. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of the national statistical system as a whole compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

The compliance with this principle of the national statistical system has improved.

Follow-up:

30. On the basis of the above mentioned indicators please list below actions you would like to take which are suited to improve the appropriateness of the statistical procedures within your organization.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

None

31. Please identify below possible actions at European level suited to improve the appropriateness of the statistical procedures within your organization. -open reply-(compulsory)

None

Principle 9 - Non-excessive burden on respondents

The reporting burden is proportionate to the needs of the users and is not excessive for respondents. The statistical authorities monitor the response burden and sets targets for its reduction over time.

Indicator 9.1:

The range and detail of European Statistics demands is limited to what is absolutely necessary.

1. Procedures are in place to assess the content of the statistical work program to avoid redundancy and duplication.

QAF Method: 9.1.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. description of procedures, work flow, resource problems). -open reply-(compulsory)

NSI and National Revenue Agency signed the bilateral agreement for implementation the project 'Single Entry Point' for reporting the fiscal and statistical information. After starting the project all enterprises should provide their annual reports in one place and collected and processed information is available for using of both institutions. The project is developing and will be extended in the future The statistical activity in the field of public health is performed by the National Statistical Institute and the "National Health Care Data and

e-Health" Directorate of National Center for Public Health and Analyses (NCPHA) at the Ministry of health which are Bodies of Statistics. There is good cooperation between the two institutions in respect to the non-monetary health care statistics data producing. The process of the data producing is consistent in order to avoid collection of the same information.

2. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?	Yes
Examples of those activities, methods and tools:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. European and national needs of statistical information and level of detail by domain are analyzed in the Specify Needs phase of the statistical business process. (QAF Method: 9.1.4 at product level) 2. Response burden is measured periodically. (QAF Method: 9.1.5 at product level) 3. Each collected variable is duly justified. (QAF Method: 9.1.6 at product level) 4. To minimize data collection there is explicit consideration of alternative data sources, including the availability and suitability of existing survey and administrative data. (QAF Method: 9.1.7 at product level) 	
-single choice reply-(compulsory)	

Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)

All points are applicable and will be further developed and implemented in the future.

Indicator 9.2: The reporting burden is spread as widely as possible over survey populations.	Yes, partly implemented
3. Action plans for simplification/modernization to decrease burden on respondents are developed and implemented.	
QAF Method: 9.2.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	

Please specify (e.g. description of the plans, strategic plans, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

For example, Information system 'Business Statistics' will be upgraded with inclusion of annual reports for all types of financial enterprises. The duplication of the provided data will be completely avoided and the time for data transmission will be reduced.

3b. Those action plans are periodically monitored, reviewed and updated.	Yes, partly implemented
QAF Method: 9.2.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	

Please specify (e.g. trigger for updates, description of procedures, bottlenecks). -open reply-(compulsory)

The reduction of the response burden is a national policy and all governmental institutions are involved in this task. NSI has played a leading role in this process through annual National statistical programme.

4. Performance indicators on reporting burden are produced.	Not implemented
QAF Method: 9.2.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	

Please specify (e.g. description of indicators, lack of knowhow, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

None

5. Statistical sampling methods guarantee that particular categories of the population are not unnecessarily burdened.	Yes, partly implemented
QAF Method: 9.2.4 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	

Please specify (e.g. description of procedures, lack of knowhow, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

The samples are stratified but the first strata is exhaustive and some large enterprises are permanently included.	
6. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?	Yes
Examples of those activities, methods and tools:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reporting burden is reduced by appropriate sampling designs. (QAF Method: 9.2.5 at product level) 2. The reporting burden is calculated for the time needed: to answer the questionnaire, to retrieve the required information, to obtain internal or external expertise and to handle sensitive information. (QAF Method: 9.2.6 at product level) 3. Questions used to collect information which will not be published are limited and justified. (QAF Method: 9.2.7 at product level) 	
-single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
All points are applicable and will be further developed and implemented in the future.	
Indicator 9.3: The information sought from businesses is, as far as possible, readily available from their accounts and electronic means are used where possible to facilitate its return.	Yes, fully implemented
7. Manuals and technical tools (e.g. software) are developed to increase electronic means for data collection.	
QAF Method: 9.3.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify (e.g. descriptions of the tools, how they are distributed, accessibility, resource problems). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Developed and implemented ISBS and ISSTS which are nonstop available during the accounting campaign.	
8. A plan for implementing electronic data collection for businesses exists.	Yes, fully implemented
QAF Method: 9.3.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify (e.g. strategic plans, policies, obstacles to push electronic data collection). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The programme is already realised and will be further developed with inclusion of the annual reports of all financial enterprises.	
9. A common web site for business data collection is in place.	Yes, fully implemented
QAF Method: 9.3.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify (e.g. reference to the website, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
https://isbs.nsi.bg https://issts.nsi.bg	
10. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?	Yes
Examples of those activities, methods and tools:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Business accounting concepts and standardized IT systems are used in data collections from businesses. (QAF Method: 9.3.4 at product level) 2. Survey managers aware of potential difficulties in obtaining information work together with business community in order to find adequate solutions. (QAF Method: 9.3.5 at product level) 3. Software tools to directly extract information from business accounting systems are in 	

<p>place. (QAF Method: 9.3.6 at product level)</p> <p>4. Responding businesses are kept informed about the results of the survey. (QAF Method: 9.3.7 at product level)</p> <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
Points 1, 2 and 4 are applicable and are strictly followed.	
<p>Indicator 9.4:</p> <p>Administrative sources are used whenever possible to avoid duplicating requests for information.</p> <p>11. Planning actions at national level are developed in order to explore and use administrative sources for statistical needs.</p> <p>QAF Method: 9.4.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. strategic plans, procedures, responsibilities, resource problems, obstacles to foster relevant contacts). -open reply-(compulsory)	
In order to avoid double collection of the same information concerning some non expenditure health indicators, the National Health Insurance Fund is used as data source.	
<p>12a. Legal access to the administrative sources is granted.</p> <p>QAF Method: 9.4.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. citation of relevant laws, obstacles to bring such laws into force). -open reply-(compulsory)	
In the field of energy statistics there are administrative data collected on the base of a Bulgarian Law.	
<p>12b. The administrative authorities have the obligation to provide the administrative data if requested.</p> <p>QAF Method: 9.4.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify e.g. citation of relevant laws, obstacles to bring such laws into force. -open reply-(compulsory)	
Law on statistics and related national legislations.	
<p>13. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?</p> <p>Examples of those activities, methods and tools:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Guidance on the availability and quality of administrative data is available to survey managers. (QAF Method: 9.4.4 at product level) 2. Applications for the collection of administrative data to be used for statistical purpose are developed and implemented. (QAF Method: 9.4.5 at product level) <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	No
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
None	
<p>Indicator 9.5:</p> <p>Data sharing within statistical authorities is generalised in order to avoid multiplication of surveys.</p>	Yes, partly implemented

14. Technical tools for data sharing within the national statistical system exist.

QAF Method: 9.5.1. at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify (e.g. description of the tools, technical problems, obstacles to foster relevant contacts). -open reply-(compulsory)

No technical problems but confidentiality problems. The microdata are available only between NSI and NRA.

15. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?

Yes

Examples of those activities, methods and tools:

1. Documentation of repositories for production and archived data exists. (QAF Method: 9.5.2 at product level)
2. Data archives are shared within the NSI and in compliance with confidentiality policies. (QAF Method: 9.5.3 at product level)

-single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)

The data warehouse is established.

Indicator 9.6:

Statistical authorities promote measures that enable the linking of data sources in order to reduce reporting burden.

Yes, fully implemented

16. The NSI provides clear definitions of key variables that need to be shared between data processes in accordance with confidentiality rules.

QAF Method: 9.6.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify (e.g. definition standards, information platforms, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

The NSI provides clear definitions of key variables that need to be shared between data processes in accordance with confidentiality rules and provides standard definitions.

17. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?

Yes

Example of those activities, methods and tools:

1. Documentation is available on the data file structures and transmission formats required for linking data sources. (QAF Method: 9.6.2 at product level)

-single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)

Documentation is available on the data file structures.

Strengths and weaknesses:

18. Please state below the main area of *strength* with regard to the non-excessiveness of response burden within your organization. -open reply-(compulsory)

• NSI and National Revenue Agency signed the bilateral agreement for implementation the project 'Single Entry Point' for reporting the fiscal and statistical information; • Developed and implemented ISBS and ISSTS which are nonstop available during the accounting campaign.

19. Please state below the main area of *weakness* with regard to the non-excessiveness of response burden within your organization. -open reply-(compulsory)

Indicator 9.2 is partially implemented.

Innovative practices:

20. Please state below the innovative practices, i.e. genuinely new ways which have made a difference in implementing the CoP, with regard to Non-Excessive Burden on Respondents within your organization and/or other initiatives beyond the QAF. -open reply-(compulsory)

Developed and implemented ISBS and ISSTS which are nonstop available during the accounting campaign.

Development since the previous peer review:

21. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of your organization compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

Visible improvement.

22. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of the national statistical system as a whole compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

Visible improvement.

Follow-up:

23. On the basis of the above mentioned indicators please list below actions you would like to take which are suited to improve the non-excessiveness of response burden within your organization.

Action and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

None

24. Please identify below possible actions at European level suited to improve the non-excessiveness of response burden within your organization.

Action and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

None

Principle 10 - Cost Effectiveness

Resources are used effectively.

Indicator 10.1:

Internal and independent external measures monitor the statistical authority's use of resources.

Yes, fully implemented

1. Indicators of human and financial resources are centrally monitored.

QAF Method: 10.1.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify (e.g. scope, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented, because of monthly cost and budget implementation accounting. Three indicators of human resources are centrally monitored: 1. Total permanent staff (average) – monthly, annually 2. The wage fund – quarterly, annually 3. Labor productivity – quarterly

1b. These indicators are reported to management.

QAF Method: 10.1.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. frequency or latest update, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Yes, fully implemented, because of monthly cost and budget implementation accounting.	
2. Accounting systems allow allocation of resources to statistical processes. QAF Method: 10.1.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. description, level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Budget planning corresponds to the needs of resources for statistical activities providing.	
3a. Human resources are evaluated in line with office-wide guidelines. QAF Method: 10.1.3 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. description, level of implementation, frequency, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Evaluation of human resources is strictly in line with office-wide guidelines. 1. A personal record of immediate duties is made by the superiors for each member of staff, pointing obligations of common character specified for the position. 2. An annual work plan is made, based on the personal record, including a list of concrete tasks and duties to be fulfilled during the year. Criteria of performance and deadlines are strictly pointed. 3. Evaluation of the performance is made twice a year – in the middle of the period to estimate the progress and in the end of the year to evaluate the results.	
3b. The evaluation of human resources covers allocation, performance and training needs of staff. QAF Method: 10.1.3 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. scope, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
After each year evaluation personal training plans are recommended to all the staff. The training plan of the NSI is based on them.	
4. Staff opinion surveys are conducted. QAF Method: 10.1.4 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. frequency, scope, rate of participation, follow-up or action plan approach, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
It's not a routine. It's organized on matters of importance for the NSI when it's needed.	
5. IT infrastructure is reviewed. QAF Method: 10.1.5 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. frequency, reporting period, scope, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Each year there is an assessment of resources and development is planned. The costs of the development plan are not guaranteed.	
6. Ex-ante cost calculation procedures are available for statistical processes. QAF Method: 10.1.6 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. description, level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The cost calculations for the new surveys included in the National Statistical Programme are provided by the responsible departments. The cost calculations for the regular surveys are based on the expenditure of the previous year.	
Indicator 10.2: The productivity potential of information and communications technology is being	Yes, partly implemented

<p>optimised for data collection, processing and dissemination.</p>	
<p>7a. Centralized IT and methodological units provide for pooling resources and investments. QAF Method: 10.2.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Please specify (e.g. description, level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>The development of information systems is determined independently from the different departments and coordinated by the IT department.</p>	
<p>7b. Centralized IT and methodological units provide for identification of innovation/modernization potential. QAF Method: 10.2.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, partly implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Centralized IT department offers innovation only for technical infrastructure.</p>	
<p>8. An appropriate IT architecture and strategy exists and is regularly updated. QAF Method: 10.2.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, partly implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. scope, level of implementation, latest update, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>There is a strategy, but it is not updated.</p>	
<p>9. Policies, procedures and tools exist to promote automatic techniques for data capture, data coding and validation. QAF Method: 10.2.3 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, partly implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. scope, level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>The development of Information system "Business Statistics" and Information system "Short-term Statistics" is tool for automatic data capture, data coding and validation.</p>	
<p>10. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?</p> <p>Example of those activities, methods and tools:</p> <p>1. The use of automated processing techniques is reviewed. (QAF Method 10.2.4 at product/survey level)</p> <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>The development of information systems is foreseen in other statistical domains.</p>	
<p>Indicator 10.3: Proactive efforts are being made to improve the statistical potential of administrative data and to limit recourse to direct surveys.</p> <p>11. Arrangements are signed with owners of administrative data. QAF Method: 10.3.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. coverage, appropriateness, update frequency, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>NSI has agreements with other national institutions such as Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Economy and Energy, National Revenue Agency, National Social Security Institute.</p>	

11b. Involvement in the design of administrative data collection is sought. QAF Method: 10.3.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
To ensure the Involvement in the design of administrative data collection NSI should participate in development or updating of administrative registers.	
12. An assessment of possible administrative data sources is carried out prior to launching any new survey. QAF Method: 10.3.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
For any new survey an assessment is carried out in accordance with the requirements of the respective regulations and the possibilities of administrative data source usage.	
13. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator? Examples of those activities, methods and tools: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data linking and integration methods are pursued. Remark: These methods are subject to data security considerations. (QAF Method: 10.3.3 at product/survey level) 2. Quality indicators are developed and compiled to improve the methods for using administrative data for statistical purposes. (QAF Method: 10.3.4 at product/survey level) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	No
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
None	
Indicator 10.4: Statistical authorities promote and implement standardized solutions that increase effectiveness and efficiency.	Yes, partly implemented
14. Standardization programmes and procedures are defined and implemented in the main stages of statistical production areas according to the business process model. Examples: Sampling, registers, data collection and data exchange. QAF Method: 10.4.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify (e.g. scope, level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Standardization procedures are implemented in some phases of the statistical production, especially in the dissemination phase (e.g. SDMX, SDDS).	
15. There is a strategy to adopt or develop standards in various fields. Examples: quality management, process modelling, statistical methods, software development, software tools, project management, document management. QAF Method: 10.4.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. state of existence, content and level of implementation of the strategy, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
One of the Challenges in front of NSS in the period 2013-2017 according to the Strategy for Development of the National Statistical System of the Republic of Bulgaria 2013 - 2017 is the production of statistical data with proved quality and according to the international standards regarding the provision of comparable and reliable data in compliance with the strict standards for confidentiality and protection of information. (see http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/uplf_e/Strategy2013-2017.pdf)	
16. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?	

Yes

Example of those activities, methods and tools:

1. A statement explaining steps taken to move towards or to comply with standardization is part of the reference metadata. (QAF Method: 10.4.3 at product/survey level)

-single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)

Metadata are available to all users of the NSI website under the respective heading with the statistical data. Current metadata are partially compliant with the ESMS structure (13 of 21 concepts). Within the "Horizontal and vertical integration project: Implementing of technical and statistical standards in the European Statistical System" to develop national reference metadata entirely ESMS structure, which will be published on the NSI's website.

Strengths and weaknesses:

17. Please state below the main area of *strength* with regard to your organization's approach towards cost-effectiveness of your processes. -open reply-(compulsory)

• Indicators of human and financial resources are centrally monitored; • Human resources are evaluated in line with office-wide guidelines; • Arrangements are signed with owners of administrative data.

18. Please state below the main area of *weakness* with regard to your organization's approach towards cost-effectiveness of your processes. -open reply-(compulsory)

Standardization procedures are implemented in some phases of the statistical production.

Innovative practices:

19. Please state below the innovative practices, i.e. genuinely new ways which have made a difference in implementing the CoP, with regard to Cost Effectiveness within your organization and/or other initiatives beyond the QAF. -open reply-(compulsory)

The development of Information system "Business Statistics" and Information system "Short-term Statistics" is tool for automatic data capture, data coding and validation.

Development since the previous peer review:

20. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of the NSI compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

The compliance with this principle has improved during the years.

21. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of the national statistical system as a whole compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

The compliance with this principle has improved during the years.

Follow-up:

22. On the basis of the above mentioned indicators please list below actions you would like to take which are suited to improve your organization's cost-effectiveness.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

The development of information systems is foreseen in other statistical domains – long term.

23. Please identify below possible actions at European level suited to improve your organization's cost-effectiveness.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

None

Principle 11 - Relevance

European Statistics meet the needs of users.

<p>Indicator 11.1: Processes are in place to consult users, monitor the relevance and utility of existing statistics in meeting their needs, and consider their emerging needs and priorities.</p> <p>1. Your Statistical Law requires user consultation. QAF Method: 11.1.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. content of the law, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>The Law on Statistics ensures the organization and functions of the National Statistical Council - Article 14. According to Article 7. (1), point 9, NSI provides statistical information to domestic and international users. (see http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/StatisticsAct_en.pdf)</p>	
<p>2a. There are one or more national users' committees or advisory councils in which the main users are represented. QAF Method: 11.1.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. names, responsibilities, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>There is one advisory council – the National Statistical Council. The Council's functions and tasks: 1. give an opinion and recommendations on the Strategy for Development of the National Statistical System for each 5-year period; 2. discuss the proposals of the Bodies of Statistics and give recommendations for including in the draft version of the National Statistical Programme particular statistical surveys specified in kind, coverage and acting persons; 3. support the National Statistical System activities on implementation of the National Statistical Programme; 4. create, in case of need, constant or temporary working groups to deal with particular statistical issues in compliance with its competencies; 5. cooperate with the European Statistical Advisory Committee (ESAC) (according to the Art. 3, Para 4 from Decision No 234/2008/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council); 6. adopt the rules on its activities; 7. elect a chairperson among its members for a term of five years. (see http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/191/basic-page/national-statistical-council http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/246/basic-page/rules-national-statistical-council-activity)</p>	
<p>2b. Procedures are in place to consult users about the statistical needs and the content of the statistical programme. QAF Method: 11.1.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. scope, level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>The National Statistical Council discusses the proposals of the Bodies of Statistics and gives recommendations for including in the draft version of the National Statistical Programme particular statistical surveys specified in kind, coverage and acting persons and supports the National Statistical System activities on implementation of the National Statistical Programme. (see http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/191/basic-page/national-statistical-council and http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/246/basic-page/rules-national-statistical-council-activity) The Rules for the dissemination of statistical products and services to the National Statistics Institute ensure the consultation of users about the statistical needs as specified in Chapter VIII.</p>	
<p>2c. Procedures are in place to consult users about the quality of the statistical output. QAF Method: 11.1.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. scope, level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>The National Statistical Council is established in accordance with Art.14 of Law on Statistics, as a consultative body, attached to the President of the National Statistical Institute. The Council shall comprise the members, as follows: Intrastat Directorate, National Revenue Agency – Ministry of Finance; Customs Statistics and Analyses Department in Customs Statistics and Automation Directorate of National Customs Agency - Ministry of Finance; Agrarian Statistics Department in Directorate General "Agriculture, Forestry and Land Relations" – Ministry of Agriculture and Food; National Center of Health Informatics – Ministry of Health; Department "Ports" in Inspection Activities Directorate of Executive Agency "Maritime administration" - Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications; Registers and Statistics Department in Administrative Directorate of Directorate General "Civil Aviation Administration"</p>	

- Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications; Directorate General "Analyses, Planning and Prognoses" – National Social Security Institute; Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Directorate of Executive Environment Agency - Ministry of Environment and Water; one member representing the Bulgarian National Bank; members representing the academic society; members representing different groups of the respondents and users. The Council conducts its meetings at least three times per year. (see <http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/246/basic-page/rules-national-statistical-council-activity>)

<p>3a. Data on the use of statistics are analysed. Example: Evaluation of downloads, subscribers of reports and requests for information. QAF Method: 11.1.3 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>A questionnaire on customer satisfaction survey of the proposed statistical information products and services is published on the website of the NSI – see http://www.nsi.bg/en/node/11744 . There is a section in the questionnaire about the use of statistics. Another tool for analyzing the data on the use of statistics is the WebCounter which estimates downloads and visits of the NSI's website. (see http://bgcounter.com/?sts,summary,,,nsicntr)</p>	
<p>3b. The result of the analysis is used to support priority setting and user consultation. QAF Method: 11.1.3 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>According to the Strategy for Development of the National Statistical System of the Republic of Bulgaria 2013–2017 the main objective for National Statistical System development is to improve the development, production and dissemination of quality statistical information about all user groups according to their information needs. The main objectives for the development of NSS are defined based on the user needs, priorities in the European Statistical Programme in the period 2013-2017, the significance of providing quality statistical information for development, monitoring and evaluation of different policies, the extent of respondents' burden and the expenditures for conduction of surveys. Priorities are layed down in the Strategy in relation to priority setting and user consultation (see Priority 1.2. Updating the existing ones and development of indicators for surveys on new phenomena and processes; Priority 1.3. Extending the scope of provided statistical products and services; Priority 3.3. Cooperation and partnership between institutions of NSS and users). (see http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/uplf_e/Strategy2013-2017.pdf)</p>	
<p>4. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator? Examples of those activities, methods and tools:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A classification of users of a given product exists. (QAF Method: 11.1.4 at product/survey level) 2. A classification of users of a given product is made available. (QAF Method: 11.1.4 at product/survey level) 3. An list of key users and their data uses is available for each statistic. (QAF Method: 11.1.5 at product/survey level) 4. The list of key users includes unmet user needs. (QAF Method: 11.1.5 at product/survey level) 5. Procedures for user consultation for each statistic are in place. (QAF Method: 11.1.6 at product/survey level) 6. Quality indicator(s) on relevance are assessed. (QAF Method: 11.1.7 at product/survey level) <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>User Satisfaction Survey - http://www.nsi.bg/node/11744/ - in Bulgarian only. The aim of the survey is to collect data on: • type of users; • the field in which is the information user look for • the purposes for which the statistical information is used • the frequency • the most used product and services • quality aspects • dissemination, metadata and services. The results of the survey are analyzed and a report is prepared. The reports are published on the website of the NSI.</p>	

http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/USS/user_satisfaction_survey_nsi_2009.pdf - (available in Bulgarian only)
http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/USS/user_satisfaction_survey_nsi_2010.pdf - (available in Bulgarian only)
http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/USS/user_satisfaction_survey_nsi_2011.pdf - (available in Bulgarian only)
http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/USS/user_satisfaction_survey_nsi_2012.pdf - (available in Bulgarian only)
http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/USS/user_satisfaction_survey_nsi_2013.pdf - (available in Bulgarian only) Quality indicators on relevance are assessed in the Quality reports on Business statistics (see <http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/762/basic-page/quality-reports-business-statistics>) There are also quality reports on Multi-domain statistics (see <http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/763/basic-page/quality-reports-multi-domain-statistics>)

Indicator 11.2:

Priority needs are being met and reflected in the work programme.

Yes, fully implemented

5. Procedures are in place to prioritise between different users' needs in the work programme.

QAF Method: 11.2.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify (e.g. level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

The National Statistical Council discusses the proposals of the Bodies of Statistics and gives recommendations for including in the draft version of the National Statistical Programme particular statistical surveys specified in kind, coverage and acting persons. (see <http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/246/basic-page/rules-national-statistical-council-activity>)

6. Strategic goals and programme plans are in place.

QAF Method: 11.2.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. scope, update frequency, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

Strategic goals of the NSI of Bulgaria are set in the Strategy for Development of the National Statistical System, 2013 – 2017. The Strategy outlines the directions for development, priorities, objectives and provision of resources in regard to the National Statistical System until 2017. Sustainability criteria are laid down in the Strategy, due consideration is given to the tendencies and development objectives of the European Statistical System, as well as the increasing demand of the society for timely and objective statistical information produced in accordance with harmonised European methodology and standards. It is being prepared and adopted every 5 years. (see <http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/11790/basic-page/strategy-development-national-statistical-system-2013-2017>) Programme plans are set in The National Statistical Programme for 2014. The Programme is elaborated in accordance with Chapter Three of the Law on Statistics. The programme includes Plan for activity of National Statistical Institute (NSI) and the Plans for statistical activities of the Bodies of Statistics. The development of methodology, production and dissemination of statistical information in the National Statistical System of the Republic of Bulgaria is realized in accordance with adopted uniform European standards and harmonized methods. The new surveys and activities included in the national programme for 2014 are related to user needs and to priorities of the Community Statistical Programme for 2014. It is being prepared and adopted every year. (see <http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/11993/basic-page/national-statistical-programme-2014>)

6b. Strategic goals and programme plans are published.

QAF Method: 11.2.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. frequency, availability, accessibility, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

Strategic goals and programme plans are published on the NSI's website - <http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/99/basic-page/legal-basis>. They are being published after their official approval and are available and accessible to all users.

7. Service Level Agreements or similar arrangements are established with your most important users.

QAF Method: 11.2.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. existence, scope, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

Under the terms of Art.34, paragraph 3 of Rules for dissemination of statistical product and services of the NSI – The preparation of statistical products and services of value above 2 500 BGN starts after the signing of a contract according the Appendix 3. Art. 35, paragraph 1 and 2 of Rules for dissemination of statistical product and services of the NSI – NSI provides statistical information to

ministries, administrations and other institutions upon a concluded Agreement for cooperation and strategic partnership in exchange of information (Appendix 4). http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564/ - (available in Bulgarian only)	
8. Periodic evaluation of the work programme is carried out to identify negative priorities and emerging needs. QAF Method: 10.2.4 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
According to Art. 9., point 6 of the Law on Statistics the president of the National Statistical Institute annually prepares and submits to the Council of Ministers a report on the implementation of the national statistical program and the activities of the National Statistical Institute for the previous year. (see http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/uplf/Otchet_2013.pdf) → (available in Bulgarian only)	
Indicator 11.3: User satisfaction is monitored on a regular basis and is systematically followed up.	Yes, fully implemented
9. User satisfaction surveys or similar studies with an office-wide scope are carried out. QAF Method: 11.3.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify (e.g. frequency, scope, methodology namely if there is a customer satisfaction index, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
A questionnaire on customer satisfaction survey of the proposed statistical information products and services is published on the website of the NSI - http://www.nsi.bg/en/node/11744 - (available in Bulgarian only) This questionnaire aims to study the opinion of the greatest possible number of users which will allow the NSI to make a real assessment and analysis of the users' satisfaction with the provided statistical information products and services. Conducting consumer research is an excellent tool for improving the quality of products and services NSI. There is a section in the questionnaire about the quality and dissemination of the statistical output. The results of the survey are being analyzed each year.	
10. User satisfaction surveys are followed up by improvement actions. QAF Method: 11.3.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Not implemented
Please specify (e.g. level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
None	
11. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator? Example of those activities, methods and tools: 1. Measures are in place to assess the satisfaction of key users of particular statistics. (QAF Method: 11.3.3 at product/survey level) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
During the period 3.02.2014 - 30.04.2014 The National Statistical Institute will conduct a communication market research for customer satisfaction of the information offered in the areas of income, expenditure and household consumption. The study aims: • To obtain indicators of the usefulness of the survey data; • To outline the profile of the users on basic socio-demographic characteristics; • To enhance direct communication with consumers, to get feedback on their knowledge and experience provided by the NSI information products and services in the field of household budgets; To draw conclusions on the basis of responses with a view to further improving the parameters of the study.	
Strengths and weaknesses:	
12. Please state below the main area of <i>strength</i> with regard to your organization's approach towards relevance of your statistics. -open reply-(compulsory)	
The availability of documents, stated above, that provide the framework of the procedures necessary for the implementation of processes to consult users, meeting their needs, and consider their emerging needs and priorities.	

13. Please state below the main area of *weakness* with regard to your organization's approach towards relevance of your statistics. -open reply-(compulsory)

The user satisfaction surveys are not followed up by improvement actions.

Innovative practices:

14. Please state below the innovative practices, i.e. genuinely new ways which have made a difference in implementing the CoP, with regard to Relevance within your organization and/or other initiatives beyond the QAF. -open reply-(compulsory)

The online questionnaire on customer satisfaction survey of the proposed statistical information products and services and the new communication market research for customer satisfaction of the information offered in the areas of income, expenditure and household consumption.

Development since the previous peer review:

15. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of the NSI compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

The National Statistical Institute has strengthen its compliance with the principle of Relevance on the bases of the strategies for development of the National Statistical System - 2008 – 2012 and 2013 – 2017, the National statistical programme, the Rules for the dissemination of statistical products and services to the National Statistics Institute, the Internal rules for distribution of information. Statistical products and services and publication activity of NSI.

16. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of the national statistical system as a whole compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

The national statistical system strengthened its compliance with the CoP and its principles.

Follow-up:

17. On the basis of the above mentioned indicators please list below actions you would like to take which are suited to improve the relevance of the statistics of your organization.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

None

18. Please identify below possible actions at European level suited to improve the relevance of the statistics of your organization. -open reply-(compulsory)

None

Principle 12 - Accuracy and Reliability

European Statistics accurately and reliably portray reality.

Indicator 12.1:

Source data, intermediate results and statistical outputs are assessed and validated.

Yes, fully implemented

1a. Systems for assessing and validating *source data* are implemented.

QAF Method: 12.1.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify (e.g. description, level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

Yes, for each particular survey are developed procedures for evaluation and validation of the initial data depending on the specifications.

1b. Systems for assessing and validating *intermediate results* are implemented.

QAF Method: 12.1.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. description, level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply- (compulsory)	
The procedures of validation for preliminary data are the same as regards to the final data.	
1c. Systems for assessing and validating <i>statistical output</i> are implemented. QAF Method: 12.1.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. description, level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply- (compulsory)	
See answers to questions 1a and 1b.	
2. Internal procedures and guidelines for data quality assessment exist. Remark: These procedures and guidelines address accuracy and reliability issues. QAF Method: 12.1.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. description, level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply- (compulsory)	
Quality reports following the Eurostat requirements are prepared for all surveys.	
3. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator? Examples of those activities, methods and tools: 1. Results are compared with other existing sources of information in order to ensure validity. Explanation: Validity in this context is the degree to which there is no bias or systematic error. (QAF Method: 12.1.3 at product/survey level) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
In the field of public health statistics – some indicators concerning non-expenditure health data are verified with the data produced by the "National Health Care Data and e-Health" Directorate of National Center for Public Health and Analyses (NCPHA) at the Ministry of health. In the field of education statistics is carried out evaluation of coherence with other surveys and investigate the deviations in trends. NSI has taken the necessary steps to obtain and apply the received only on paper from the "Customs" Agency, customs declarations for exports made under "emergency procedure" mode. The created in this connection software aimed to ensure full coverage of exports to third countries and to ensure the provision of reliable and timely data on foreign trade statistics, which are some of the important components in the compilation of Balance of Payments and National Accounts of Bulgaria for 2013. Thanks to the software product the NSI will be able to respond adequately and timely in such situations in the future.	
Indicator 12.2: Sampling errors and non-sampling errors are measured and systematically documented according to the European standards 4a. Internal procedures and guidelines to measure errors are in place. Examples: - Identification of the <u>main sources of error</u> for key variables; - Quantification of <u>sampling errors</u> for key variables; - Identification and evaluation of main <u>non-sampling error</u> sources in statistical processes; - Identification and evaluation in quantitative or qualitative terms of the potential <u>bias</u> ; - Special attention to <u>outliers</u> as well as their handling in estimation; - Quantification of potential <u>coverage errors</u> ;	Yes, fully implemented

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quantification of potential <u>measurement errors</u> (comparison with existing information, questionnaire design and testing, information on interviewer training, etc.); - Quantification of <u>non-response errors</u>, including systematic documentation for technical treatment of non-response at estimation stage and indicators of representativeness; - Quantification of <u>processing errors</u>; - Analysis of the <u>differences between preliminary and revised estimates</u>. <p>QAF Method: 12.2.1 at institutional level.</p> <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Please specify (e.g. descriptions, level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>All points are applicable and are strictly followed in accordance with the legal requirements.</p>	
<p>4b. Internal procedures and guidelines to reduce errors are in place.</p> <p>QAF Method: 12.2.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. descriptions, level of implementation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Input arithmetic and logical control and additional output control in accordance with the legal requirements. In the NSI we make efforts to increase the response rate, as well as specific procedures of grossing up.</p>	
<p>5. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?</p> <p>Examples of those activities, methods and tools:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Periodic quality reporting on accuracy is in place (serving both producer and user perspectives). Explanation: Reporting both to users and producers. (QAF Method: 12.2.2 at product/survey level.) 2. Quality reporting on accuracy is guided by ESS-recommendations. Explanation: ESS-recommendations are Euro SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS), ESS Handbook for Quality Reports (EHQR) and the Single Integrated Metadata Structure (SIMS). (QAF Method: 12.2.3 at product/survey level) 3. Methods and tools for preventing and reducing errors are in place. Explanation: It concerns both sampling and non-sampling errors. (QAF Method: 12.2.4 at product/survey level) <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>All points are applicable and will be further developed and implemented in the future.</p>	
<p>Indicator 12.3: Revisions are regularly analysed in order to improve statistical processes. Please consider only statistics for which this indicator is relevant.</p> <p>6a. A revision policy exists. Explanation: The revision policy states principles, procedures, the timing of revisions, their reasons and nature. QAF Method: 12.3.1 and 12.3.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. scope, frequency, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	

In the field of consumer price statistics (HICP/CPI): The standards of CR No 1921/2001 on revisions had been implemented in 2002 starting with the index for January 2002. HICP/CPI series, including back data, are revisable under the terms set in CR No 1921/2001. The published HICP/CPI data may be revised for mistakes, new or improved information, and changes in the system of harmonized rules. In general, monthly Bulgarian HICP/CPI indices are not subject to revisions. They are final when first released. The only exception is the HICP/CPI for January that is calculated and is published as preliminary data with flag 'p'. Each year January index is firstly released as a preliminary index with preliminary weights. The reason is that data from HBS used for construction of the weights at the lower levels of aggregation is not available for the whole previous year. The January index is firstly calculated with HBS data from October of year t-2 to September of year t-1. The final January index is released together with the February index when the HBS data is available for the whole previous year (from January to December). The final January index replaces the preliminary one and is published as final data with flag 'r'. Index numbers for the rest of the months of the year are final when first released. In 2007 the Bulgarian HICP data for 2005 and 2006 has been revised. The reason was that since January 2007 Bulgaria has started to apply domestic concept in construction of HICP weights. Till December 2006, domestic concept has not been fully implemented into Bulgarian HICP. For ensuring the comparable index series, the monthly HICPs have been revised for the period from January 2005 to December 2006. The main objective was to have 'clear' HICP index series with the new index reference period 2005=100. The revision has been implemented in close coordination between NSI and Eurostat.

6b. A revision policy is made public.

QAF Method: 12.3.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. frequency, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

The revised data are made publicly accessible. The policy is not published.

7. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?

Yes

Examples of those activities, methods and tools:

1. The revision policy follows standard and transparent procedures in the context of the survey. (QAF Method: 12.3.3 at product/survey level)
2. Information on the size and direction of revisions for key-indicators is provided and made public. (QAF Method: 12.3.4 at product/survey level)
3. An analysis of revisions is used to improve the statistical process. (QAF Method: 12.3.5 at product/survey level)

-single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)

Point 2

Strengths and weaknesses:

8. Please state below the main area of *strength* with regard to your organization's approach towards accuracy and reliability of the statistical output. -open reply-(compulsory)

• Systems for assessing and validating intermediate results, statistical output and source data are implemented; • According to the European standards sampling errors and non-sampling errors are measured and documented.

9. Please state below the main area of *weakness* with regard to your organization's approach towards accuracy and reliability of the statistical output. -open reply-(compulsory)

No weaknesses

Innovative practices:

10. Please state below the innovative practices, i.e. genuinely new ways which have made a difference in implementing the CoP, with regard to Accuracy and Reliability within your organization and/or other initiatives beyond the QAF. -open reply-(compulsory)

No

Development since the previous peer review:

11. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of the NSI compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

The compliance with this principle has improved during the years.

12. How do you assess the compliance with this principle of the national statistical system as a whole compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

The compliance with this principle has improved during the years.

Follow-up:

13. On the basis of the above mentioned indicators please list below actions you would like to take which are suited to improve accuracy and reliability of the statistical output of your organization.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

None

14. Please identify below possible actions at European level suited to improve accuracy and reliability of the statistical output of your organization.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

None

Principle 13 - Timeliness and Punctuality

European Statistics are released in a timely and punctual manner.

Indicator 13.1: Timeliness meets European and other international release standards	Yes, fully implemented
1. There is compliance with international standards on timeliness. QAF Method: 13.1.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify (e.g. a list of the standards, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS)	
2. A release calendar is published covering all statistics, for which timeliness standards are established within European regulations or agreements at international level. QAF Method: 13.1.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. coverage of the release calendar, period and statistical outputs, description of processes for updating the calendar, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The date of publication of statistical information is indicated in the Release Calendar presenting the results of the statistical surveys. The Release Calendar is published on the NSI website 10 days after approval of the National Statistical Programme for each year.	
3a. Divergences from European and international timeliness targets are monitored. QAF Method: 13.1.3 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. frequency of monitoring, time of the latest update, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open	

reply-(compulsory)	
All results are made public according to the requirements for actuality and timeliness. All the results are released according to the Release Calendar.	
3b. An action plan is developed if European and international timeliness targets are not met. QAF Method: 13.1.3 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Not implemented
Please specify (e.g. reference to the document and short description of the content, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
See answer to question 3.a.	
4. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator? Examples of those activities, methods and tools: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quality indicator(s) on timeliness are regularly calculated. (QAF Method: 13.1.4 at product/survey level) 2. Quality indicator(s) on timeliness are published. (QAF Method: 13.1.4 at product/survey level) 3. Quality indicator(s) on timeliness are analyzed and assessed to improve the statistical process, if relevant. (QAF Method: 13.1.5 at product/survey level) 	No
-single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
None.	
Indicator 13.2: A standard daily time for the release of European Statistics is made public. 5a. A release policy is defined. QAF Method: 13.2.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. release principles or contents of the release policy, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The dissemination of the statistical products and services of the National Statistical Institute are established by: Rules for dissemination of statistical products and services of the NSI http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564/ - (available in Bulgarian only) Internal rules for dissemination of information, statistical products and services and publication activities of the NSI. Both the Rules are approved by the President of NSI.	
5b. A release policy is published. QAF Method: 13.2.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. reference to the release policy, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Rules for dissemination of statistical products and services of the NSI are published on the website of NSI. http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564/ - (available in Bulgarian only) Internal rules for dissemination of information, statistical products and services and publication activities of NSI are published on the Intranet site of the NSI Internal Rules are sent to all staff of NSI and Directors of Regional Offices by the internal information system.	
5c. The release policy distinguishes between different kinds of publications (e.g., press releases, specific statistical reports/tables, general publications) and their corresponding release procedures.	Yes, fully implemented

QAF Method: 13.2.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify (e.g. a list of the types of publications and their corresponding release procedures, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The press release, printed publications and electronic publications are defined by both Rules for dissemination of statistical product and services of the NSI and Internal Rules for dissemination of information, statistical products and services and publication activities of the NSI. www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564/ The different kinds of publications are defined by the Publication plan of the NSI.	
6. Releases are published at a standard daily time.* QAF Mmethod: 13.2.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. the release time of electronic output and printed output, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The deadlines for release of electronic and printed output are defined by the Publication plan of the NSI, which is approved by the President of NSI. The deadline is also defined by the Catalogue of statistical publications, which is available both in printed issue and electronic version. The catalogue is published on the website of NSI. http://www.nsi.bg/en/node/11176/	
Indicator 13.3: The periodicity of statistics takes into account user requirements as much as possible.	Yes, fully implemented
7. The statistical authority consults users on periodicity. QAF Method: 13.3.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify (e.g. principles of consultation or short description of the consultation process, frequency of consultation, time of the latest consultation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Knowledgeable staff consult users by e-mail, phone or at site from 9.00 a.m. till 5.00 p.m. every working day at the Reception Desk of NSI.	
Indicator 13.4: Divergence from the dissemination time schedule is publicized in advance, explained and a new release date set.	Yes, fully implemented
8. A release calendar is published. QAF Method: 13.4.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify (e.g. frequency of publishing the calendar, time of the latest publication, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The Calendar (by months and by themes) is approved by the President of NSI at the beginning of the respective year. It is published on the website of NSI both in Bulgarian and English. http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/79/basic-page/release-calendar	
9. Punctuality of every release is monitored and assessed. QAF Method: 13.4.2 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. frequency of monitoring and assessment, time of the latest assessment, reference to the document and short description of the content, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
The Inspectorate, who is subordinated to President of National Statistical Institute, supervises the deadlines of every release.	
10a. Divergences from the pre-announced time are published in advance. QAF Method: 13.4.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Not implemented
Please specify (e.g. reference to the regulating document, description of processes, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	

None.	
10b. The reasons for divergences from the pre-announced time are explained. QAF Method: 13.4.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Not implemented
Please specify (e.g. reference to the document, description of processes, examples of occurrence, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
None.	
10c. A new release time is announced. QAF Method: 13.4.3 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Not implemented
Please specify (e.g. reference to the document, description of processes, examples of occurrence, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
None.	
11. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator? Examples of those activities, methods and tools: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quality indicator(s) on punctuality for preliminary and final results are calculated and monitored. (QAF Method: 13.4.4 at product/survey level) 2. Quality indicator(s) on punctuality for preliminary and final results are disseminated. (QAF Method: 13.4.4 at product/survey level) 	No
-single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
None.	
Indicator 13.5: Preliminary results of acceptable aggregate accuracy can be released when considered useful. 12. Are there any activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator? Examples of those activities, methods and tools: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The possibility of disseminating preliminary results is reviewed taking into account the data accuracy. (QAF Method: 13.5.1 at product/survey level) 2. When preliminary results are released, appropriate information is provided to the user about the quality of the published results. (QAF Method: 13.5.2 at product/survey level) 3. Key outputs, or groups of key outputs, which are subject to scheduled revisions have a published policy covering those revisions. (QAF Method: 13.5.3 at product/survey level) 	No
-single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
None.	
Strengths and weaknesses: 13. Please state below the main area of <i>strength</i> with regard to your organization's approach towards Timeliness and Punctuality of the statistical output. -open reply-(optional) NSI has developed a policy for publication the results of the statistical surveys. A Calendar presenting the results of the statistical	

surveys carried out by the National Statistical Institute is worked out in January of the respective year and is published on the website of the NSI. A supervisor body, which is subordinated to President of NSI is available.

14. Please state below the main area of *weakness* with regard to your organization's approach towards Timeliness and Punctuality of the statistical output. -open reply-(compulsory)

The divergences from the pre-announced time are published in the A Calendar presenting the results of the statistical surveys carried out by the National Statistical Institute only.

Innovative practices:

15. Please state below the innovative practices, i.e. genuinely new ways which have made a difference in implementing the CoP, with regard to Timeliness and Punctuality within you organization and/or other initiatives beyond the QAF. -open reply-(compulsory)

No

Development since the previous peer review:

16.How do you assess the compliance with this principle by the NSI compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

The National Statistical Institute has strengthened the implementation of the requirements of the principle.

17. How do you assess the compliance with this principle by the national statistical system as a whole compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

The National Statistical System has strengthened the implementation of the requirements of the principle.

Follow-up:

18. On the basis of the above mentioned indicators please list below actions you would like to take which are suited to improve Timeliness and Punctuality of your organization's statistical output.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

None

19. Please identify below possible actions at the European level suited to improve Timeliness and Punctuality for your organization's statistical output.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

None

Principle 14 - Coherence and Comparability

European Statistics are consistent internally, over time and comparable between regions and countries; it is possible to combine and make joint use of related data from different sources.

Indicator 14.1 Statistics are internally coherent and consistent (i.e. arithmetic and accounting identities observed)

Yes, fully implemented

1. Procedures and guidelines to monitor internal coherence are developed and carried out in a systematic way. When appropriate, they should deal with consistency between preliminary and final data (i.e. continuity), between microdata and aggregated data, between annual, quarterly and monthly data, between statistics and National Accounts, and also with

non-deterministic consistency (e.g. consistency between economic growth and employment, also called plausibility). QAF Method: 14.1.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify (e.g. reference to the document and short description of the content, description of procedures and guidelines, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Procedures and guidelines to monitor internal coherence provided by Eurostat are strictly applied.	
2. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator? Example of those activities, methods and tools: 1. Process-specific procedures and guidelines ensure that outputs obtained from complementary sources are combined so as to assure internal coherence and consistency. (QAF Method: 14.1.2 at product/survey level) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	No
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
None.	
Indicator 14.2: Statistics are comparable over a reasonable period of time. 3. Significant changes in reality are reflected by appropriate changes to concepts (classifications, definitions and target populations). QSAF Method: 14.2.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. reference to the document and short description of the content, description of processes, examples of occurrence, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Classifications, definitions and target populations are defined according to methodologies, standards and regulations. In this way comparability is assured for a reasonable period of time.	
4. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator? Example of those activities, methods and tools: 1. Changes in methods are clearly identified and their impact measured to facilitate reconciliation. (QAF Method: 14.2.2 at product/survey level) 2. Breaks in the series are explained. (QAF Method: 14.2.3 at product/survey level) 3. Methods for ensuring reconciliation over a period of time are made publicly available. (QAF Method: 14.2.3 at product/survey level) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
Point 2	
Indicator 14.3: Statistics are compiled on the basis of common standards with respect to scope, definitions, units and classifications in the different surveys and sources.	Yes, partly implemented

<p>5. A common repository of concepts or a mechanism to promote coherence and consistency is used.</p> <p>QAF Method: 14.3.1 at institutional level -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Please specify (e.g. reference to the repository, description of processes, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>For most of the surveys there is methodology available on the website. The main statistical concepts are included in dictionaries. See http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/8953 (available in Bulgarian only)</p>	
<p>6. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?</p> <p>Examples of those activities, methods and tools:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An assessment of compliance with standards on definitions, units and classifications is carried out. (QAF Method: 14.3.2 at product/survey level) 2. Results of periodic assessments are reflected in quality reporting. (QAF Method: 14.3.2 at product/survey level) 3. Deviations from standards on definitions, units or classifications are made explicit and the reasons for deviating are explained. (QAF Method: 14.3.3 at product/survey level) <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Definitions and the recommendations of Eurostat are strictly applied.</p>	
<p>Indicator 14.4: Statistics from different sources and of different periodicity are compared and reconciled.</p> <p>7. Are any activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?</p> <p>Examples of those activities, methods and tools:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Statistical outputs are compared with other statistical or administrative data that provide the same or similar information on the same domain/phenomenon. (QAF Method: 14.4.1 at product/survey level) 2. Divergences originating from different sources are identified. (QAF Method: 14.4.2 at product/survey level) 3. Reasons for divergences are clearly and publicly explained. (QAF Method: 14.4.2 at product/survey level) 4. Statistical outputs are reconciled whenever possible. (QAF Method: 14.4.3 at product/survey level) <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>In the field of consumer price statistics: point 1 as regards weights and price changes of administered prices. Data are compared between Intrastat declarations and the fields for intra-Community acquisitions and supplies from VAT declarations to check the quality of declared trade within the EU. Data from VAT declarations are used in the assessment of non-response marketing and trade below the threshold, and in determining the Intrastat thresholds.</p>	
<p>Indicator 14.5:</p>	<p>Not implemented</p>

Cross-national comparability of the data is ensured within the European Statistical System through periodical exchanges between the European Statistical System and other statistical systems. Methodological studies are carried out in close co-operation between the Member States and Eurostat.

8 An assessment of comparability is institutionalized.

QAF Method: 14.5.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify (e.g. frequency of assessment, description of processes and institutions involved, time of the latest assessment, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

None.

9 Methodological studies are conducted in collaboration between Member States and Eurostat.

QAF 14.5.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. examples of occurrence, description of processes, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

Yes, within the frame of the Eurostat Working groups, Task forces or written consultations.

10. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?

Yes

Examples of those activities, methods and tools:

1. An analysis of asymmetries is carried out where possible. (QAF 14.5.4 at product/survey level.)
2. Reports on mirror statistics between Member States are made available to the public. (QAF 14.5.4 at product/survey level)
3. Discrepancies in mirror statistics are identified and corrected whenever possible. (QAF 14.5.5 at product/survey level)

-single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)

"Foreign Trade Statistics" Department participates annually in the mirror comparisons with other Member States in which the data are corrected if found to be incorrectly declared by the respondents. The updates are published and sent to Eurostat.

Strengths and weaknesses:

11. Please state below the main area of *strength* with regard to your organization's approach towards Coherence and Comparability of the statistical output. -open reply-(compulsory)

Availability of statistical dictionaries on the website.

12. Please state below the main area of *weakness* with regard to your organization's approach towards Coherence and Comparability of the statistical output. -open reply-(compulsory)

Mechanisms and process to assess comparability are not in place.

Innovative practices:

13. Please state below the innovative practices, i.e. genuinely new ways which have made a difference in implementing the CoP, with regard to Coherence and Comparability within your organization and/or other initiatives beyond the QAF.

-open reply-(compulsory)

No

Development since the previous peer review:

14. How do you assess the compliance with this principle by the NSI compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

The compliance with this principle has improved.

15. How do you assess the compliance with this principle by the national statistical system as a whole compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

The compliance with this principle has improved.

Follow-up:

16. On the basis of the above mentioned indicators please list below actions you would like to take which are suited to improve the Coherence and Comparability of the statistical output of your organization.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

None

17. Please identify below possible actions at the European level suited to improve the Coherence and Comparability of the statistical output of your organization.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

None

Principle 15 - Accessibility and Clarity

European Statistics are presented in a clear and understandable form, released in a suitable and convenient manner, available and accessible on an impartial basis with supporting metadata and guidance.

Indicator 15.1:

Statistics and the corresponding metadata are presented, and archived, in a form that facilitates proper interpretation and meaningful comparisons.

Yes, fully implemented

1a. A Dissemination Policy, defining dissemination practices, is in place.

QAF Method: 15.1.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Please specify (e.g. content and topics covered in the dissemination policy, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

Rules for dissemination of statistical products and services of NSI <http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564/> - (available in Bulgarian only) Internal Rules for dissemination of information, statistical products and services and publication activities. Both Rules are approved by the President of NSI.

1b. The Dissemination Policy is made public.

QAF Method: 15.1.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, fully implemented

Please specify (e.g. reference to dissemination policy, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

Rules for dissemination of statistical products and services of NSI are published on the website of NSI. <http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564/> - (available in Bulgarian only)

1c. Procedures are in place to review the standards for the dissemination of statistical results.

QAF Method: 15.1.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Not implemented

Please specify (e.g. description of procedures, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

None.	
2. Users are consulted (e.g. through focus groups, Customer Satisfaction Surveys) about the most appropriate forms of dissemination. QAF Method: 15.1.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. frequency of consultations, list of forms of consultations, time of three latest consultations for each form of consultation, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Knowledgeable staff consult users by e-mail, phone or at site from 9.00 a.m. till 5.00 p.m. every working day at the Reception Desk of NSI.	
3a. Training courses for interpretation of statistics are conducted for users. QAF Method: 15.1.3 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
Please specify (e.g. number of training courses and number of participants in these courses since last Peer Review, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Not for the users, only for the statisticians and interviewers.	
3b. Training courses for writing press releases are conducted. QAF Method: 15.1.3 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Not implemented
Please specify (e.g. number of training courses and number of participants in these courses since last Peer Review, share of statisticians who write press releases and have attended the training course on writing press releases, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
None.	
4a. A policy for archiving statistics is in place. QAF Method: 15.1.4 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
Please specify (e.g. reference to the policy, short description of the content, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
Yes, there are institutional regulations on archives activity. The archived data are available on the NSI website.	
4b. A policy for archiving metadata is in place. QAF Method: 15.1.4 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Not implemented
Please specify (e.g. reference to the policy, short description of the content, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)	
In the framework of the "Horizontal and vertical integration project: Implementing of technical and statistical standards in the European Statistical System" currently a database is being built based on reference metadata, where the metadata will be archived.	
5. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator? Example of those activities, methods and tools: 1. Meaningful comparisons are clearly included in publications, when appropriate. (QAF Method: 15.1.5. at product/survey level) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	No
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
None.	
Indicator 15.2:Dissemination services use modern information and communication technology and, if appropriate, traditional hard copy.	Yes, partly implemented

<p>6. The website and statistical data bases conform so far as it is possible to universal web content accessibility guidelines.</p> <p>QAF Method: 15.2.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Please specify (e.g. reference to the website and statistical data base, results of the relevant assessment, time of the latest assessment, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>The main website complies fully to the requirements, but separate databases are available with specific means which do not meet the requirements.</p>	
<p>7a. The website and statistical data bases are the main means for disseminating statistical results.</p> <p>QAF Method: 15.2.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, partly implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. reference to the document, reference to the website and statistical data base, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>Art. 28, paragraph 1 of Rules for dissemination of statistical product and services of NSI – The websites of the National Statistical Institutes are the main source for dissemination of official statistical information, which is free of charge both in Bulgarian and English Art. 29 of Rules for dissemination of statistical products and services of NSI determine the information which will be published on the main website of NSI. http://www.nsi.bg/bg/node/564/ - (available in Bulgarian only) A lot of the data to the public administration are provided through various channels.</p>	
<p>7b. The website and statistical data bases facilitate self-tabulation in the most appropriate formats (e.g., XLS, HTML).</p> <p>QAF Method: 15.2.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. reference to the website and statistical data base, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>The most recent data are available on the website in HTML format and the time-series are available on the website in XLS format.</p>	
<p>8. An information service/call centre service composed of knowledgeable staff is available for answering requests and clarifications of statistical results.</p> <p>QAF Method: 15.2.3 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. reference to the contact information of the centre and description of the qualifications of the staff, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>Knowledgeable staff consult users by e-mail, phone or at site from 9.00 a.m. till 5.00 p.m. every working day at the Reception Desk of NSI, where users may send requests to e-mail: info@nsi.bg or make a telephone call on number 9857 111.</p>	
<p>9. A publication catalogue is available to users.</p> <p>QAF Method: 15.2.4 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. reference to the document, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>A catalogue of statistical publications is available both in printed issue and electronic version. The catalogue is published on the website of NSI. http://www.nsi.bg/en/node/11176/</p>	
<p>10. Statistical results are disseminated using tools and formats that facilitate re-dissemination by the media by means of, for example, press releases, readymade tables, charts, maps connected to statistics, metadata.</p> <p>QAF Method: 15.2.5 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	<p>Yes, fully implemented</p>
<p>Please specify (e.g. reference to the web page, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>Data are provided in searchable format.</p>	
<p>11. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?</p>	<p>No</p>

<p>Example of those activities, methods and tools:</p> <p>1. Various forms of dissemination are considered (e.g. optical discs, web-based tools and applications, hard copies) that would allow for better understanding and comparisons of particular results and would better facilitate their use in decision-making. (QAF Method: 15.2.6 at product/survey level)</p> <p>-single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	
<p>Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>Indicator 15.3: Custom-designed analyses are provided when feasible and the public is informed.</p> <p>12. The possibility and terms of custom-designed analyses are clearly communicated. QAF Method: 15.3.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	Not implemented
<p>Please specify (e.g. reference to the document, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>13. Custom-designed outputs are provided on request. QAF Method: 15.3.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	Not implemented
<p>Please specify (e.g. description of processes, examples of occurrence, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>14. Custom-designed analyses are made public where possible. QAF Method: 15.3.3 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	Not implemented
<p>Please specify (e.g. reference to the document, examples of occurrence, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>15. An information service is available to enable users to make requests for custom-designed analyses. QAF Method: 15.3.4 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	Not implemented
<p>Please specify (e.g. description of processes, reference to the contact information of the service, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>Indicator 15.4: Access to microdata is allowed for research purposes and is subject to specific rules or protocols. The answers to the methods related to this indicator maybe close to that under 5.6.</p> <p>16. Researchers are consulted about the rules or protocols for access to microdata, about their effectiveness and about the effective access. QAF Method: 15.4.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)</p>	Yes, fully implemented
<p>Please specify (e.g. description of processes, forms of consultation (user surveys, seminars, feedback given to user support, etc., obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)</p>	

The procedures for application and provision of access to information is defined in Chapter Three of Rules for provision of anonymized individual data for scientific and research purposes. Advising of the users on specific methodological issues and possibilities for preparation and execution of the application is conducted by the the department/departments which is/ are competent for the study. During a meeting the members of the Commission for access to anonymised data for scientific purposes may ask additional questions for clarification of user' application. <http://www.nsi.bg/bg/mode/575/> - (available in Bulgarian only)

17. The rules or protocols for access to microdata are made publicly available. QAF Method: 15.4.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
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Please specify (e.g. reference to the document, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(**compulsory**)

The Rules for provision of anonymized individual data for scientific and research purposes and the Appendixes are published on the website of NSI. <http://www.nsi.bg/bg/mode/575/> - (available in Bulgarian only)

18. Researchers are able to access microdata in a secure environment (e.g., Safe Centres). QAF Method: 15.4.3 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Not implemented
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Please specify (e.g. conditions for access, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(**compulsory**)

The National Statistical Institute has no Safe Center. At the moment only one research institution is certified by Eurostat for access to confidential data (American University).

19. Remote access facilities are available with appropriate controls. QAF Method: 15.4.4 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Not implemented
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Please specify (e.g. conditions for access, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(**compulsory**)

National Statistical Institute has no build data base for access to anonymized microdata. Software for giving the access to anonymized microdata is not introduced.

Indicator 15.5: Metadata are documented according to standardized metadata systems.	Yes, fully implemented
20. All statistical results are disseminated together with the respective metadata allowing for a better understanding of the results. QAF Method: 15.5.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	

Please specify (e.g. reference to statistical results and metadata, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(**compulsory**)

All statistical results are disseminated on the NSI website together with metadata (See: e.g. <http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/6610/fertility>).

21. Metadata are available and, if separate from the statistical product, clear links are presented. QAF Method: 15.5.2 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
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Please specify (e.g. reference to metadata, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(**compulsory**)

Metadata are available to all users of the NSI website under the respective heading with the statistical data. See e. g. link to data and metadata for Purchasing-power-parities <http://www.nsi.bg/en/node/5211> .

22a. Metadata are structured in accordance with European Standards. QAF Method: 15.5.3 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
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Please specify (e.g. list of standards, structure of metadata, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(**compulsory**)

Current metadata are partially compliant with the ESMS structure (13 of 21 concepts). Within the "Horizontal and vertical integration project: Implementing of technical and statistical standards in the European Statistical System" to develop national reference metadata

entirely ESMS structure, which will be published on the NSI's website. It aims at documenting methodologies, quality and the statistical production processes in general. It uses 21 high-level concepts, with a limited breakdown of sub-items, strictly derived from the list of cross domain concepts in the SDMX Content Oriented Guidelines (2009).

22b. Metadata are disseminated in accordance with European Standards. QAF Method: 15.5.3 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
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Please specify (e.g. description of processes, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

See answer to question 22.a.

23. Metadata of statistical results are available independently of the format of publication (e.g., online, hard copies). QAF Method: 15.5.4 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
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Please specify (e.g. description of the metadata database or information system, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

Metadata are available to all users of the NSI website. In execution of activities on project "Horizontal and vertical integration: Implementing of technical and statistical standards in the European Statistical System" a national metadata database will be built-up. This database is intended to be compatible with NRME (Eurostat tool).

24. Metadata are updated and procedures to ensure their updating are available. QAF Method: 15.5.5 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, fully implemented
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Please specify (e.g. frequency of updating, time of the last update, reference to processes, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

According to ESMS metadata structure any change will be reflected. Changes can have a different nature, such as a change in methodology, changes in collection and processing of data, change the responsible person, etc.

25. An information service/ call centre service is able to answer users' enquiries about metadata issues. QAF Method: 15.5.6 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Not implemented
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Please specify (e.g. description of processes, reference to the contact information of the centre, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

Specifically dedicated information center for issues related to metadata is not created. The information center will have an opportunity to direct users to the managers of specific statistical fields.

26. Training courses on metadata are provided for the staff. QAF Method: 15.5.7 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, partly implemented
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Please specify (e.g. frequency of training courses, number of participants, description of the training course, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open reply-(compulsory)

Training courses of the personnel at national level are not conducted, but the NSI's experts participated in a European training courses for metadata.

Indicator 15.6: Users are kept informed about the methodology of statistical processes including the use of administrative data.	Yes, partly implemented
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27. Standardized up-to-date user-oriented quality reports and methodological documents are produced. QAF Method: 15.6.1 at institutional level. -single choice reply-(compulsory)	
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Please specify (e.g. frequency of production, description of processes, obstacles and difficulties to implementation). -open

reply-(compulsory)	
Quality reports and methodological documents are prepared as part of statistical research in NSI.	
28. Are other activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?	Yes
<p>Example of those activities, methods and tools:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. User-oriented quality reports and methodological documents are made available to the public. (QAF Method: 15.6.2 at product/survey level) 	
-single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
The prepared reports and methodological documents are available to all users of the NSI's website.	
Indicator 15.7: Users are kept informed about the quality of statistical outputs with respect to the quality criteria for European Statistics.	No
29. Are any activities, methods or tools implemented within this indicator?	
<p>Examples of those activities, methods and tools:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. User-oriented quality reports on statistical outputs are made publicly available. (QAF Method: 15.7.1 at product/survey level) 2. User oriented quality reports are defined according to ESS standards and guidelines for quality reporting. (QAF Method: 15.7.2 at product/survey level) 	
-single choice reply-(compulsory)	
Please specify. -open reply-(compulsory)	
None.	
Strengths and weaknesses:	
30. Please state below the main area of strength with regard to your organization's approach towards Accessibility and Clarity of the statistical output. -open reply-(compulsory)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The forthcoming implementation of ESMS metadata structure; • Creating a database for reference metadata; • Publication of metadata available on the website of NSI thus available to all users of statistical information; • Publication on the website of the quality reports for part of the research. 	
31. Please state below the main area of weakness with regard to your organization's approach towards Accessibility and Clarity of the statistical output. -open reply-(compulsory)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partial implementation of ESMS structure (13 of the 21 concepts are implemented); • Lack of training courses at the national level. 	
Innovative practices:	
32. Please state below the innovative practices, i.e. genuinely new ways which have made a difference in implementing the CoP, with regard to Accessibility and Clarity within your organization and/or other initiatives beyond the QAF. -open reply-(compulsory)	
None.	
Development since the previous peer review:	

33. How do you assess the compliance with this principle by the NSI compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

Over the past five years there have been significant developments in the availability and distribution of metadata. The Quality reports are in standardized European format and the available ones are published on the NSI's website.

34. How do you assess the compliance with this principle by the national statistical system as a whole compared to 5 years ago? -open reply-(compulsory)

See answer to question 33.

Follow-up:

35. On the basis of the above mentioned indicators please list below actions you would like to take which are suited to improve the Accessibility and Clarity of the statistical output of your organization.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

• Creating a database for metadata - November 2014; • Publication of the references in the ESMS metadata format NSI website - November 2014; • Organizing courses for different groups of users;

36. Please identify below possible actions at the European level suited to improve the Accessibility and Clarity of the statistical output of your organization.

Actions and time frame -open reply-(compulsory)

None