Selection of Other National Authorities Taking Part in the Third Round of the ESS Peer Reviews – Procedures, Results and Analysis

1. Introduction

As agreed at the meeting of the ESS Committee in February 2021, Eurostat collects, analyses and validates the information on the selection process of the Other National Authorities (ONA) participating in the third round of the ESS peer reviews. The results of these analyses are shared with the members of the ESS Committee. The list of these ONAs is published on Eurostat's website and the present summary provides further transparency on the procedures and selection criteria used by the countries in identifying and selecting the ONAs for participation in the peer review.

By September 2022, Eurostat had asked all participating countries to provide information on the procedures and results of the selection process of the ONAs for participation in the peer review. Three of the countries (Estonia, the Netherlands and Liechtenstein) were excluded from the analysis and verification since they informed that there were no ONAs applicable or designated in their national statistical systems. Therefore, the analysis presented in this document is based on 28 selection procedures for ONAs.

In the analysis, several countries were re-contacted and asked for additional input due to some issues that were captured during the verification process:

- Discrepancies between the ONAs listed as part of the NSS in the explanatory note and the list maintained by Eurostat[1];
- Missing elements, insufficient description or limited argumentation in the explanatory note;
- Accounting discrepancies in annexed tables in the explanatory note where the total differed from the sum of its components.

Additional explanations were provided and, if necessary, the affected countries informed Eurostat that the necessary steps to update the list maintained by Eurostat would be taken.

2. Analysis and results

The statistical systems of the 28 countries consist on average of 10 ONAs (287 ONAs in total), with the number ranging from one to as much as 31 ONAs. Certain complexities were also identified within each system, for example as it is the case of Germany, where the 14 statistical offices of the Länder are considered as a single ONA for the purpose of the peer review, similarly to the approach in the second round of ESS peer reviews.

In total 87 ONAs were designated by their NSIs to take part in the peer review. These accounted for 30% of all ONAs. The NSIs tended to select 3 participating ONAs, which is the minimum number according to the endorsed methodology. There were also six NSIs, which designated 4 participating ONAs each and one other NSI designated all its 5 ONAs. None of the countries selected the
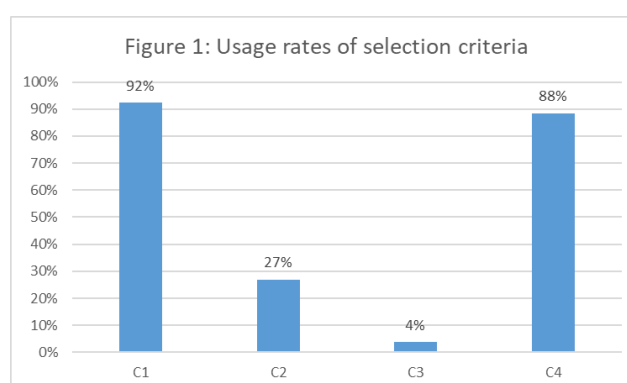
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[1] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/european-statistical-system

maximum number of 6 participating ONAs. In addition, one of the countries selected only 2 ONAs (i.e. less than the approved minimum) and provided an additional justification according to the adopted peer reviews methodology.

In the methodology for the ESS peer reviews, four criteria for selecting ONAs are mentioned and it is recommended, but not obligatory, that at least two of these are used in the selection:

- C1: Importance for European statistics, measured by a percentage threshold of producing European statistics;
- C2: Importance for European statistics, measured by its significance;
- C3: Degree of compliance with ES CoP by an ONA;
- C4: Importance of an ONA from the perspective of the NSI.

On average, the countries were using two criteria for their ONA selection, with Figure 1 showing the usage rate for each individual criterion.

Figure 1: Usage rates of selection criteria

As can be seen from the chart, most of the countries used criteria C1 and C4, thus combining quantitative and qualitative reasons in their selection. Only a few countries opted for the resource-oriented criterion C2, while only in one case criterion C3 was used.

With regard to the final outcome of the selection, the ONAs designated to take part in the third round of ESS peer reviews were most often from the following sectors: Social protection (including health), Economy, Environment and Agriculture. These accounted for more than half of the participating ONAs.

3. Conclusions

Based on the analysis above, the following conclusions could be drawn:

1. C1 and C4 were the most widely used selection criteria;
2. Criterion C3 was not considered useful by NSIs as a mean to select the participating ONAs;
3. The NSIs tended to select the participating number of ONAs around the recommended minimum and rarely slightly above;
4. Selected ONAs are in most cases from either Social protection (including health), Economy, Environment or Agriculture public sectors.