

Members of the Peer review team:

Heinrich Brünger, UNECE (chair)
Claudia Cingolani, ISTAT, Italy
Michail Skaliotis, EUROSTAT

**Peer review on the implementation
of the
European Statistics Code of Practice**

Country visited: Romania

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Main findings (including an assessment of the co-ordination role of the National Statistical Institute):

The National Institute for Statistics in Romania (INS) has reached a remarkable level of professionalism and user-orientation in its role as main producer and disseminator of official statistics in Romania. INS enjoys a high level of trust from various user communities and respondents. It has used the accession process to the EU to increase its status and visibility at national level, and is now considered as one of the government organisations that has made greatest progress in implementing EU standards. The high level of trust is relatively recent, and is the consequence of a sustained INS policy of openness at all levels that has accompanied the statistics part of the accession process, and of the demonstrated ability to keep commitments on delivering in time and in substance. The openness of INS is also demonstrated by its willingness to subscribe to an ambitious list of improvement actions over and above the already high level of overall achievement.

As regards the activities of INS, the Law on Statistics, created 1992 and amended several times since, is fully in compliance with the requirements of the European Statistics Code of Practice concerning principles 1 to 6 and 15. A revised version, to be passed by Parliament soon, addresses the remaining gaps with respect to the activities outside the INS and the coordination role of INS, and adds institutional safeguards for the INS and its president concerning independence and impartiality. The present law, as well as the lower level legal acts about annual statistical programmes, are sufficient to provide the data collection activities carried out by INS with the necessary degree of legitimacy, which is translated into a generally high response rate in surveys. On the other hand, access to administrative data for INS needs to become more systematic, especially concerning transmission of microdata to INS. The issue of confidentiality is addressed in the law and in practice in a very coherent and satisfactory way. For both legal and resource reasons, the coordination function of INS is presently carried out in a very partial and unsystematic way only, and this in spite of the many interactions INS maintains with other government departments in their functions as users or as providers of data to INS, and of the positive attitude of other producers to a strengthened coordination role of INS.

INS is a well organised agency with a high number of territorial offices at two geographical levels (region and county). INS faces a number of problems that concern the level of staff resources to a certain extent, but even more the structure of staff and the conditions to recruit and retain good quality staff. Qualified IT staff is a serious bottleneck for INS in gradually changing the present well functioning but too diverse IT tools, so as to make it less dependent on tailor-made in-house software developments for specific surveys. The existing level of staff resources is only sufficient for carrying out the statistical programme when stretched beyond the limit, but does not leave space for either coping with new requirements at EU level or launching cross-cutting investments such as the redesign of production processes to improve productivity. Various users expressed needs for additional information that cannot be met presently, but it might be possible to meet some of them without additional data collection from respondents. Great assets of INS are the National Center for Training in Statistics, which is a specially funded subsidiary of INS, and the excellent cooperation with universities and the wider research community. Staff in INS are well motivated and consider their jobs as offering interesting new challenges and opportunities for international contacts. There is a strong

corporate identity among INS staff, in spite of limited possibilities of interaction for staff from different subject-area departments.

With the notable exception of timeliness and punctuality, which are strictly monitored and adhered to, the wider concept of quality management needs to be better anchored in the everyday work of staff, and the existing commitment of the senior management to quality issues be spread to all staff in a way that is targeted to their responsibilities. Existing mechanisms, such as the internal auditing of processes, need to be complemented by additional mechanisms for staff from various production lines to learn from each other. One reason for the lack of quality culture is also the strong emphasis on the production and dissemination processes laid down in a legally binding form through the annual programmes, and the consequent lack of time necessary for staff to be able to analyse the data from the quality and coherence points of view.

Recently, INS has made great efforts to improve networks with users and the user-friendliness of products and services. Staff have been successfully trained to adopt a service and transparency culture towards users and respondents. This has increased the satisfaction of users and greatly contributed to a better perception of INS, notably the positive attitude of media. It is a deliberate policy of the INS to interpret impartiality in a very strict way so as not to allow any form of interpretation of data in releases; occasional analytical products exist (more frequent at regional than at central level), but are not very visible. In spite of this limitation, the present level is an excellent basis for further extensions, e.g. concerning the inclusion in modern forms of dissemination of an increasing part of results of official statistics (and their metadata) from as many subject areas as possible.

2. INTRODUCTION

With the adoption of the European Statistics Code of Practice, the Statistical Programme (SPC) committed itself to adhering to its principles. At its meeting on 25 May 2005, the SPC endorsed a stepwise monitoring procedure for the implementation of the Code over three years during which countries' self-assessments should be combined with elements of peer review, benchmarking and monitoring on the basis of the explanatory indicators added to each principle of the Code.

During December 2005/January 2006 the National Statistical Institutes and Eurostat have completed their self-assessments, the results have been summarised by Eurostat in a report submitted to the Economic and Financial Committee in May 2006 which has been published on the Eurostat website.

As a next step towards implementation of the Code, the European Statistical System is organising peer reviews to complement the self-assessments starting with 2006. They are considered a vital element for the implementation of the Code of Practice given their capacity to encourage the sharing of best practice and to contribute to transparency in what is, essentially, a self-regulatory approach. This approach is designed to enhance accountability and to help building trust in the integrity of the European Statistical System, its processes and outputs.

The Code of Practice peer reviews follow a common methodology focusing on the institutional environment and dissemination part of the Code comprising the following principles: (1) Professional independence, (2) Mandate for data collection, (3) Adequacy of resources, (4) Quality commitment, (5) Statistical confidentiality, (6) Impartiality and Objectivity and (15) Accessibility and Clarity. In principle, the peer review is limited to the National Statistical

Institute and its co-ordination role within a dispersed national statistical system. A short document provided by the National Statistical Institute which summarises key aspects of the functioning of the national statistical system is published together with this report.

During a three days visit on-site and on the basis of information material provided by the National Statistical Institute and Eurostat prior to the review, peer reviews yield a report assessing compliance with the Code of Practice at indicator level and by principle following a four point assessment scale. The report includes a refined set of improvement actions covering all principles of the Code which are being used to feed the monitoring process of the implementation of the Code in the European Statistical System.

While the peer reviewers will undertake to base their assessment to the extent possible on factual information, it is worth noting some of the limitations of the peer review process. For example, peer reviewers are dependent upon the resources made available to them (though experienced reviewers can be expected to identify where appropriate information is not forthcoming). In addition these reviews are conducted on a strategic, organisation-wide and system wide basis. Accordingly it is not straightforward to ascertain that certain practices or behaviours or systems operate in all statistical domains.

3. FINDINGS PER PRINCIPLE

Principle 1: Professional Independence

The 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.

Overall assessment: INS (the National Institute of Statistics of Romania) has a strong legal foundation from which it derives its professional independence. The Government Ordinance 9/1992 on the organisation of official statistics <http://www.insse.ro/cms/files/legislatie/ordonanta%20nr9.pdf> and its subsequent modifications and additions http://www.insse.ro/cms/rw/pages/legislatie/cadru_leg.en.do constitute the basic legal act (Statistical Law). Users underlined that the current high level of public trust in official statistics is the result of INS's hard work and professionalism during the last two decades, and especially in recent years.

Indicator 1.1: The independence of the statistical authority from political and other external interference in producing and disseminating official statistics is specified in law.

Fully met

Comments: The non-interference of policy, political, regulatory and other interest groups is clearly stated in Article 5(2) of the Government Ordinance 9/1992: 'According to the autonomy principle, the National Institute of Statistics is authorised to establish – in an impartial and independent manner, free from any pressure from the Government, political parties, ethnic groups, trade unions, employers organisations and other organisations or natural persons – systems of indicators, nomenclatures, classifications, methodologies, registration and processing techniques, to publish and disseminate statistical data and information'. Users confirmed that INS is enjoying a high level of trust and credibility among the Romanian society.

Indicator 1.2: The head of the statistical authority has sufficiently high hierarchical standing to ensure senior level access to policy authorities and administrative public bodies. He/She should be of the highest professional calibre.

Largely met

Comments: INS is headed by a President who is a Secretary of State but he/she is not a Member of the Government. The appointment (and dismissal) of the President is made by the Prime Minister and the relevant act is published in the Official Journal of Romania. The President of INS reports to the Prime Minister through the General Secretariat of the Government; this arrangement is considered better than reporting to a Minister because it ensures greater stability, neutrality and continuity in the relations of INS with the Government. The President is present in the media and he is a recognised public figure. While –in the law currently in force- there are no specific provisions regarding the qualifications of the President, in practice, all Presidents since 1990 have been PhD holders in Economics, and the majority among them had substantial relevant professional experience. Similarly, the Statistical Law does not include specifications regarding the duration of service, reappointment and reasons for termination. Most of these weaknesses are addressed to a certain extent in the new draft law on the organisation and functioning of official statistics in Romania (presently under the endorsement procedure at the ministries; expected to be adopted in 2008). In particular, the length of service is proposed to be 5 years (avoiding having the same length as the Government) with the possibility of only one re-appointment. It is the opinion of the Peer Review team that a future revision / amendment of the Statistical Law should include further clarifications regarding the required qualifications and the selection procedure for the appointment of the President.

Indicator 1.3: The head of the statistical authority and, where appropriate, the heads of its statistical bodies have responsibility for ensuring that European Statistics are produced and disseminated in an independent manner.

Fully met

Comments: All statistical activities of INS form part of the Annual Programme of Statistical Surveys, which is executed in an independent and transparent manner. The Peer Review Team gathered enough evidence that these responsibilities are exercised in a professional and impartial way, independent of any third-party influence. EU statistics (those based on legislation and those based on gentlemen agreements) are included in this programme.

Statistics activities by other producers are included in the programme in so far they are linked to specific data collection activities. The statistical law assigns the responsibility of coordination to the INS (see comments in chapter 4).

Indicator 1.4: The head of the statistical authority and, where appropriate, the heads of its statistical bodies have the sole responsibility for deciding on statistical methods, standards and procedures, and on the content and timing of statistical releases.

Fully met

Comments: The Statistical Law (GO 9/1992 <http://www.insse.ro/cms/files/legislatie/ordonanta%20nr9.pdf>) provides an explicit and clear mandate to INS in this regard (see comments on 1.1). In practice, this mandate is carried out in an exemplary and effective way with the systematic advisory involvement of the Methodological Endorsement Committee (CAM) and the Council for the Co-ordination of Statistical Activity (CCAS). It is important to underline that final decision regarding methodology and

dissemination issues rests always with INS. Members of the CCAS and INS expressed their satisfaction with the current functioning of the CCAS. Other national producers of official statistics can benefit from the methodological advice provided by INS.

Indicator 1.5: The statistical work programmes are published and periodic reports describe progress made.

Fully met

Comments: INS has a formal legal obligation to adopt and publish an annual work programme (Chapter 2 of the Statistical Law, Art. 7, 8, 9). It is called 'Annual Programme of Statistical Surveys', and following its adoption by a specific Government Decision, it is posted on the web site of INS (<http://www.insse.ro/cms/rw/resource/pcs2007.doc?download=true>). A systematic monitoring of work-progress, at an operational level, is carried out on a weekly basis. An annual Activity Report, describing the execution of the work programme, is published in Romanian and English, both on paper and on the web <http://www.insse.ro/cms/rw/pages/raportINS2006.en.do>. Both the draft annual programme and the ex-post activity report are discussed with the CCAS.

The (new) draft legislation on the organisation and functioning of Romanian official statistics stipulates that INS should also develop multi-annual statistical programmes for the period covered by the strategy (Art. 9 of draft legislation). INS already has experience in developing multi-annual strategy documents (http://www.insse.ro/cms/rw/resource/strategia_dedezv.pdf?download=true) and it is expected that they will also be successful in multi-annual programming and monitoring of progress.

Indicator 1.6: Statistical releases are clearly distinguished and issued separately from political/policy statements.

Fully met

Comments: Statistical releases are factual and do not contain any political or policy comments. The Peer Review team gathered substantial evidence on this issue by studying a number of press releases from INS's archive (<http://www.insse.ro/cms/rw/pages/listaArhivaCom.en.do>) and through discussions and interviews with major stakeholders. Moreover, the post-release embargo of 1 hour in the form of a 'gentlemen's agreement' with the media is functioning well. INS has a logo of its own, distinct from the logo of the Government.

Indicator 1.7: The statistical authority, when appropriate, comments publicly on statistical issues, including criticisms and misuses of official statistics.

Fully met

Comments: INS permanently monitors – through its Press Office - media reactions to the statistical press releases and publications. In the event of serious misuse, criticism or misinterpretation, INS's leadership (usually the President) reacts immediately either via a Press Conference or a press release. It is believed that the risk of misuses of official statistics can be kept to minimum levels by providing comprehensive and clear documentation (metadata) and objective analyses. Results are less contested in recent years compared to 5 years ago.

Principle 2: Mandate for Data Collection

Statistical authorities must 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.

Overall assessment: The mandate for data collection by INS given through the statistical law and the statistical programme is entirely sufficient for statistical surveys, but the means to enforce response from some type of economic actors are not sufficient. The statistical law also provides a sufficient basis for access by INS to administrative data sources, but there is a potential of using this source that has either not been explored or been met with resistance. The revision of the statistical law is meant to address the outstanding problems in the area of data collection.

Indicator 2.1: The mandate to collect information for the production and dissemination of official statistics is specified in law.

Fully met

Comments: Chapter 3 of the Statistical Law regulates data collection for the whole statistical system. Being at regulation level only in the beginning, this legal act has been upgraded in 1994 to the level of a law. This upgrading is essential to withstand existing and possible new provisions in other legal acts that may contradict some of the provisions in the statistical law. With the exception of censuses, which are based on specific laws, all statistical surveys carried out by INS are based on this law, mediated by the annual statistical programmes that have the form of lower-level legal acts. The statistical law also authorises INS to recruit temporary staff for surveys, or even outsource some parts of surveys to contractors.

There is a specific article in the law (article 12) granting INS access to all administrative data necessary for official statistics. These activities are also included in the annual programmes.

The presently valid law from 1994 is in revision, with the revised text expected to be passed by the Parliament in the near future.

Indicator 2.2: The statistical authority is allowed by national legislation to use administrative records for statistical purposes.

Partly met

Comments: In spite of article 12 in the statistical law, and in spite of the fact that no provision in another law contradicts article 12, access to administrative data for INS has not been implemented to the full possible extent. INS has not been able to obtain access to identifiers of the population register (which would be important in the context of the next population census), nor to any individual characteristics from administrative sources kept by the ministry of labour on social security, pensions, and wages. INS has not had the resources so far to systematically evaluate all administrative sources for their potential use in official statistics, so for some potentially relevant sources no request for access has been formulated.

Where access is implemented, this is always based on protocols signed by the INS and the source ministry or agency, which are negotiated bilaterally (<http://www.insse.ro/cms/rw/pages/conventiiColaborare.en.do>). In some cases, data transmission is limited to aggregate data. The revision of the statistical law will reinforce the position of INS with respect to the access of INS even in cases where there is resistance from the data owner. More use of administrative sources was also proposed by representatives of

companies to reduce response burden caused by INS statistical surveys, which are seen as duplicative with administrative data collections addressed to the same companies by other government departments.

Indicator 2.3: On the basis of a legal act, the statistical authority may compel response to statistical surveys.

Largely met

Comments: All statistical surveys included in the annual programme are compulsory for respondents. Only replies to sensitive characteristics of natural persons (listed in art.11, paragraph 4 of the statistical law) such as health remain optional for response. All surveys are designed for results not only at national level, but also at a defined regional level (region or county, for exhaustive surveys even at a more detailed level), and companies have to report most characteristics with break-downs by region (which in some cases are not kept in the records of the companies). When companies have problems in replying, there is a help desk organisation in the INS that is flexible and tries to accommodate. On request, companies can receive and send back forms electronically in a safe way.

With the exception of some multi-nationals, non-reponse has not been a problem so far for INS. Sanctions for non-compliance by respondents are provided in the law, but they are only used as ultimate means. However, the maximum level of fines does not seem to be a deterrent for some subsidiaries of multi-national companies, which prefer to pay rather than to provide the information. The revision of the statistical law will address this problem.

Principle 3: Adequacy of Resources

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

Overall assessment: INS has a responsive, motivated and well educated staff. However, the high levels of staff turnover, especially among the highly qualified, constitute a major threat which undermines the capability of the Institute to cope with increasing requirements in the work programme and the emerging new obligations from EU legislation. Attention is also drawn to the need to rationalise IT applications.

Indicator 3.1: Staff, financial, and computing resources, adequate both in magnitude and in quality, are available to meet current European Statistics needs.

Partly met

Comments: All users and major stakeholders have underlined that “keeping skilled staff members in INS is a serious concern that has to be addressed very soon”. For a number of years INS has been a “net knowledge provider” to other sectors of the Romanian labour market. On average, during the last two years, 5% of the total number of employees left INS for reasons other than retirement. A typical new recruit, a university graduate, will receive several years experience with INS and very good training opportunities at the National Statistical Training Centre (NSTC), resulting in enhanced possibilities for a better paid job in other sectors of the economy. One of the main reasons for such a high staff turnover is the relatively low level of salaries. Another reason is the unattractiveness of the civil servants' promotion system for highly qualified people. It is expected that the new draft law regarding the establishment of the unitary salary system and of other rights of public officers' will eliminate some of the current imbalances in this regard.

With a total number of 1948 officials in 2006, INS is in a relatively weak position to cope effectively with additional requirements, and in particular with the increasing demands from EU legislation. It is the opinion of the Peer Review team, as well as of the users and stakeholders of official Romanian statistics, that the human resources available to INS should follow a path of sustained increase over the next years.

INS is aware of the need to rationalise its IT applications and adopt solutions which have wider usage. This issue will be addressed within the framework of a renewed multi-annual IT strategy, the implementation of which will also provide an opportunity to re-examine and streamline the entire spectrum of business processes within INS.

Indicator 3.2: The scope, detail and cost of European Statistics are commensurate with needs.

For European level reply

Indicator 3.3: Procedures exist to assess and justify demands for new European Statistics against their cost.

For European level reply

Indicator 3.4: Procedures exist to assess the continuing need for all European Statistics, to see if any can be discontinued or curtailed to free up resources.

For European level reply

Principle 4: Quality commitment

All ESS members commit themselves to work and co-operate according to the principles fixed in the Quality Declaration of the European Statistical System.

Overall assessment: The principles set out in the ESS Quality Declaration have been taken over in the strategies of the INS and in the annual activity reports that are established by INS on objectives, priorities and main actions performed. A specific chapter in the report is devoted to the "Quality of Statistical System"; and the ESS Quality Declaration is also used as benchmark for training courses organized by the National Statistical Training Centre (NSTC) for the internal staff and for the staff of the other producers of official statistics.

The Development Strategy of the National Statistical System for the years 2007-2013 highlights that quality in statistics is the main objective of the statistical system for use both at national and international level, and it stresses the need for the adoption of the Total Quality Management as a more comprehensive approach to be achieved in the near future. The implementation of the TQM is foreseen for the next years in the frame of the PHARE programme 2006.

Although the reference to quality issues is regularly present in the documentation on current activity and on future strategy of INS, quality commitment seems not yet to be fully integrated in the management and implementation of statistical products and processes. The lack of qualified human resources and their high mobility is a critical factor for the development of a quality control system within the organization. Moreover, the lack of a methodological unit as a centralized structure for the development and coordination of methods and tools on quality does not facilitate the integration and standardization of the processes among the production units. Documentation on products and processes is not yet conducted in a systematic way and there is not a centralized information system for metadata and quality indicators. Dissemination of statistical culture on quality is in progress as well as an increasing focus on

users to meet their needs and to improve the transparency and relevance of the released information.

Indicator 4.1 Product quality is regularly monitored according to the ESS quality components.

Partly met

Comments: With the exception of timeliness and punctuality, product quality according to the ESS quality components is not regularly monitored for all the statistical products simultaneously with the production process. The monitoring of quality, carried out for a limited number of statistical data, is mostly related to the need of meeting the requirements for ex-post quality reports laid down in the European Regulations instead of responding to a real-time quality control system of the output as regular practice within the INS. The assessment of some quality requirement as ex-post validation of the accuracy has been conducted in 2006 by means of quality reports drafted only for specific outputs requested by European legislation (Labour Cost index, Vocational Training Survey, etc) or on experimental basis for other statistical products (waste statistics, business statistics, etc.). However it has also to be noted that INS policy is to give great visibility to these quality reports through public dissemination both inside and outside INS.

Indicator 4.2 Processes are in place to monitor the quality of the collection, processing and dissemination of statistics.

Largely met

Comments: Quality of statistical production processes is monitored for most surveys, but the procedures and methods used for assessing all the phases of the production cycle are based on internal auditing and self-assessment and not on a quality indicators system. Standardized tools to measure the process variables and to promote the control of quality are not yet broadly applied. Data collection is based on traditional methods and also on electronic assisted procedures (CAPI, CATI, CAWI) but data processing could benefit from the use of more standardized IT tools. At the moment only 15 statistical surveys are monitored by the check list. However, it is recognized that the implementation of a quality control system is under way and that INS is oriented to extend gradually this practice to other surveys. There is a strong commitment to this objective.

Indicator 4.3 Processes are in place to deal with quality considerations, including trade-offs within quality, and to guide planning for existing and emerging surveys.

Largely met

Comments: The improvement of timely statistics in the management of quality approach is crucial for the INS. It is evident that timeliness is a basic requirement in the vision of the INS, in setting priorities and in the management of the statistical processes. This statement is clearly mentioned in the law which requests INS to disseminate statistical data within the deadlines set out in the annual program and in compliance with the timetable for the dissemination of official statistical databases (art. 20). To this extent internal rules regarding the drafting, printing and dissemination of statistical tools are clearly defined in order to increase the responsibility of all the persons in charge to the statistical production. A schedule of performance deadlines is a basic element for a rigorous approach to the planning process.

From the institutional and organizational point of view the existence of two consultative bodies, the Council of Coordination of Statistical Activity (CCSA) and the Methodological Endorsement Committee (MEC), represents a very systematic guarantee for promoting surveys coherent with users' needs (CCSA) and adopting appropriate methodologies (MEC). As professional

authority in charge of the endorsement of methodological projects and organization of surveys, MEC gives opinion on technical aspects related to new activities to be implemented and on instructions about how to fill in questionnaires and guidelines for statistical surveys.

Indicator 4.4 Quality guidelines are documented and staff is well trained. These guidelines are spelled out in writing and made known to the public.

Partly met

Comments: According to the "unitary rules regarding the drafting and editing of statistical surveys methodologies" standardized forms are followed by the INS to describe in a coherent and unitary way to staff and users all the relevant aspects related to the general framework, the techniques and the organization, the data processing and the IT system description of a statistical surveys. Such methodological note is a current practice to support the presentation of statistical surveys, but in the INS documentation there is no evidence of any handbook on quality as a generalized tool for all statistical surveys as well as of any quality guidelines for specific statistical surveys. Training activity is a core business for the INS but training programme 2006 and 2007 does not include any course on this specific subject matter. The documentation requirements are mainly seen as ex-ante planning tools for those that are responsible for new or revised activities, e.g. for preparing the above-mentioned form for the approval of new methodologies; there is not a strong interaction between the different production sectors in this respect. As a consequence, documentation and dissemination of quality guidelines for the statistical processes are not well developed and do not appear as part of an integrated information system.

Indicator 4.5 There is a regular and thorough review of the key statistical outputs using external experts where appropriate.

Partly met

Comments: The review of key statistical outputs by external experts is not a current practice although body as the MEC and also close relationship with academic community in planning new surveys and defining appropriate methodology can be considered a good practice of ex-ante assessment of a statistical activity. In the last years INS has been subject to global assessment for the compliance of the Acquis Communautaire in the view of the accession process to the EU; but the last review by the International Monetary Fund in the context of ROSC procedure dates back to 2001.

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 must be absolutely guaranteed.

Overall assessment: From the legal point of view, and from the point of view of implementing these legal provisions into concrete behaviour in all parts of INS, this principle is fully met in a consistent way. Users and respondents are clearly aware of the INS policy in this respect and accept it as necessary for the credibility of the organisation in view of the not so distant past when this principle was frequently not observed.

Indicator 5.1 Statistical confidentiality is guaranteed in law.

Fully met

Comments: Chapter 4 of the statistical law regulates statistical confidentiality in several articles. These articles address the interdiction of disclosure aspect of confidentiality, as well as the strict limitation of confidential data to statistical use. One provision even states very clearly that any data collected for statistical purposes cannot be used as evidence in courts or when setting up certain rights and obligations for the concerned statistical subjects.

In recent years, the policy of INS has been to strictly adhere to confidentiality and not to allow access to microdata for any ministry in any form. The representatives of companies that were interviewed have full trust in the confidentiality pledge signed by INS employees as regards their own data.

Indicator 5.2 Statistical authority staff signs legal confidentiality commitments on appointment.

Fully met

Comments: All staff, including temporary staff, have to sign a Confidentiality Undertaking. The obligation to keep data confidential is valid beyond the termination of the contract.

Indicator 5.3 Substantial penalties are prescribed for any wilful breaches of statistical confidentiality.

Fully met

Comments: For staff who breach the confidentiality rules, sanctions can be of three types, with possible cumulation of more than one type: disciplinary (including separation), penal, and civil liability for damage. Researchers who do not comply with the rules can be fined and are barred from future access to microdata. No occasion of breach of confidentiality has been reported.

Indicator 5.4 Instructions and guidelines are provided on the protection of statistical confidentiality in the production and dissemination processes. These guidelines are spelled out in writing and made known to the public.

Fully met

Comments: The document that is publicly available on the INS website (in Romanian) called (in English translation) "Rules on the Confidentiality of Statistical Data" explains the concrete measures to be observed within the INS during collection, processing, and dissemination. These rules are on the restrictive side. Not only tables in releases and publications, but also tailor-made tables for specific users, are thoroughly checked for cells with disclosure risks before being disseminated. In addition, a confidentiality committee reviews all requests from researchers for release of microdata, but the final decision is in all cases with the president of INS (see also comments on indicator 5.6.)

Indicator 5.5 Physical and technological provisions are in place to protect the security and integrity of statistical databases

Fully met

Comments: The document mentioned under 5.3 includes a chapter on physical and technological measures to prevent unauthorised access to files and equipment. It mentions, inter alia, that each access to files (except those in the public sphere) will be monitored by the system. Authorisation to files with confidential data is only given to a few persons within a unit (department of INS or regional office).

Indicator 5.6 Strict protocols apply to external users accessing statistical microdata for research purposes.

Fully met

Comments: The way of access INS recommends to researchers is to use a facility (securitised room) at INS Headquarters in Bucharest. They can access the microdata (without identifiers) there, but what they can print out, download and export to their own environment is controlled and cannot contain confidential information. There is a possibility for bona fide researchers for whom the above option is not feasible to receive files with microdata, after a positive decision by the President following a review of the request by the confidentiality committee, and after signing a convention (micro-data supply agreement) in each case. These data sets do not contain identifiers, and are further checked for sensitive characteristics concerning detail that may allow indirect identification. No microdata are given to ministries or to the National Bank.

Principle 6: Impartiality and objectivity.

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

Overall assessment: The present high level of public trust in official statistics in Romania was built gradually during the last two decades as a result of INS's commitment to scientific independence, objectivity, transparency, impartiality and service culture. It should be underlined that the efforts of Romania to comply with the Acquis Communautaire in the field of statistics during the pre-accession period have greatly contributed in building a solid image for INS. All users confirmed that INS has made remarkable progress in this regard and they are confident that INS will continue to enhance its credibility through its adherence to high quality standards and respect for the principles stipulated in the Statistical Law.

Indicator 6.1: Statistics are compiled on an objective basis determined by statistical considerations.

Fully met

Comments: Objectivity and neutrality is a key characteristic of all statistical releases and publications; even among junior staff members, it was clearly understood that statistical releases and analyses should respect these principles. The approval process for release of statistics involves a number of hierarchical levels including the President who takes the final decision. There is evidence that these procedures are followed strictly.

Indicator 6.2: Choices of sources and statistical techniques are informed by statistical considerations.

Fully met

Comments: There is no doubt that the choices of sources and methods for the production of official statistics in Romania are solely driven by statistical considerations. Besides the confirmation obtained in this regard from users and in particular the academic / research community, there are two important statutory structures which guarantee that statistical considerations prevail over any other reasons: two high level professional advisory bodies (i) the Council for the Co-ordination of Statistical Activity and (ii) the Methodological Endorsement Committee provide continuous methodological guidance and statistical expertise. Methodologies have to be documented according to a grid laid down in the "unitary rules

regarding the drafting and editing of statistical works methodologies”, which are the basis for the decisions within INS, the advice given by MEC and the metadata documentation that is publicly available.

Indicator 6.3: Errors discovered in published statistics are corrected at the earliest possible date and publicised.

Largely met

Comments: While in practice INS has a well established policy in this regard, the Peer Review team thinks that the complete procedure of correcting an error should be formally documented in the form of guidelines that must be kept up-to-date and made known to all staff members.

Indicator 6.4: Information on the methods and procedures used by the statistical authority are publicly available.

Largely met

Comments: There is a good level of publicly available methodological notes and metadata which accompany most of the quantitative results. In our opinion, this documentation should be extended to cover all statistical outputs and should be standardised and enriched with more advanced methodological information.

Indicator 6.5: Statistical release dates and times are pre -announced.

Fully met

Comments: The establishment and follow up of the release calendar is managed by INS in an exemplary manner. Users have expressed their deep satisfaction regarding the functioning of the release calendar. (<http://www.insse.ro/cms/rw/pages/press2007.en.do>). In addition to the schedule of publications and press releases which are posted on the website of INS at the beginning of the year, the Press Office, every Friday, reminds users of the publications to be disseminated during the following week. In the (exceptional) event of advancing the release date to an earlier date, users are informed at least 48 hours in advance.

Indicator 6.6: All users have equal access to statistical releases at the same time and any privileged pre-release access to any outside user is limited, controlled and publicised. In the event that leaks occur, pre-release arrangements should be revised so as to ensure impartiality.

Fully met

Comments: The Peer Review team gathered strong evidence that INS treats all users in a completely impartial and objective way. Adherence to this principle has resulted in a continuous increase in public trust and in the credibility of official statistics. The embargo policy of INS can be considered as being 'good practice' and is highly appreciated by the representatives of the mass media. The procedures are clear, comprehensive, well documented, and well known to all those concerned, i.e. users (the mass media in particular) and INS staff. In the rare event of either breaking the embargo or leaking information prior to the agreed date, all pre-set measures and procedures are applied without delay and in a transparent way.

Indicator 6.7: Statistical releases and statements made in Press Conferences are objective and non-partisan.

Fully met

Comments: INS has a well established culture and expertise in this regard. We have examined a large number of statistical releases and publications, as well as written material presented at some press conferences. Users have also confirmed that INS's statistical releases and statements at press conferences are neutral, professional and objective.
<http://www.insse.ro/cms/rw/pages/listaArhivaCom.en.do>
<http://www.insse.ro/cms/rw/pages/confPresa.en.do>

Principle 15: Accessibility and clarity

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

Overall assessment: INS is responsible for producing and disseminating objective and reliable statistical information and for providing all users with equal access to these data. The dissemination of statistics is mainly based on publications and databases available also on website at central and local level and special tabulations can be realized to respond to national authorities's and other users' request. Provisions regarding access to public information are stated in the law 544/12 of October 2001 on "Free access to public information", with its further amendments, whereas in the art.1 "the individual's free and unconstraint access to public information represents one of the fundamental principles of the relations between the individuals and the public authorities..."

Dissemination is a key policy for the institution which has established a specific department in charge for information dissemination and public relations, stressing the importance of having a sole entry end exit point for the requests for data. Strong attention is payed also to the staff with specific training courses on dissemination practices and to improve their skills in promoting the accessibility of statistical data to the users.

However considering that INS is a public institution and official statistics is a "public good", the Peer Review team is of the opinion that the public and civil society should benefit from a more extended flow of information distributed in electronic form free of charge, as opposed to being accessible only for subscribers against payment.

Indicator 15.1: Statistics are presented in a form that facilitates proper interpretation and meaningful comparisons.

Largely met

Comments: INS disseminates data and statistical information by means of paper publications, a bilingual website Romanian/English (in document form and as on-line database), press releases, press conferences and other special events. The INS statistical publications catalogue is available on website (<https://statistici.insse.ro>) and offers a good variety of publications in the different thematic areas. Users may utilize the online system to order such publications and to request tailor-made analysis subject to payment to the publication department established to manage this activity and to deal with users' requests. All the requests made by the journalists are managed by the INS press office and a precise procedure

exists for regulating the relationships with the media. It is recognized by the peer review that a comprehensive programme for the development of data dissemination is on the way of being implemented, increasing the number of press releases, and organising more press conferences, seminars, and other events.

In general the different categories of users seem to be largely satisfied with the quality and accessibility of the information released by INS, which they judge understandable and clear. However, in the case of press releases journalists ask for more details and analysis on related phenomena, trends, data series, international comparability, etc. in order to achieve broader knowledge of the observed phenomenon and a better interpretation of the statistical results.

Indicator 15.2: Dissemination services use modern information and communication technology and, if appropriate, traditional hard copy.

Largely met

Comments: Dissemination services are a priority for the INS strategy, strongly oriented towards the adoption of modern technologies for improving the efficiency of the dissemination and communication policy. The website is well structured and offers a broad variety of statistical production and information in the different thematic fields. The TEMPO data base is also accessible to users and the public through the website. However, at present there is not an integrated system between this central database and the rest of technological infrastructure in order to improve the validation process and the coherence checks between the different data series.

Indicator 15.3: Custom-designed analyses are provided when feasible and are made public.

Largely met

Comments: The dissemination policy of INS is aimed at increasing the capacity of meeting the requests for information made by statistical data users. Providing tailor-made tables is a current practice for INS and a specific "procedure for the administration of the requests for statistical data and information" entered into force on May 2006. Staff is well informed on the process to be observed at central and regional level, and pricing is regulated so as to depend on the category of user. Tailor-made tables seem to be highly appreciated by the users. Some of them are made public after a certain period of time, but there is no general policy of public access to such additional results.

Indicator 15.4: Access to microdata can be allowed for research purposes. This access is subject to strict protocols.

Fully met

The access to micro-data for scientific research purposes is subject to strict protocols. A "securitized room" is available to allow physical access to individual data made anonymous for scientific purposes. If users cannot come to the INSSE headquarters, the data may be provided on the basis of a "micro-data agreement" where strict rules are established to protect individual data.

Indicator 15.5: Metadata are documented according to standardised metadata systems.

Largely met

Comments: Information on methodologies and data sources on statistical products are largely documented, also on the website, where a forum is specifically devoted to this target. According to the satisfaction survey's results, the large majority of users consider that the

information on methodologies is enough and appropriate. However, this documentation is not (yet) part of a standardized metadata system.

Indicator 15.6: Users are kept informed on the methodology of statistical processes and the quality of statistical outputs with respect to the ESS quality criteria.

Partly met

Stakeholders are in general kept informed on methodology of statistical processes and quality of statistical outputs through the traditional channels as paper publications, website and other public events, but this information is not structured according to the grid of the ESS criteria. In the opinion of the Peer Review team, users could be informed in a better and more systematic way on methodology and quality of the INS results through a more systematic use of the ESS quality framework in the dissemination of metadata.

4. CO-ORDINATION ROLE OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL INSTITUTE

The notion of a National Statistical System has not been included as such in the present statistical law, but there are provisions (Art. 2) that INS has a coordination responsibility in relation to the other "official statistical services". The instruments to achieve coordination, notably the prerogatives of the INS president in this context, are left open. In this respect, the draft of the revised legislation will, at least from the legal point of view, improve the situation.

There is no doubt that INS is by far the major producer of official statistics in Romania, and that the system can be characterised as centralised. The exact degree is difficult to determine, since it is not clear who else is a producer of official statistics other than INS and the National Bank. The statistical programme 2007 mentions only the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the National Administration for Land Administration, the National Agency for Health Protection, and the National Water Administration, but from the session organised with other producers, it became clear that at least the Ministry of Economy and Finance claims to be a producer of official statistics as well. Other producers seem to have been included in the present programme only if they collect primary data. There are occasional divergencies between INS and Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development concerning results published by INS. In the SDDS context of the IMF, INS acts as coordinator for the statistics produced by INS, the National Bank, and the Ministry of Economy and Finance. The preparation of the statistical programme could be an opportunity for coordinating the activities of other producers, but the impact of INS is limited, mainly because of lack of resources.

Other producers of official statistics, and notably the National Bank, would welcome more services, including coordination services, from INS, over and above the occasional methodological advice they receive from INS on request. It is accepted that INS is the best institution to carry out statistical surveys. e.g. economy wide business surveys, and to carry out complex statistics tasks. However, INS presently does not have enough resources for filling the coordination role with substance. This would have to start with an assessment of which activities outside the INS are official statistics, and who is able and willing to act as producer and disseminator of official statistics on a regular basis and in compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice. So far, INS has not been very proactive towards other producers in promoting this Code, or the principles enshrined in the statistical law of Romania, and as a consequence, knowledge of the Code of Practice is very limited with other producers.

Another aspect of coordination is not implemented regularly, neither within the INS nor between producers: discrepancies in results about the same phenomenon originating from different

sources or different production processes that use the same source. With one exception (national CPI and HCPI), results are presented in separate releases, with metadata for each result, but with no additional help for non-expert users, such as a possible quantification of some elements that cause the two results to be different. Even in the CPI example, the Harmonised CPI according to EU specification is simply added for information, without further explanation about the nature of the main differences. When questions arise from media, they are answered in the regular press conferences organised by INS.

INS is interacting with other government agencies in many ways, most of them bilateral: through conventions for access to administrative data (see comments on 2.2.), through regular consultations as important users, as well as multilaterally in the CCAS (art. 6 of the Statistical Law). The major function of this committee is not to coordinate between producers, but to have key users represented in discussions about the strategies and statistical programmes of INS. In this function, members and INS are satisfied with the present working of the CCAS, with improvements compared to previous years that are considered important. This has greatly contributed to create a climate of trust towards INS, so that a future coordination role, based on the new statistical law, is likely to find a positive echo with the limited number of other producers in Romania, provided that INS can allocate sufficient regular resources to this task in the future.

5. GOOD PRACTICES TO BE HIGHLIGHTED

Four good practices of INS deserve to be highlighted:

1. The National Center for Training in Statistics (NCTS), which ensures a sustained training on professional issues for staff of INS, including those from its regional offices. This is an asset in competing for good quality staff on the labour market. It could be used e.g. for improving the analytical skills of staff.
2. There are many forms of successful cooperation and interactions between INS and universities/research communities, from which both sides benefit: participation in the CEM committee; regular user of microdata from INS with feed-back given on results; jointly organised training in universities; traineeships for students in INS; and joint research projects. This is instrumental in enhancing the perception of INS as professional science-based institution, and in ensuring the support of the research community for INS with the decision-makers on resources.
3. There is a generally respected post-release embargo for disseminating comments after INS has released the data. Users, and journalists in particular, do not disseminate comments on the new release prior to 1 hour after the INS release becomes available at the pre-announced hour. This allows everybody to spend time on analysing the possible impact of the new data, without the fear of coming too late with own comments. On the other hand, electronic redisseminators of data that do not add comments such as Reuters do not fall under this embargo and can act immediately after the INS release.
4. A leakage of results before the release time in 2006 was handled in a exemplary way. At a press conference, the president of INS clearly stated that this is a breach of rule, and that an investigation will take place. Few months later, the media were informed about the results of the investigation, including the sanction to the staff member concerned. This has greatly contributed to users', notably government users', acceptance of the strict policy of INS not to give any pre-release information to anybody outside the INS.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PEER REVIEW TEAM

The Peer Review team identified four recommendations to be made to the INS. The first three were included in the improvement action plan agreed with INS at the occasion of the visit; they are included here because they are cross-cutting and can not be allocated to a single principle.

The process in the Parliament to adopt a new law on statistics seems to be well advanced, so that a final result can be expected in 2008. This will make it possible to close some of the gaps in the institutional framework for official statistics identified here for the INS; but the main improvement to be made possible by the law is to bring other producers of official statistics more in line with the modern concept of official statistics as exemplified in the European Statistics Code of Practice. The Peer Review team recommends that INS devotes enough resources to prepare implementation, and to assist other producers who are willing to take on themselves the task of producing and disseminating their part of statistics in a way that fully complies with the Code of Practice. A special unit in INS might be created for system wide coordination issues, and to follow and react to draft legislation in other areas that may contain provisions on statistics or regulate administrative sources that are relevant for statistics. When the first multi-annual programme is prepared under the new law, other producers should be assessed by INS for their willingness and ability to operate under this law, and their proposed activities should be checked for duplications, synergies and conformity with EU standards.

Presently, the training on general issues such as the fundamental principles of official statistics, the European Statistics Code of Practice, the ESS quality framework, and the INS internal codes elaborating on these issues in so far as they exist, seems to be concentrated on newly recruited INS staff. The Peer Review team recommends that some new mechanisms be created by which staff from various departments can exchange their practical problems in using these codes in their work and be assisted in difficult implementation issues. More generally, the awareness of these principles and of their relevance for current work should be kept high for all staff; focusing training on newly recruited staff only is not a sufficient guarantee for a sustained use in practice over time. Furthermore, training and the other mechanisms along these lines should include staff from other producers of official statistics as well.

The production and dissemination in INS is organized along survey operations which are tightly organized in parallel stovepipes from design to dissemination. There are not many opportunities for staff to interact with staff from parallel production processes other than in occasional training courses. In view of the fact that in modern official statistics, an increasing number of results are compiled on the basis of more than one source of data, and that a given data collection operation is used as input for compiling results in more than one production process, it is crucial that staff receive more incentives for lateral thinking and acting beyond the narrow boundaries of their respective areas of activity. Horizontal groups for cross-cutting issues, and project teams composed of staff from various departments for the development phase of new activities, are some and by no means the only examples that the Peer Review team recommends to the senior management of INS for consideration.

As mentioned in the overall assessment for principle 15, most of content of the on-line TEMPO database is accessible only against payment. An increasing number of national statistical offices, as well as EUROSTAT and more and more international producers of statistics make their full statistical information on the web accessible and downloadable free of charge; charges are only made for products in other forms (hard-copy publications) or tailor-made services. The Peer Review team recommends to the INS to follow this general trend and, in parallel to extending the content of the TEMPO database, to reduce gradually the number of series that are only available against payment.

7. LIST OF IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS BY PRINCIPLE OF THE CODE

Principle 1: Professional Independence

Improvement actions

- ★ Adopt multi-annual programme (including a development strategy for the national statistical system) based on the new law
- ★ Extend annual activity reports to include evaluation in terms of progress in the implementation of multi-annual programme. This report should be reviewed by the Statistical Council and made available public
- ★ Use more frequently the possibility of reacting to erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics, including as part of regular press conferences

Timetable

- 2008
- 2009 (about year 2008)
- Continuous

Principle 2: Mandate for Data Collection

Improvement actions

- ★ Prepare the use of administrative sources that have not yet been used for official statistics (ministry of labour; tax data; buildings and population registers), and examine possible duplicative data collection from enterprises for administrative purposes and in statistical surveys.
- ★ Increase possibilities for enterprises and local units to receive forms and to reply electronically
- ★ Reduce response burden by examining need for continuing regional break-downs in selected business surveys

Timetable

- From 2008
- selective implementation through annual programmes
- Continuous
- From 2008

Principle 3: Adequacy of Resources

Improvement actions

- ★ Bring in line the earnings of staff of INS with those in ministries
- ★ Increase the number of permanent staff positions at INS to a level that allows the effective carrying out of the present work programme and the implementation of new EU regulations/directives:
- ★ Make more use of the possibility of other ministries or the Central Bank to co-finance new INS surveys
- ★ Develop an IT-strategy for the INS that minimises dependence on application development for specific surveys and minimises the variety of software to be maintained. The implementation is also an opportunity to examine and streamline the business processes throughout INS

Timetable

- Depending on adoption and implementation of a new "Law regarding the establishment of the unitary salary system and of other rights of public officers" (tentatively 2009)
- Stepwise
- From 2008
- Strategy to be adopted in 2009; implementation stepwise

Principle 4: Quality commitment

Improvement actions

★ Define a strategic plan for quality as regular part of all production (not only ex-post reports for EUROSTAT) to be realized through concrete actions strictly correlated to the multi-annual and annual statistical programmes

★ Create a quality unit as a permanent structure within the organization with the mandate of acting as central body to support the monitoring of quality in the production processes and to promote a higher integration between the different production sectors in terms of methodologies, techniques, tools, software to adopt during the various phases of the work

★ Develop standards of documentation (metadata) that accompany all production processes and become a prerequisite for validating microdata sets and official results; make this documentation available centrally and (concerning results) publicly

★ Include other quality parameters than timeliness and punctuality in the targets for all production departments

Timetable

Plan adopted 2008; stepwise implementation in all production departments according to the schedule defined in the plan
2008

Standard adopted in 2008; stepwise implementation in all production departments according to schedule
From 2008

Principle 6: Impartiality and objectivity

Improvement actions

★ Use press conferences to communicate factual results of analysis, and increase the number of products with impartial analytical results and series with analytical components (such as seasonal adjustment for quarterly national accounts)

Timetable

Continuous

Principle 8: Appropriate Statistical Procedures

Improvement actions

★ Apply consistently methods of treatment of partial non-response, editing and imputation

Timetable

From 2008

Principle 10: Cost Effectiveness

Improvement actions

★ Introduce a system to monitor cost of activities, products and projects

Timetable

From 2009

Principle 14: Coherence and Comparability

Improvement actions

★ Develop and implement a concept of central repository of validated results of official statistics including metadata (data warehouse), from which all dissemination products are generated

★ Improve explanations in publications and releases when different sources or different aggregation methods lead to different results about the same phenomenon

Timetable

Concept adopted in 2008; implementation starting in 2009
Continuous

Principle 15: Accessibility and clarity

Improvement actions

★ Increase the number of series in the on-line Tempo database towards full coverage of all results of official statistics in all subject areas

★ Increase and harmonise the availability of metadata in or from the Tempo database

Timetable

Continuous

Continuous

Coordination

Improvement actions

★ Prepare a strategy and plan for assisting other producers to implement new law and EU code of practice: assign resources and responsibilities for coordination function under the new law within INS

Timetable

2008

ANNEX A: PROGRAMME OF THE VISIT

Monday, 29 October - Discussions with internal stakeholders

9.00 – 9.30	Welcome and introduction of programme, organisational matters
9.30 – 11.30	Meeting with senior management and senior staff (Principles 1, 2, 3, 6 & coordination of the national statistical system)
11.30 – 13.00	Meeting with management, senior staff, DG and quality manager (Principles 4, 15)
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch break
14.00 - 14.30	Meeting with management and senior staff (Principle 5)
14.30 – 16.00	Meeting with junior staff (Principles 1-6, 15)
16.00 – 17.00	Meeting with representatives from regional statistical offices and productions directorates in NSI

Tuesday, 30 October – Discussion with external stakeholders

9.30 – 10.30	Meeting with other national data producers (ministries, National Bank of Romania)
10.30 – 11.30	Meeting with main users (ministries, National Bank of Romania)
11.30 – 12.30	Meeting with main users (representatives of Statistical Council)
12.30 – 14.00	Lunch break
14.00 – 15.00	Meeting with main users (representatives from university)
15.00 – 16.00	Meeting with media
16.00 – 17.00	Meeting with respondents

Wednesday, 31 October - Conclusions

9.30 – 11.30	Meeting with management to sum-up and detailed review of list of improvement actions for all principles
11.30 – 13.00	Meeting with top management: conclusions, recommendations and follow-up (improvement actions)

ANNEX B: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

National Institute of Statistics

Vergil VOINEAGU	President of NSI Romania
Dan Ion GHERGUȚ	Vice-President of NSI Romania
Cristian Nicolae STĂNICĂ	Vice-President of NSI Romania
Beatrix GERED	Vice-President of NSI Romania
Gabriel Petrică JIFCU	Secretary General of NSI Romania
Ilie DUMITRESCU	Director, President's Cabinet
Filofteia PANDURU	President's Adviser
Daniela ȘTEFĂNESCU	Director, Directorate of European Affairs and International Cooperation
Sândica NEAGU	Director, Directorate of National Statistical System Coordination
Gabriela POPA	Deputy-Director, Directorate of National Statistical System Coordination
Nina ALEXEVICI	Director, Directorate of Short Term Economic Indicators Statistics
Silvia PISICĂ	Director, Directorate of Labour Market Statistics
Georgeta MONDIRU	Expert, General Directorate of National Accounts and Macroeconomic Syntheses
Mariana CLIPCEA	Expert, General Directorate for Agriculture and Environment Statistics
Constantin Secăreanu	Director, Directorate of Audit
Marilena Beșteu	Counsellor, General Directorate of IT and Statistical Infrastructure
Gheorghe Muntean Vaida	Director, General Directorate of IT and Statistical Infrastructure
Laura Pistol	Counsellor, Directorate of Databases Administration
Lavinia Popescu	Counsellor, Directorate of European Affairs and International Cooperation
Ion Florescu	Director, General Directorate for Agriculture and Environment Statistics
Ileana Gabriela Lazăr	Legal Counsellor, Juridical and Contentious Office
Monica Marcu	Counsellor, Directorate of National Statistical System Coordination
Claudia Căpățână	Expert, Directorate of National Statistical System Coordination
Livia Drăgușin	Expert, General Directorate of National Accounts and Macroeconomic Syntheses
Angela Rujancu	Expert, Directorate of Databases Administration
Liviu Ghilencea	Expert, Directorate of Business Structural Statistics
Remus Lefter	Counsellor, Directorate of Foreign Trade Statistics
Carmen Grecu	Expert, General Directorate for Agriculture and Environment Statistics
Anda Georgescu	Expert, General Directorate for Agriculture and Environment Statistics

Regional statistical offices

Irina TOPOR	Director, Regional Statistical Directorate of Bucharest
Valeria MIHAI	Director, Regional Statistical Directorate Calarasi
Codrea POP	Director, Regional Statistical Directorate Cluj
Mariana TĂNASE	Director, Regional Statistical Directorate Dolj
Eugenia HARJA	Director, County Statistical Directorate Bacau

Other national data producers (ministries, National Bank of Romania)

Dinu SOFIAN, Head of Unit	Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform
Carmen DUCA, Head of Unit	Ministry of Transport – Romanian Road Authority
Yorgos IOANNIDIS, General Director	RomTelecom
Doina ILIE, General Director	Ministry of Economy and Finance
Virgil ȘTEFĂNESCU, Head of Unit	National Bank of Romania
Dan DĂRĂBAN, Elena TATOMIR,	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
Roxana ZARMA	
Lucian CONSTANTINESCU	The Romanian Waters National Administration
Mihaela PETCU, General Director	National Agency for Environment Protection
Corina Lupu, General Director	

Main users (ministries, National Bank of Romania)

Octavian ARSENE, General Director	Ministry for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, Trade, Tourism & Liberal Professions
Mihai VIȘAN, President	Romanian Food Industry Federation „RomAlimenta”
Dan BĂLTEANU	Romanian Academy - Institute of Geography
Ion GLODEANU	Romanian Academy - Institute of Sociology
Marian MUSTĂREAȚĂ, Director	National Bank of Romania
Elena IORGA	
Robert HOFNAR, General Director	Ministry of Economy and Finance - National Agency for Fiscal Administration
Dan DĂRĂBAN, Elena TATOMIR,	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
Roxana ZARMA	
Ionel CONSTANTIN	The Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Ion GHIZDEANU	National Commission of Prognosis
Maria VĂLEANU	Ministry of Labour, the Family and Equal Opportunities
Adina DRAGOTOIU, Director	
Eugen GHIULEA, General Director	The National Trade Register Office
Florin ANDREI, Deputy Secretary	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development
General	
Lucian CONSTANTINESCU	The Romanian Waters National Administration
Filon TODEROIU	Romanian Academy - Institute for Agriculture Economics
Ion CIUCĂ, Director	Ministry of Education, Research and Youth
Ioana PERȚACHE, Director	Ministry of Public Health

Main users (representatives of Statistical Council)

Gheorghe ZAMAN, PhD	Romanian Academy
Ion GHIZDEANU	President, National Commission of Prognosis
Lucian Liviu ALBU, PhD	Director, Institute of Economic Prognosis
Petru Sorin DANDEA	Vice-president, National Trade Union Confederation „Cartel ALFA”
Mircea RAMBA	Director of General Secretariat, National Confederation of Romanian Employers
Alexandru Isaic MANIU, PhD	General Association of Romanian Economists

Main users (representatives from university)

Constantin ANGHELACHE, PhD	Professor, The Academy of Economic Studies, and Vice-president of Statistical Romanian Society
Marin DINU, PhD	Professor, The Academy of Economic Studies, Faculty of General Economy
Constantin MITRUȚ, PhD	Dean, The Academy of Economic Studies, Faculty of Cybernetics, Statistics and IT
Vasile GHETĂU, PhD	Professor, University of Bucharest, Faculty of Sociology
Șerban DRAGOMIRESCU, PhD	Professor, Romanian Academy, Department of Geography

Media

Teodor BRATEȘ	„Economistul”, Romanian economic newspaper
Mihai BOBOCEA	„Ziarul Financiar”, Romanian financial newspaper
Cornel DIRMINĂ	Reuters Agency
Ovidiu TEMPEA	Mediafax Agency

Respondents

Pierre Yves JANIN, Financial Director	S.C. ORANGE
Bogdan GHEORGHE	S.C. VODAFONE
Ionel Dan VULCAN, General Director	S.C. ROMAERO S.A. BUCUREȘTI
Viorica MĂRGULESCU, Head of Unit	S.C. TERMOELECTRICA S.A.
Alma GANCEANU	S.N. CFR Marfă
Emanuela POSTELNICU	C.N. Aeroportul Internațional Henri Coandă Otopeni
Mihaela MILINSCHI, Economical	S.C. Petrom S.A.
Director	