

## Concept note

### **Seminar on 'Assessing National Statistical Systems – Experiences from Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean' Luxembourg, 20-21 July 2015**

#### **1. Background**

The assessment of a National Statistical System towards its compliance with a certain set of principles (the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics or the LAC Code of Practice or the European Statistics Code of Practice) is an essential element of designing and introducing an all-encompassing system of quality management for a given statistical office, since it provides a basis for assessing strengths and weakness of the system that can be used to develop a quality management system and identify improvement plans.

In the European Statistical System (ESS), the Quality Assurance Framework is based on the European Statistics Code of Practice, which includes 15 principles allowing analysing in a comprehensive way the National Statistical System and its institutional environment, statistical processes and statistical outputs.

In order to assess the compliance of the National Statistical Systems of the EU member states and EFTA countries with the principles of the Code of Practice, self-assessments and peer reviews are used, resulting in reports outlining recommendations for improvement and stimulating the development of improvement action plans. A first round of peer reviews was carried out in the ESS in 2006-2008; a second round started in 2014 and will be concluded in 2015.

The experience of the European Statistics Code of Practice is becoming a useful reference also in other regions of the world, inspiring the establishment of similar quality frameworks. In the case of Latin America and the Caribbean, Eurostat has shared its experience in relation to the design and implementation of the Code of Practice with ECLAC and its members, through two workshops held in Luxembourg in 2009 and 2010. This good cooperation contributed to the preparation of the Regional Code of Good Practices in Statistics for Latin America and the Caribbean, which was approved by the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC in November 2011.

Following the approval of the Code of Practice in Latin America and the Caribbean, ECLAC members have been working to reflect on possible steps for the implementation of the Code and the monitoring of the compliance with its principles. In this context, 8 countries from the region have volunteered for being assessed against the Code in 2014 and 2015.

#### **2. Objectives**

The main objective of the seminar will be to highlight the benefits of assessments in general, to discuss on how to integrate them into an overall quality management system and to encourage a culture of continuous improvements.

Through this seminar, Eurostat and ECLAC wish to cooperate for sharing the experiences of both regions in assessing National Statistical Systems, through ESS peer reviews and assessments of the 8 volunteer countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. The seminar will be an opportunity for experts from both regions to reflect together on the lessons learned, to look for commonalities in the approaches, to share knowledge on methodological aspects and to identify possible common actions in the future.

Furthermore, the seminar will also be used to discuss some existing tools available at international level to analyse/assess the capacities and outputs of National Statistical Systems. These tools include for example Eurostat's Snapshot tool and the TASC tool of the IADB and UN Census Bureau. They can be helpful in providing a clear picture of the state-of-play of a statistical system and its needs for statistical capacity building and – based on this assessment - help design improvement actions and programmes. The seminar will look in particular at how synergies among these tools can be achieved and what their relevance is in the context of Latin America and the Caribbean. Furthermore, discussions will also cover the tool used for the assessment of the Code of Practice in LAC.

The seminar will be carried out through presentations of experts from both regions, who will share their experience in assessing National Statistical Systems, for example from the point of view of the reviewer, observer or the reviewed institution. Group discussions will be also used to stimulate interactions.

### 3. Target participants

The seminar is intended for top managers in national statistical institutes from Latin America and the Caribbean, who have started reflecting on / are developing a quality management system, or who have experienced an assessment as a reviewed institution. Experts who participated in assessments of National Statistical Systems in Europe or Latin America and the Caribbean, as reviewers or observers, will also attend, as well as experts from Eurostat, Enlargement countries, ECLAC and other international partners, such as the IADB.

### 4. Tentative programme

<b>DAY 1</b>
<b>Introduction</b>
<p><b>Session 1 – Quality frameworks in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean:</b></p> <p><b>The European Statistics Code of Practice</b>  <i>The Code of Practice as the quality framework of the European Statistical System (ESS), an overview of its development, principles and indicators.</i></p> <p><b>The peer reviews in the ESS</b>  <i>The peer reviews as a tool to check the implementation of the Code of Practice, with an overview of the methodology. Basic information on the second round of the ESS peer reviews.</i></p> <p><b>The Regional Code of Good Practices in Statistics for Latin America and the Caribbean</b>  <i>The Code of Practice of ECLAC, an overview of its development, principles and indicators.</i></p> <p><b>The peer reviews in Latin America and the Caribbean</b>  <i>The peer reviews of 8 volunteer countries as a possible tool to check the implementation of the ECLAC Code of Practice. An overview of the methodology used in the 8 volunteer countries.</i></p>
<p><b>Session 2 – Sharing experience between Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean:</b></p> <p><b>Case study on the ESS peer reviews</b>  <i>Practical experiences from countries in Europe, for example from the point of view of the reviewer, of</i></p>

*the reviewed and of the observer.*

**Lessons learned from the second round of the ESS peer reviews**

*Some preliminary conclusions from the experience of the second round.*

**Case study on the peer reviews in Latin America and the Caribbean**

*Practical experiences from countries in Latin America, for example from the point of view of the reviewer and of the reviewed.*

**Lessons learned from the peer reviews in Latin America and the Caribbean**

*Conclusions from the experience of the programme concerning 8 volunteer countries.*

**DAY 2**

**Session 3 – Other tools to assess National Statistical Systems:**

**Tools available at international and regional level**

*Overview of the main features of tools, such as the Snapshot, TASC, LAC Code of Good Practice assessment tool, etc.*

**Synergies among tools**

*Analysis of main similarities, differences and possible synergies among the various tools existing at international level, including how they could possibly complement what is going on in Latin America and the Caribbean.*

**Session 4 – How to progress with the implementation of the Code of Practice in Latin America and the Caribbean?**

*This session could be carried out through group discussions reflecting on what lessons from the seminar could benefit the future work in Latin America and the Caribbean, for example in terms of tools, promoting a quality culture, conducting new assessments, etc.*

**Conclusion**

**5. Further information**

Eurostat can cover participation costs (travel, accommodation and per diem) for delegates from the national statistical institutes of Latin America and the Caribbean, for a maximum of approximately 28 persons.

For the organisation of this seminar, Eurostat will be assisted by the company ICON-INSTITUT from Germany.

Interpretation English-Spanish will be available during the seminar. Seminar documentation will include PowerPoint presentations available in English and papers in English and Spanish. Authors for papers and presentations will be contacted individually by Eurostat.