

Eurostat's quality policy

Quality as the trademark of European statistics

The commitment to quality is at the heart of the work of Eurostat. As the statistical office of the European Union, Eurostat's mission is to provide high-quality statistics for Europe. In fact, quality is the trademark of European statistics which are unique in providing reliable, comparable statistics at EU level.

Moreover, in the current social climate of disinformation, it is even more essential for Eurostat to continue providing high-quality data that can be trusted. These data therefore must be independent of all political or other influences, accurate and based on factual information. As such, the aim of this quality policy is to demonstrate how the quality of European statistics is ensured through the quality framework of Eurostat and its practical implementation. In doing so, the Eurostat quality policy aspires to maintain and reinforce the trust of the general public in its data, and subsequently in the EU policies which are based on and monitored by European statistics.

In order to produce European statistics, Eurostat is partnered by the statistical authorities of the European Union and the European Free Trade Area. Together they form the European Statistical System (ESS). Therefore, this quality policy for Eurostat goes beyond the institution itself; it also comprises elements applicable to the ESS as a whole.

The quality policy is based on the [European Statistics Code of Practice](#) and has four levels of quality assurance (see Figure 1 below).

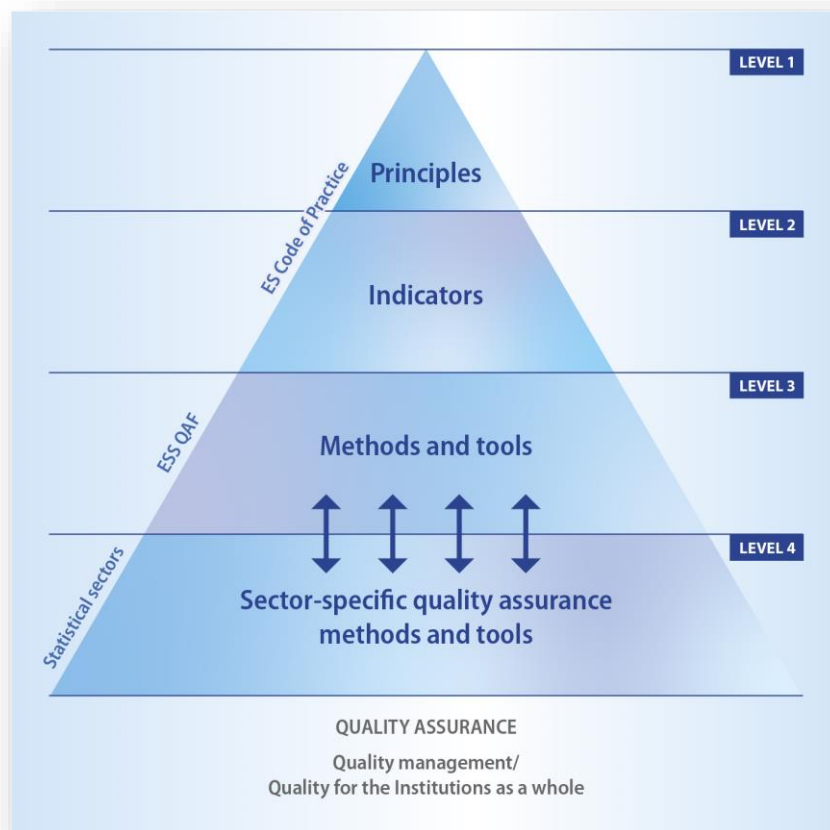


Figure 1: The four levels of quality assurance

Through its 16 Principles and 84 Indicators, the ES Code of Practice provides the two highest levels of quality assurance, encompassing the quality of the institutional environment as well of the statistical processes and outputs.

On the third level, the ES Code of Practice is supported by the [European Statistical System Quality Assurance Framework](#) (ESS QAF) which provides good practice, methods and tools for the practical implementation of the ES Code of Practice.

On the fourth level, the quality of statistical processes and outputs is assessed and reported, based on standardised rules and reporting structures as defined in the [ESS Handbook on Quality and Metadata Reports](#). These quality reports, compiled for the individual statistical datasets, provide important information for users on the methods for data collection and validation, both at national and European levels.

These four levels of quality assurance are applicable not only in Eurostat, but in the ESS as a whole. In addition, the rules for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics are laid down in [Regulation \(EC\) No 223/2009](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council.

However, Eurostat has further domain-specific tools for monitoring the quality of the statistical processes and their outputs. This quality assurance work is carried out centrally through regular quality reviews of the statistical production processes. In addition, the statisticians have integrated various quality assurance measures into their day-to-day business. This can take the form of manuals, guidelines, handbooks, process descriptions, production and data validation procedures and standards, amongst others.

The quality policy, anchored in these four levels of quality assurance and in [Regulation \(EC\) No 223/2009](#), aims to ensure, and continuously improve, the quality of European statistics whilst verifying that they meet user needs. However, the quality policy goes beyond Eurostat and the ESS - it aims to promote best statistical practices on an international level. This internal/external approach to quality assurance is achieved through four main axes of work:

- Continuously implementing quality standards in Eurostat, the ESS and in third countries: ESS Working Groups in the different statistical domains; grants and statistical quality projects with ESS and third countries;
- Continuously coordinating, communicating and promoting ESS quality standards in Europe and beyond: reaching out to support the setting of standards at international and at regional levels; organising and participating in European and international conferences, seminars, exchanges with academia;
- Further developing quality standards for the ESS: cooperating with the EU Member States, EFTA countries and academia;
- Ensuring the relevance of European statistics to fulfil user needs: hearings with the Directorates-General within the Commission; carrying out user satisfaction surveys; remaining flexible to react to new and urgent needs.

Eurostat also monitors the quality of “other statistics” (those produced by Commission services other than Eurostat) through the implementation of the Reference Quality Framework for statistics produced by Commission services.

The quality policy is driven centrally in Eurostat by a dedicated Quality Team, supported by the Coordination Group on Quality, a cross-cutting body with a consultative function on quality matters. Both

the Quality Team and all statisticians within Eurostat can bring quality matters to the Coordination Group for its advice and guidance.

In the broader ESS context, quality work is supported by the ESS Working Group on Quality in Official Statistics, who often collaborate with Eurostat on quality-driven projects. However, all new quality initiatives at a European level must first be endorsed by the European Statistical System Committee (ESSC) before their implementation.

These European quality initiatives include the [ESS Peer Reviews](#) where the compliance with the ES Code of Practice of each national statistical system, as well as Eurostat, is assessed by a team of European experts. Based on these assessments, recommendations for improvement actions are made. The implementation of these improvement actions are monitored on an annual basis by Eurostat. The third round of ESS Peer Reviews takes place from 2021-2023 and is managed by Eurostat under the supervision of the ESSC.

Eurostat is committed to continuous improvement and, in the future, will further develop and implement new tools in cooperation with the ESS to ensure the quality of European statistics and thus continue to merit the trust of its users.

We provide high quality statistics and data on Europe