



EUROPEAN
STATISTICAL
SYSTEM

PEER REVIEW REPORT

ON COMPLIANCE WITH THE EUROPEAN STATISTICS CODE OF
PRACTICE AND FURTHER IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE
NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

CZECH REPUBLIC

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Czech Republic has a strong legal framework for official statistics, the Act on Official Statistics No 89/1995 Sb on the State Statistical Service. This Act defines the State Statistical Service and its constituent authorities responsible for producing statistical information on the social, economic, demographic and environmental developments of the Czech Republic and its components. The State Statistical Service is provided predominantly by the Czech Statistical Office, which is an independent central authority of the state administration designated as the body responsible for coordinating the National Statistical System and all activities at national level for the development, production, and dissemination of European statistics. In addition to the Czech Statistical Office, eight Other National Authorities, mainly ministries, are involved in the development, production, and dissemination of European statistics.

The Act on Official Statistics No 89/1995 Sb on the State Statistical Service guarantees the professional independence of the Czech Statistical Office and requires objectivity and the use of scientific methods in the production of statistical information. It also obligates Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics to use the methodology determined by the Czech Statistical Office and negotiated with them. The Czech Statistical Office is a highly respected and trusted professional institution. Its products and services are regarded as objective and fully independent of any political influence. Statistics produced are used as a reference for evidence-based policies and scientific research, as well as by the country's media and institutional users.

The Czech Statistical Office has a clear strategy, with relevant implementation actions and priorities aimed at modernising the organisation, increasing respect for the institution and its prestige, enhancing the availability and relevance of official statistics, and reducing the burden on respondents. In addition, it values the well-being of its employees and invests in creating motivating working conditions.

The Czech Statistical Office is committed to quality and is continuously developing a solid quality culture. Clear guidelines are provided to the staff to carry out their work in accordance with the principles of quality as well as a sound methodology. To improve the quality of its production, the Czech Statistical Office has developed a metadata-driven statistical information system. The technical architecture corresponds to the Generic Statistical Business Process Model and is based on the meta-driven information system, which covers the entire production of statistics, from data collection to dissemination.

Equal access to the information is one of the strengths of the Czech Statistical Office on which its reputation is based: no pre-release access is granted. The Czech Statistical Office has made significant progress in increasing the use of modern dissemination channels such as social media over recent years. For research and scientific purposes, the Czech Statistical Office has established a safe centre in its main building to provide access to microdata. The organisation has also become one of the most active institutions in the Czech Republic in publishing open data. The Czech Statistical Office appears as an open and accessible organisation dedicated to user satisfaction. Several user satisfaction surveys over the past years have shown that the Czech Statistical Office values the feedback of users and is actively working to address their requirements.

The coordinating role of the Czech Statistical Office has improved over the years. A governance body has been established within the Czech Statistical Office to coordinate the use of classifications and metadata. An Inter-institutional Coordination Group for Statistics was established for matters related to European statistics. In addition, the Czech Statistical Office promoted the implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice among the Other National Authorities, with the implementation of an annual self-assessment.

A large part of the statistical production of the Other National Authorities is dedicated to the production of European statistics and is compiled using administrative data to a large extent, thus keeping the responding burden low. For example, the Ministry of Education has developed a direct link to the IT systems of schools for collecting statistical information on students.

The peer review team identified and highlighted several initiatives by the Czech Statistical Office, which are important from an innovation perspective. These relate to implementing new technologies and developing a cost-efficient and motivating human resource policy.

Generally, the peer review team considers that the Czech Statistical Office demonstrates a high level of compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice (ES CoP). However, the peer review team identified two compliance-relevant recommendations, one addressed to the Czech Statistical Office and one to the Other National Authorities participating in the peer review, and 19 improvement-related recommendations, grouped under five main headings listed below.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Streamlining the governance of the National Statistical System

The President of the Czech Statistical Office is appointed by the President of the Czech Republic on the proposal of the government. Although the independence of the Czech Statistical Office and its President has never been questioned to date, and no President has ever been removed from the Czech Statistical Office, the lack of transparency and regulation of the procedures for appointing and dismissing the President of the Czech Statistical Office carries a risk of political interference.

To comply with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

1. The relevant authorities should improve the transparency of future appointments of the President of the Czech Statistical Office, for example, by advertising the post and the necessary qualifications; the relevant authorities should also specify in the legal framework the potential reasons for dismissal, which cannot include reasons compromising professional or scientific independence. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 1.8)

The Czech Statistical Office has a comprehensive annual work programme covering the planned surveys in the current year. To provide users with a complete overview of all statistics that will be produced in the country, including by the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics, a consolidated annual work programme needs to be made available by the Czech Statistical Office.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

2. The Czech Statistical Office should enhance transparency and inform users on the full extent of the statistical production of the National Statistical System and publish a consolidated annual work programme for the National Statistical System. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1.5 and 1bis.1)

The multi-annual strategic objectives of the Czech Statistical Office, accompanied by actions and priorities, provide a good insight into the work that it plans to implement by 2026. Complementing actions and priorities with milestones linked to the use of resources and indicators for measuring their implementation would facilitate the planning of the resources to be mobilised for their achievement.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

3. The Czech Statistical Office should strengthen the link between strategic objectives and the annual implementation actions and priorities, and complement them with milestones linked to the use of resources and indicators for measuring their implementation. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 10.1, 3.2 and 11.2)

II. Strengthening the coordination of the National Statistical System

To ensure quality in the development, production and dissemination of the statistics it produces, the Czech Statistical Office has established a set of quality guidelines that are applied in the production of the statistics. However, these guidelines have not been fully applied to all European statistics produced within the National Statistical System. In its coordinating role, the Czech Statistical Office should further extend these guidelines to the whole National Statistical System and monitor their application regularly.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

4. The Czech Statistical Office should strengthen its coordination of the Other National Authorities by extending quality guidelines for the development, production, and dissemination of European statistics and by improving the system of quality reviews for European Statistics produced by the Other National Authorities. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1bis.2)

There is a need for more systematic coordination in the entire National Statistical System regarding the implementation of the ES CoP. For methodological coordination, the Czech Statistical Office organises a one-day methodological workshop each year with the Other National Authorities. An initial set of methodologies for bodies of the State Statistical Service and Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating European statistics was produced (although some areas are not yet sufficiently covered). Regular systematic methodology reviews of all Other National Authorities were started in 2022. However, practices related to the dissemination of official statistics by the Other National Authorities are considered deficient. Therefore, it is evident that the Other National Authorities' adherence to ES CoP principles is not yet sufficient.

To comply with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

5. The Other National Authorities reviewed (Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports) should comply with the European Statistics Code of Practice, supported by the Czech Statistical Office; in particular, the Other National Authorities reviewed should enhance the dissemination of European statistics by publishing release calendars, quality reports and methodological documents on their websites. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicators 15.7, 15.6 and 6.5)

Access to all outputs produced within the National Statistical System, with an indication of the date of their release, not only facilitates the work of users but also increases the transparency and credibility of the System. Although the Czech Statistical Office publishes links to all the statistics produced by the Other National Authorities on its website, and indicates the dates of their release, it is not easy to access all the outputs produced within the National Statistical System from its website nor to know when these outputs will be published.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

6. The Czech Statistical Office should enhance the visibility of the European statistics produced within the National Statistical System by including on its website the list of statistics produced by the Other National Authorities, by domain, with a link to their publication and release calendar. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 15.1 and 6.5)

III. Continuing to improve efficiency

The Czech Statistical Office has an overview of the budget and its distribution, but there is currently no accurate overview of the time and resources spent on specific statistical activities. Also, the estimate of funds required for new statistical activities and other developments is relatively broad, with no reference to existing facts or the actual cost of similar activities.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

7. The Czech Statistical Office should develop and implement cost estimates of all operations related to the development, production, and dissemination of official statistics, for effective use of existing resources, as well as for cost-effective planning of new statistical activities. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 3.3)

The Czech Statistical Office has a proactive human resources management. However, internal mobility is neither encouraged nor organised, and it is very difficult for employees willing to acquire knowledge of other areas to change positions. Internal mobility, however, is a good way to ensure a fruitful exchange of experiences between the different statistical areas of the Czech Statistical Office and facilitates internal cooperation by avoiding silo work.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

8. The Czech Statistical Office should continue enhancing its active human resource management, in particular by organising and promoting internal staff mobility, in order to provide opportunities for staff to improve their skills and develop their careers. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 7.6 and 3.1)

The Czech Statistical Office has started developing a model of employee competencies. The main idea of the approach is that the competencies of all employees are evaluated according to the requirements of the position. During the peer review, it became apparent that the competency model currently exists as a written document only but has not yet been implemented in the organisation. Therefore, it is recommended to continue with the development of the competency model and its planned implementation in the organisation.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

9. The Czech Statistical Office should continue efforts to ensure that employees' competencies match the requirements of their positions and, therefore, support the improvement of organisational efficiency. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 3.1)

The Czech Statistical Office is already actively using administrative data to produce statistical information. As the development of digitalisation in the government administration is increasing the number of potentially available administrative sources, offering new options for official statistics, the Czech Statistical Office should investigate the use of new administrative data for statistics proactively, to reduce the reporting burden.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

10. The Czech Statistical Office should develop a proactive approach in using administrative data relevant to produce European statistics and exploit their full potential for reducing the reporting burden. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 10.3, 9.4 and 2.2)

There is no "Tell us once" mechanism in the Czech Republic guaranteeing companies that information will be requested once only and shared between the different institutions that need it. The representatives met during the peer review stressed the burden of having to report the same information several times. The risk is that statistical obligations appear as an additional burden and lead to lower response rates.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

11. The Czech Statistical Office, in cooperation with relevant authorities, should pro-actively consider the creation of a common platform for government data sharing in order to collect information from businesses once only. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 9.3 and 10.3)

IV. Embedding quality management throughout the National Statistical System

Over the years, the Czech Statistical Office has developed various elements of a quality management system. Nevertheless, currently there is no fully comprehensive, central approach to the organisation's quality management system. The interrelationships of the existing elements are not systematically described and organised. Therefore, the quality management system is only partially functioning and is effectively managed to a limited extent, without a comprehensive approach.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

12. The Czech Statistical Office should further progress in the development of a systematic, comprehensive and centrally organised approach to the organisation's quality management system and its interrelated processes. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 4.1)

The Czech Statistical Office has defined the production of statistics and its activities in relation to the Generic Statistical Business Process Model. Quality guidelines are mainly made by statistical domain units, and their detail and content differ across the Czech Statistical Office and its structural units. Recently, the Czech Statistical Office has started a development project to harmonise all processes and related guidelines, but currently many descriptions and guidelines for processes are either incomplete or missing altogether.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

13. The Czech Statistical Office should enhance and widely promote standardised descriptions and quality guidelines for all processes, to ensure the quality of the production of European statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 4.2)

While the Czech Statistical Office is in close contact with academia, which advises it on certain methodological issues, there is no formal mechanism to ensure the quality of the methodology of statistical operations. A Methodology Committee of experts would be beneficial to review and advise on the methodology of new statistical operations.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

14. The Czech Statistical Office should establish a Methodology Committee with the objective of advising on the methodology of new European statistics produced in the National Statistical System or on major revisions of existing statistical operations. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 7.1, 7.2 and 4.2)

The scientific community is an important and informed user of survey microdata produced by the Czech Statistical Office and considers the Office a valued and trusted institution. To benefit from

researcher feedback on how to improve the quality of statistics and its relevance to research, the Czech Statistical Office should cooperate more systematically and further develop links with the scientific community.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

15. The Czech Statistical Office should reinforce cooperation with the scientific community. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 7.7)

V. Making the most of the evolving data ecosystem

Users of the National Statistical System are consulted through the Czech Statistical Council and user groups set up by the Czech Statistical Office. Although these mechanisms are useful, they only concern identified users. In order to meet the needs of all components of Czech society, it is necessary to take into account potential users who could benefit from the current statistical products, but also express needs for statistical information on topics not yet covered by the National Statistical System.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

16. The Czech Statistical Office and the Other National Authorities reviewed (Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports) should actively engage in reaching new user groups and involving wider sections of society. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, indicator 11.1)

The Czech Statistical Office has already successfully invested in the use of new data sources for producing statistics from scanner data and developing a cooperation model with private data providers. The Czech Statistical Office should capitalise on this success and, together with the scientific community, identify more new data sources and statistical domains where methodological developments can lead to the production of new statistics.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

17. The Czech Statistical Office should enhance research and development activities for exploring new data sources and methodologies for the production of European statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 10.3 and 2.4)

The Czech Statistical Office makes microdata available to researchers, under contract, by allowing access to anonymised microdata through a Safe Centre, a room located at its headquarters. The Safe Centre allows secure access to the information but limits the use of software to that provided by the Czech Statistical Office. However, to improve access to a larger group and allow researchers to use the software they work with, the scientific community should be provided with remote access to the microdata.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

18. The Czech Statistical Office should further develop access to microdata for scientific purposes including by providing researchers with a secure environment for remote access to microdata. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.4)

The Czech Statistical Office does not have an archiving policy per se to preserve the heritage formed by the results of surveys, censuses and other statistical operations, in the form of files regularly maintained in a readable format and accompanied by the metadata necessary for their use. Therefore, a concrete archiving policy is necessary, as well as a structure in charge of implementing it.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

19. The Czech Statistical Office should develop a policy and fully implement processes for archiving statistical data and metadata. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.1)

The Czech Statistical Office does not take advantage of all the information available in the National Statistical System to carry out cross-cutting analyses that would allow for an in-depth examination of the characteristics of certain population groups or phenomena. The use of all sources available, linking them together, would enrich the information provided to users without increasing costs and the burden on respondents.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

20. The Czech Statistical Office should develop cross-cutting analyses by taking advantage of the different sources of information available in the National Statistical System and enable the establishment of links between the different data sources. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 9.5 and 9.6)

The Czech Statistical Office website, together with the public database and other applications provided by the Czech Statistical Office, are the main means of disseminating statistics. Nevertheless, concerns were raised by users regarding the user-friendliness of the Czech Statistical Office website and public database. New users usually find the database very difficult to understand and use without the help of an experienced specialist.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

21. The Czech Statistical Office should improve the usability and functionality of its website as well as the public database, so that the dissemination of European statistics meets the expectations and needs of users and supports a friendlier, more intuitive use of products and services. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.2)

In the spirit of continuous improvement integral to the European Statistical System (ESS), the Czech Statistical Office will interpret the recommendations formulated in this report as improvement actions for implementation within the National Statistical System.

2. INTRODUCTION

It is recognised that quality is one of the European Statistical System's (ESS) comparative advantages in a world experiencing a growing trend of instant information and new challenges, driven by exceptional circumstances or the continuous need for faster but quality-assured data. The European Statistics Code of Practice (ES CoP) is the cornerstone of the ESS common quality framework, and the ESS statistical authorities have committed themselves to adhere to it.

In this context, it is crucial for the ESS to be equipped with a review mechanism, the peer reviews, supporting with credible evidence this self-commitment to adhere to the ES CoP. The objective of this review mechanism is to enhance the integrity, professional independence and accountability of the ESS statistical authorities. The first round of peer reviews was carried out in 2006-2008, followed by a second round in 2013-2015.

In 2017, the ES CoP was reviewed and extended and now encompasses 16 principles. This revised version of the ES CoP triggered a third round of peer reviews, being carried out in the Member States of the European Union and of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), and Eurostat from 2021 to mid-2023. This round of peer reviews aims at improving the quality and trust in European statistics by assessing the compliance of the ESS with the principles of the revised ES CoP. The peer reviews cover the ESS statistical authorities (Eurostat, the National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) and selected Other National Authorities (ONAs)) developing, producing and disseminating European statistics. The peer reviews will be followed by a period of annual monitoring of the implementation of the improvement actions developed by the NSIs to address the recommendations laid down in the peer review reports.

The third round of peer reviews has the following two objectives:

- To review the compliance/alignment of the ESS with the ES CoP, in order to demonstrate to the ESS and to external stakeholders that the ESS is a system based on the principles of the ES CoP;
- To help NSIs, ONAs and Eurostat in their further improvement and development by indicating future-oriented recommendations; at the same time they should stimulate government authorities to support the implementation of these recommendations.

Each peer review is conducted by a team of four statistical experts (both from inside and outside the ESS). The peer review has four phases: completion of the Self-Assessment Questionnaires (SAQs) by a country; analysis of these SAQs by the peer review team; a country visit by the peer review team; and the preparation of the final report and ensuing recommendations by the peer review team. These recommendations are of two types:

- Compliance-relevant (ensuring compliance/alignment with the ES CoP);
- Improvement-related (less critical/technical supporting improvements).

A combination of an audit-like and a peer review approach is used when assessing the national statistical systems (NSS) in the countries to benefit from the positive aspects of both approaches. The audit-like approach requires the provision of documents as evidence, the ownership of the recommendations by the peer review expert team, and the right for the NSIs to express diverging views on the recommendations and to formulate the corresponding improvement actions. Whereas the peer review approach allows for common agreement within the ESS on the methodology, the objectives, scope and implementation arrangements, the focus on improvements and a peer learning process.

Although all principles of the ES CoP will be reviewed for all countries through the SAQ, the peer review experts are free to customise the country visit to concentrate on those principles where more

clarification/explanation is needed. However, certain principles such as those concerning professional independence and coordination and cooperation, as well as principles including elements of modernisation, will be assessed during the peer review visit for every member of the ESS.

In addition to the common principles to be addressed for every member of the ESS, the peer review team also placed an emphasis on aspects related to accessibility, quality, adequacy of resources, and methodology.

The motivation to review aspects related to accessibility (ES CoP, Principle 15) was to provide the CzSO, and the ONAs, with an opportunity to consider their engagement with users, the dissemination of the statistical information they produce, and the satisfaction of various categories of users, including researchers, in line with the first priority of the CzSO Strategy 2022-2026 to improve the relevance and availability of statistical information.

Aspects related to quality (ES CoP, Principle 4) were reviewed in depth since quality management was restored in the Office after 2018. The coordination of quality within the National Statistical System and the implementation of quality guidelines in the Other National Authorities were also analysed.

Careful attention was given to the management of resources (ES CoP, Principle 3) and, in particular, human resources, as an important axis of the CzSO Strategy 2022-2026 is to become a recommended employer.

The peer review team also examined the mechanism for ensuring a sound methodology (ES CoP, Principle 7) and the use of new data sources in the context of emerging opportunities in the availability of privately held data.

Also, although the reports should not be used to compare one country to another, much effort has been made to ensure the harmonisation of the reports and the ensuing recommendations across the countries so that all countries are treated equitably.

The peer review of Eurostat was conducted by the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB).

3. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

Legislation

The basic legal act defining the National Statistical System of the Czech Republic is the Act on Official Statistics No 89/1995 Sb on the State Statistical Service, which defines the principles and creates the basis for reliable, impartial, professional and independent statistical outputs. The Act on Official Statistics No 89/1995 Sb on the State Statistical Service regulates the following issues, inter alia: definition of the State Statistical Service, authorities performing the State Statistical Service, the terms of reference of the Czech Statistical Office (CzSO), ministries and other central administrative authorities, the use of administrative data sources, the Programme of Statistical Surveys (with the reporting duty), secrecy and protection of confidential statistical data and provision of confidential statistical data.

According to the Act on Official Statistics No 89/1995 Sb on the State Statistical Service, the State Statistical Service in the Czech Republic is provided predominately by the CzSO. Ministries and other central administrative authorities, including the Other National Authorities, may also provide the State Statistical Service under the conditions and within the scope laid down by the Act on the State Statistical Service. They are obliged to use the methodology determined by the CzSO and negotiated with them.

The CzSO is an independent central authority of the state administration designated as the body responsible for coordinating all activities at national level for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics. The CzSO has a coordinating role in the National Statistical System.

In accordance with Act No 2/1969 Sb on the establishment of ministries and other bodies of the central government of the Czech Republic (Competence Act), the CzSO is not subordinate to any political authority. Its mission is to create objective and comprehensive official statistics in the fields of economic, social, demographic and environmental development of the Czech Republic and its components, in accordance with the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice. According to the Act on Official Statistics No 89/1995 Sb on the State Statistical Service, the CzSO coordinates the State Statistical Service. The CzSO is also the administrator of the national Basic Administrative Business Register and is responsible for processing election results.

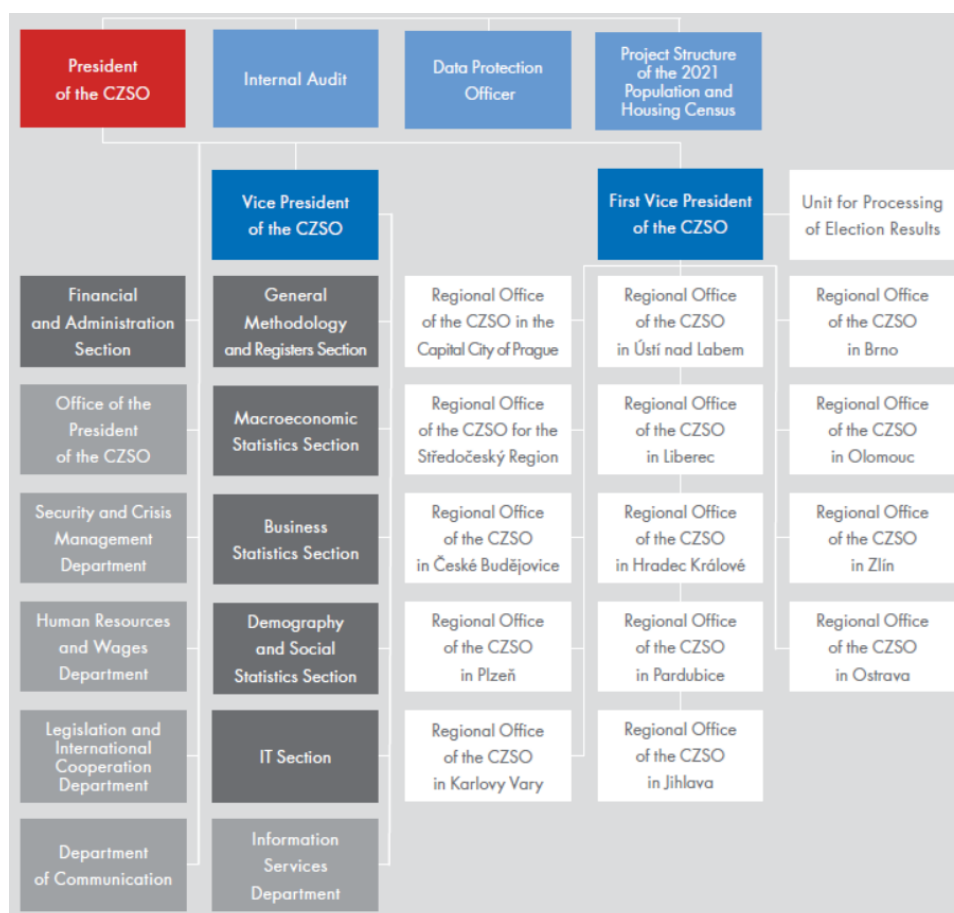
The President of the CzSO is solely responsible for statistical programming and the development, production and dissemination of statistics, including their timing and the allocation of human and financial resources. Their administrative position is the highest level in the central state administration, and they are not subordinate to any political ministry or any other administrative authority. The President regularly attends government meetings (without a voting right) that give access to high-level executive authorities.

Organisation

The President manages the CzSO with the support of the First Vice-President and the Vice-President. In addition to the Head of the President's Office, the Heads of the five departments/sections that do not have a statistical function *per se* (responsible for human resources, international cooperation, communication, legislation, financial management, security, facility management, and legal support) report directly to the President. The Head of Internal Audit, the Data Protection Officer, and the Head of the Project Structure of the 2021 Population and Housing Census are also directly subordinate to

the President. The First Vice-President is responsible for the 14 regional offices and the Electoral Results Processing Unit. All the regional offices conduct surveys and carry out information service activities; seven of them are also responsible for primary statistical processing at national level, specialised by domain. The Vice-President is responsible for the six sections/departments in charge of the main statistical production processes and IT.

Figure 1: Organisation chart of Czech Statistical Office



Source: Czech Statistical Office

As an advisory body, the Czech Statistical Council supports the National Statistical System in various statistical matters. The Council debates the draft Programme of Statistical Surveys and issues opinions on proposed voluntary statistical surveys. The Council also adopts views on proposals for generally binding legal regulations and conceptual issues of the further development of the State Statistical Service. It may also discuss other matters at the request of its members. The Council is chaired by the President of the CzSO and has a minimum of 11 and a maximum of 25 members. Members are appointed and dismissed by the President among experts in statistical theory and practice, i.e. those who have contributed to statistics for a long time, those working in statistical science, research or lecturing, important statistical representatives, especially in the civil service, important data providers, mainly from business and employers' associations, and reporting units. Membership of the Council is personal and honorary (unpaid).

Appointment procedures for the head of the National Statistical Institute

According to Section 3.2 of Act No 89/1995 Sb on the State Statistical Service, the President of the Czech Statistical Office is appointed and dismissed by the President of the Czech Republic on the proposal of the Government of the Czech Republic. The position of President of the Czech Statistical Office is incompatible with membership of a political party or movement. The position of the President of the Czech Statistical Office is considered a civil service body under the Civil Service Act. There is no fixed term for the President of the Czech Statistical Office specified in the Act No 89/1995 Sb on the State Statistical Service, but the average term is 7 years. The current President was appointed in 2018.

The post of President of the Czech Statistical Office is not regulated by the Civil Service Act similarly to other heads of independent regulatory national authorities. In this respect, the President is not subject to the disciplinary authority of the Deputy Minister of Interior responsible for the Civil Service.

Reasons for the dismissal of the President of the Czech Statistical Office are not explicitly provided in legislation apart from the incompatibility of the position of the President of the Czech Statistical Office with being or becoming a member of a political party or movement.

Statistical programmes

According to Section 10 of the Act on Official Statistics No 89/1995 Sb on the State Statistical Service, the Programme of Statistical Surveys is determined by the CzSO by means of a Decree prepared in cooperation with ministries and other administrative authorities and always issued no later than 30 November of the preceding year.

The draft Programme of Statistical Surveys is submitted to the Czech Statistical Council for comments. Individual surveys are consulted with representatives of reporting units, institutional users and selected trade unions. Later the draft Programme is approved by the Czech Statistical Council. The next step is the legislative process of preparing the draft Decree in accordance with the legislative regulations of the Government of the Czech Republic.

The Programme contains only the list of statistical surveys with a reporting duty (voluntary surveys and statistics based on administrative data sources are excluded) and, for each statistical survey, sets the purpose and contents, the reporting units, the method of the statistical survey, the frequency and deadlines for providing data, and the body conducting the statistical survey. The 2023 Programme includes 158 statistical surveys, 92 of which are conducted by the CzSO and 66 by other members of the State Statistical Service.

However, the CzSO publishes an annual work programme that reflects the content of the European Statistical Programme and consists of the Catalogue of Products including the release calendar for the CzSO outputs based on the Programme of Statistical Surveys with a reporting duty as well as other outputs produced from administrative data sources and voluntary surveys. The CzSO monitors the degree of implementation of the annual work programme and publishes it as a part of the Annual Report and the Detailed Report on Information Services.

Resources

The production of official statistics is financed from the State Budget, although the CzSO has its own budget chapter. The CzSO provides inputs for the State Budget on an annual basis, justifying its financial needs linked to the annual work programme.

In 2022, the CzSO employed around 1,291 people (11% less than in 2019), of whom 60.8 % are higher graduates incl. PhD (60.1% in 2019). There were 618 employees at headquarters, of which 468 were

PhDs or higher graduates (75.7 % in 2022 compared to 74% in 2019) and 673 employees in the regions, of which 317 were PhDs or higher graduates (47.1 % in 2022 compared to 47.5 % in 2019). Employees in the regional offices mainly deal with fieldwork and data processing. Outside the CzSO, 234 persons work in the other institutions of the NSS.

The annual expenditure in 2022 was around 1,370 million CZK, very similar to the 2019 expenditure (50% of the total budget was spent on staff; 18% on IT; 9% on current expenses, and 22% on other expenses).

Coordination of the National Statistical System

The coordination role of the Czech Statistical Office is established in the Act on Official Statistics No 89/1995 Sb on the State Statistical Service. Section 4.3 of the Act states that "*The Czech Statistical Office co-ordinates the State Statistical Service provided by the ministries*". To this end, the Czech Statistical Office: keeps records of the activities carried out by the ministries pertinent to the State Statistical Service; urges the ministries to comply with the measures set forth in this Act to protect confidential statistical data; cooperates with the ministries in the preparation of the Programme of Statistical Surveys; ensures that the burden on reporting units is not excessive; unifies the methodological procedures of statistical surveys conducted by the ministries and provides the ministries with methodological assistance in carrying out the tasks of the State Statistical Service. To address methodological issues, CzSO routinely consults the ONAs on specific (general and domain-oriented) issues and holds an annual one-day methodological workshop with all of them.

In the Czech Republic there are eight ONAs responsible for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics: Ministry of Transport; Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; Ministry of Industry and Trade; Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports; Institute of Health Information and Statistics; Ministry of Agriculture; Ministry of the Interior; and Customs Administration of the Czech Republic. The Czech Statistical Office is responsible for updating and amending the list of ONAs in terms of entities producing European statistics.

Three ONAs (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Industry and Trade, and Ministry of Transport) were selected to participate in the peer review. The heads of the statistical units in these ONAs are at the hierarchical level of a Department director.

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports produces European statistics on education and life-long learning. Its work programme is linked to the respective legislation. The Ministry does not conduct statistical surveys within the Programme of Statistical Surveys but uses administrative data sources in the main. It publishes most statistical outputs immediately upon processing at standard time periods that comply with the internal calendar.

Ministry of Industry and Trade focuses mainly on European statistics on energy and raw materials and arms production. The Ministry conducts several statistical surveys within the Programme of Statistical Surveys and publishes statistical information upon completion.

Ministry of Transport produces European transport statistics. The Ministry conducts several statistical surveys within the Programme of Statistical Surveys. Processing and publishing dates are stipulated in the respective legislation that also determines the dissemination schedule.

Data access

The Act on Official Statistics No 89/1995 Sb on the State Statistical Service provides the legal basis for the bodies of the State Statistical Service to access – free of charge - all kinds of data, including official registers, public administration information systems, non-public information systems and units

responding to statistical surveys included in the Programme of Statistical Surveys. The reporting units of statistical surveys not included in the Programme are not obliged to provide data.

Relations with users/dissemination of statistical products and services

Information concerning the Dissemination Policy is defined in the Act on Official Statistics No 89/1995 Sb on the State Statistical Service, the CzSO Strategy 2022-2026, external and internal legal regulations and internal data dissemination guidelines. The CzSO provides all standard statistical information free of charge and simultaneous access to statistical information relevant to user needs is guaranteed. Anonymised individual data are provided to the scientific community under contract by means of the Safe Centre, a room located at the headquarters of the CzSO that allows secure access to individual information.

The main tool for the publication of statistics is the CzSO website, which offers modern standards of dissemination and equal access conditions to all users. Social networks such as Instagram, LinkedIn, Mastodon (new), Twitter and YouTube are used to disseminate information.

The CzSO has been regularly praised on its performance by professional organisations in the field of marketing and public relations. As an example, in 2022, it was awarded a prestigious marketing award - Effie (1st place in the Public Administration category for the Census 2021 campaign).

The CzSO collects institutional user opinions annually through the comment procedure of the draft Programme of Statistical Survey. Individual surveys are consulted with representatives of selected reporting units, users and trade unions. In addition, the CzSO periodically conducts a user satisfaction survey.

4. PROGRESS/ADVANCEMENT IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS

Coordination and governance

The CzSO has established the list of ONAs and signed cooperation agreements within the scope of their responsibility in the development, production and dissemination of European Statistics. A governance body has been set up within the General Methodology Department to coordinate statistical surveys in the fields of classifications, metadata, and administrative burden. An Inter-institutional Coordination Group for Statistics was established on matters related to European statistics, consisting of CzSO executives and representatives of other producers and users of statistics. Additionally, through the coordination of the CzSO, self-evaluation of all ONAs has been implemented, which is considered similar to the ES CoP-based peer review processes. It is planned that these evaluations will be conducted annually.

Data collection

The CzSO has effectively implemented its online data collection strategy and successfully encouraged respondents to use the online tool to respond. At national level, it has been agreed that all ministries and other administrative authorities (including administrative data holders) must negotiate with the CzSO on the creation, modification and discontinuation of administrative data sources. An additional success is the active utilisation of new data sources, including scanner data, as well as the development and implementation of machine-learning applications for the production of statistics.

Dissemination

The timeliness of outputs has been significantly improved and new indicators have been published according to the needs of users (e.g. GDP at T+30, regionalisation of the tourism satellite account, Agenda 2030 and SDG project, etc.). A number of new products have been introduced to meet the needs of users, including "Czech Republic in Figures" and publications containing regional comparisons. For research and scientific purposes, the CzSO has established a Safe Centre in its main building, to provide microdata according to its principles and operating rules. The organisation has also become one of the most active institutions in the Czech Republic in publishing open data.

Quality management

The position of Quality Manager has been created together with responsibility for a more integrated and systematic implementation of quality management and promotion of quality guidelines in the NSS. The implementation is supported by courses on quality management and ES CoP, available for all employees in the NSS. From an external perspective, the dissemination of quality and metadata reports has been improved under the supervision of an internal working group on quality.

Information technology

The implementation of the statistical information system (SIS), in which most statistical tasks are processed centrally, has continued successfully. The descriptions of SIS technical projects are implemented as a good practice. The SIS technical architecture deployed corresponds to the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) and is based on the meta-information system, which covers the entire production of statistics, from data collection to dissemination. Furthermore, a Council for Information Systems Architecture Management (also known as the Board of Architects) has been set up at the CzSO, to coordinate the preparation and implementation of projects for information systems. Several strategic documents and policies have also been developed and followed for statistical information system development, such as the Ten Principles of the Statistical Information

System, Framework Security Policy, and Information and Cyber Security Policy. Significant developments have also been made in automating financial and personnel management processes.

Personnel

A human resources policy has been developed, which guides all related processes, from planning and recruitment to evaluation, training and even work-life balance. The CzSO has developed a recruitment strategy including activities such as employer presentations on social networks, cooperation with schools and the scientific community, systematic training of staff and civil service exams. An internal communication policy has been approved and implemented to inform employees more systematically and continuously about the activities taking place in the organisation, as well as about the information necessary for work. A notable project has been the development of daily childcare in the CzSO, to offer a better balance between work and family life.

5. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE AND FUTURE ORIENTATION

5.1 STRENGTHS OF THE NSI AND THE PARTICIPATING ONAs IN RELATION TO THEIR COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE

Highly respected and trusted, professional institution

During the peer review visit, feedback from stakeholders clearly indicated that the Czech Statistical Office is considered a highly respected and trusted professional institution by users. Its products and services are regarded as objective and fully independent of any political influence. The CzSO has well-established procedures to guarantee the protection of confidential data, preserve anonymity and provide impartial high-quality statistics. Representatives of professional associations, the scientific community, the media, data suppliers, users and ONAs recognised the key role of the institution, indicating that the CzSO is considered a trusted partner, which is inspiring confidence, nationally. The statistics it produces are used as a reference for evidence-based policies and scientific research, as well as by the country's media and institutional users. With remarkable progress in products and services over the recent years, the institution has maintained its reputation and positive image as a respected partner with an increasing user focus.

Clear strategic vision and implementation plan

The mission of the Czech Statistical Office is to provide official statistics for fact-based decision-making. To accomplish its mission, the CzSO has five strategic objectives for the 2022-2026 period, based on principles, strategies, and tools, with relevant implementation actions and priorities aimed at modernising the organisation's operation, increasing respect for the institution and its prestige, enhancing the availability and relevance of official statistics and reducing the burden on respondents. The tools used to implement the strategy are specific, covering key statistical domains, methodology, dissemination, communication, data quality, process management and support actions. The multi-annual strategic plan for the period 2022-2026 takes into account the requirements of domestic and international users as part of the European Statistical System.

Equal access

The Czech Statistical Office applies a strict pre-release policy providing no pre-release access to users. Communication with the media and the process of preparing publications are governed by directives and well-defined internal procedures with which all employees must comply. Equal access is, therefore, one of the strengths of the CzSO on which the reputation of the organisation is built.

Motivating working environment

The CzSO values the well-being of its employees and invests in creating working conditions that reconcile personal and professional life. In addition to flexible working arrangements, childcare facilities with dedicated personnel, a physical training room, a library and accommodation for temporary overnight stays are available to employees in the CzSO headquarters building, increasing motivation and creating a balanced, flexible and motivating workplace. The peer review team recognises that the working environment was an important factor of job satisfaction, maintaining loyalty to the CzSO, despite higher salaries in other sectors. The attractiveness of the CzSO as an employer is one of the five strategic objectives in the multi-annual strategic plan for the 2022-2026 period, indicating the importance of maintaining a motivating working environment in the organisation.

Quality and service-oriented culture

A quality and service-oriented culture are clearly visible across the organisation. The peer review team acknowledged the positive views expressed by all users met during the visit, on the attitude and support received from the CzSO in all their contacts. There are clear guidelines and personalised support with well-established procedures designed to facilitate contact with the appropriate service. The CzSO emerged as an open and accessible organisation dedicated to user satisfaction. Several user satisfaction surveys over the past years have proved that the Office values user feedback and is actively working to address their requirements.

User-friendly dissemination practices

The Czech Statistical Office has made significant progress in increasing the use of modern dissemination channels such as social media over recent years. The use of infographics, interactive tools and electronic products is also gaining momentum, and contributes to the positive image of the organisation that was highly praised by users including the media. Several main users also expressed satisfaction with access to open data that allows users to use their own data analysis tools. The user-friendly and transparent dissemination policy enhances usability, adding value to its very comprehensive content and bringing statistics closer to the citizens. In turn this contributes to the impression that the CzSO is a lively, reactive, easily accessible and open organisation.

Other National Authorities' statistics

The work of the ONAs has been stable over the past years, both in terms of content, procedures, and resources. A large part of the statistical production of the ONAs is dedicated to the requirements of sectoral European statistics (energy, transport, environment, tourism, etc.) and is compiled using well-established surveys and extensively administrative data, keeping the responding burden low. The Ministry of Education's link to the IT system of schools for collecting statistical information on students is a good practice in the field of educational statistics. Continuity in statistical production and user satisfaction is, therefore, ensured.

Use of innovative data sources for statistics

The use of new data sources such as scanner data is already part of the statistical production. The cooperation model with private data providers of scanner data, investment in new internal skills (such as the use of R and Python) and the establishment of a data science assistance team create a solid basis for capitalising on the evolving data landscape. Several experimental statistics are also available on a dedicated section of the CzSO's website, covering data of accommodation platforms for tourism statistics, satellite accounts of households and job vacancies.

Innovative Practices

- The internal metadata-driven statistical information system (SIS), which is an innovative and a good practice at the same time, and its architecture correspond to the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM). The system is currently in production for structuring and centralising in one interface the important production processes from data collection to dissemination. This system is boosting internal efficiency, optimising statistical processes, improving security and interoperability with other sources of information that can be used more easily for statistics.
- The human resources policy is set on using available expertise, e.g. in IT, from the lower cost of living regions of the Czech Republic. This policy allows the provision of IT expertise by personnel working in the regions, without moving to the capital city where the CzSO is located

and the cost of living is higher. These experts may use temporary accommodation in the CzSO premises, if needed.

5.2 ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.2.1 Streamlining the governance of the National Statistical System

According to the Act on Official Statistics No 89/1995 Sb of 20 April 1995 on the State Statistical Service: *“The Czech Statistical Office is chaired by its President, who is appointed and recalled by the President of the Czech Republic upon a proposal of the Government of the Czech Republic. The position of President of the Czech Statistical Office is incompatible with membership of a political party or movement.”*

In 2014 the new Civil Service Act was adopted; as is the case for the independent regulatory authorities (e.g. the Office for the Protection of Competition), it excludes the position of President of the CzSO. The peer review team was informed that the intention of the legislator – regarding the independent and specific position of the State Statistical Service – was to preserve the conventional appointment scheme. This approach was strongly supported by the Czech Statistical Council, which argued that the position of President of the CzSO could not be aligned with other civil service institutions that fall under the official authority of the Deputy Minister of Interior for the Civil Service.

However, the peer review team considers that the procedure for appointing the President of the CzSO seriously lacks transparency. The peer review team did not receive answers to any of the following questions: how does the government pre-select candidates, based on which criteria, which qualifications are required, and how are potential candidates informed of the opening of the procedure in order to be able to express their interest in the position? Similarly, the reasons for dismissal of the President of CzSO are not explicitly provided in the legislation apart from the incompatibility of the position of the President of the Czech Statistical Office with being or becoming a member of a political party or movement.

Although the independence of the CzSO and its President have not been questioned to date, and no CzSO President has been removed from office, the lack of transparency and regulation of the procedures for appointing and removing the CzSO President carries a risk of political interference. This is why the ES CoP requires that: *“The procedures for the recruitment and appointment of the heads of the National Statistical Institutes and Eurostat and, where appropriate, the statistical heads of other statistical authorities, are transparent and based on professional criteria only. The reasons on the basis of which the incumbency can be terminated are specified in the legal framework. These cannot include reasons compromising professional or scientific independence.”*

The previous peer review team already recommended that the responsible Czech authorities should promote legislative amendments laying down clear provisions for the appointment and dismissal of the President of the Czech Statistical Office in line with the European Statistics Code of Practice. The CzSO expressed a divergent view, considering that the existing legislation met the essence of the ES CoP while agreeing that the appointment and dismissal procedure should be transparent.

Noting that the legislation has not been amended, the peer review team therefore reiterates its recommendation to comply with the ES CoP regarding the appointment and dismissal of the CzSO President.

To comply with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R1. The relevant authorities should improve the transparency of future appointments of the President of the Czech Statistical Office, for example, by advertising the post and the necessary qualifications; the relevant authorities should also specify in the legal framework the potential reasons for dismissal, which cannot include reasons compromising professional or scientific independence. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 1.8)

The annual work programme of the Czech Statistical Office is mainly focused on the production of statistics related to the national Programme of Statistical Surveys. Many statistical activities are carried out by Other National Authorities, however, and are not available in a consolidated form covering the full list of statistics produced in the country, reducing the accessibility of the statistical information. To enhance transparency and provide users with a complete list of the statistics available at national level, the Czech Statistical Office should compile and publish a consolidated annual work programme for the National Statistical System.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R2. The Czech Statistical Office should enhance transparency and inform users on the full extent of the statistical production of the National Statistical System and publish a consolidated annual work programme for the National Statistical System. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1.5 and 1bis.1)

To accomplish its mission to provide official statistics for fact-based decision-making and inform society with reliable high-quality statistics, the Czech Statistical Office has developed a multi-annual strategic plan for the period 2022-2026 with specific objectives, actions, and priorities, establishing a coherent roadmap for the implementation of its strategic objectives. Currently, however, there is no connection between actions and priorities with milestones linked to resources. To ensure the timely implementation of the strategic objectives and to identify how these objectives will be met, milestones should be set and linked to resources. The implementation of these actions should also be complemented by performance indicators providing information on the progress made.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R3. The Czech Statistical Office should strengthen the link between strategic objectives and the annual implementation actions and priorities, and complement them with milestones linked to the use of resources and indicators for measuring their implementation. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 10.1, 3.2 and 11.2)

5.2.2 Strengthening the coordination of the National Statistical System

The coordinating role of the Czech Statistical Office in the State Statistical Service is set out in the Act on Official Statistics No 89/1995 Coll. of 20 April 1995 on the State Statistical Service. It focuses on keeping records of activities carried out by Other National Authorities, cooperating with them in the preparation of the Programme of Statistical Survey, although not all European statistics are included in the Programme, and unifying methodological procedures. To address methodological issues, the CzSO routinely consults with the Other National Authorities on specific (general and domain-oriented) issues and holds an annual one-day methodological workshop with all of them. However, due to the specifics of the different statistics produced by the ONAs, the peer review team considers that this practice is not sufficient to ensure the quality of the statistics. National guidelines are in place to ensure quality in the development, production and dissemination of European statistics but the CzSO should also monitor their correct implementation. Furthermore, the CzSO should improve the mechanism and regularly continue implementing quality reviews of European statistics produced by the Other National Authorities.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R4. The Czech Statistical Office should strengthen its coordination of the Other National Authorities by extending quality guidelines for the development, production, and dissemination of European statistics and by improving the system of quality reviews for European statistics produced by the Other National Authorities. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1bis.2)

Over the years, the CzSO has supported the ONAs in the implementation of the ES CoP with various measures. General training courses have been given to introduce the principles and indicators of ES CoP, as well as advice on a more detailed level based on need, according to requests from the ONAs. However, the ONAs' adherence to ES CoP principles is not yet sufficient. The peer review team noted the inconsistency and inadequacy of practices related to the dissemination of statistics in the participating ONAs in particular. For example, there are no pre-planned and published release calendars to notify users in advance. The methodologies used and the quality of production and output are not reported systematically and there are no central solutions for the dissemination of quality reports and methodological documents on the websites. Whilst all the above-mentioned practices are well implemented by the CzSO, as coordinator of the National Statistical System, the CzSO is also responsible for supporting and coordinating the ONAs in meeting the requirements of the ES CoP.

To comply with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R5. The Other National Authorities reviewed (Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports) should comply with the European Statistics Code of Practice, supported by the Czech Statistical Office; in particular, the Other National Authorities reviewed should enhance the dissemination of European statistics by publishing release calendars, quality reports and methodological documents on their websites. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicators 15.7, 15.6 and 6.5)

Access to European statistics on the website of the Czech Statistical Office is somewhat complicated, making it difficult to search for the required information. Moreover, although the CzSO publishes a release calendar of the statistics it produces on its website, the three Other National Authorities reviewed that develop, produce and disseminate European statistics do not publish a release calendar. Therefore, it is recommended to publish the list of all European statistics produced within the NSS and a link to their release calendar and data published on the web. This would improve the visibility of all European statistics produced and make it easier for users to find them.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R6. The Czech Statistical Office should enhance the visibility of the European statistics produced within the National Statistical System by including on its website the list of statistics produced by the Other National Authorities, by domain, with a link to their publication and release calendar. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 15.1 and 6.5)

5.2.3 Continuing to improve efficiency

The CzSO has an overview of the budget and its distribution, including the estimated working hours and volume used for various statistical activities, but this has not been used systematically to calculate production costs. For example, the volume and cost of interviewers' work are measured constantly, and there is also a general overview of costs across all domains and units of the organisation. In the past, the CzSO has also experimented with the calculation of output costs, but it was abandoned due to excessive detail and time, and the experiment did not yield the desired result in terms of efficiency and effectiveness.

Therefore, there is currently no accurate overview of the time and resources spent on specific statistical activities. Also, the estimate of funds required for new statistical activities and other developments is relatively broad, with no reference to existing facts or the actual cost of similar activities. It is recommended that the CzSO develops and implements a more specific cost accounting methodology in order to reduce costs and allow the resources to be used for necessary developments.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R7. The Czech Statistical Office should develop and implement cost estimates of all operations related to the development, production, and dissemination of official statistics, for effective use of existing resources, as well as for cost-effective planning of new statistical activities. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 3.3)

The CzSO has implemented proactive human resources management in line with its strategic goal of becoming a 'recommended employer'. The peer review team observed that the CzSO provides good working conditions and practises participative management. However, as internal mobility is neither encouraged nor organised, it is very difficult for employees to follow their desired career path, for example, by moving to other areas to increase their skills and knowledge.

Internal mobility is a good way to ensure a fruitful exchange of experiences between different statistical areas of the CzSO and facilitates internal cooperation. Mobility should be encouraged, especially among young staff, to improve their skills and knowledge in the different statistical areas. However, it is not enough to wait for a vacancy to arise to organise internal mobility. It should be organised in the form of regular campaigns allowing each employee to express their wishes for mobility to ensure a match between supply and demand.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R8. The Czech Statistical Office should continue enhancing its active human resource management, in particular by organising and promoting internal staff mobility, in order to provide opportunities for staff to improve their skills and develop their careers. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 7.6 and 3.1)

A few years ago, CzSO started developing a model of employee competencies, including descriptions of different work families and the expectations set for them at all levels of the organisation. The main idea of the approach is that the competencies of all employees are evaluated according to the requirements of the position. More specifically, according to the specifics of the position, regular evaluations must be requested regarding competencies in respect of legislation, IT applications and other specific skills related to daily work. According to the vision, evaluations based on the competency model should also provide continuous input into the general training plan.

During the peer review, it became apparent that the competency model is currently a work-in-progress. The model has been developed methodologically and exists as a written document but has not yet been implemented in the organisation. The currently implemented regular evaluation of employees, based on the Civil Service Act, does not take sufficient account of the statistics needs. Expectations to use digital tools for competency evaluation have been described and the CzSO has searched for service providers, but unfortunately has not found a suitable IT partner so far. Therefore, it is recommended to continue with the development of the competency model and its planned implementation in the organisation.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R9. The Czech Statistical Office should continue efforts to ensure that employees' competencies match the requirements of their positions and, therefore, support the improvement of organisational efficiency. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 3.1)

The increasing digitalisation of state operations and the creation of the e-Government platform are an opportunity to reduce the reporting burden through a more extensive use of relevant administrative data. The Czech Statistical Office is already in regular contact with representatives of administrative data sources and is immediately informed on changes that may impact the production of statistics. Increasing efforts to identify and link both existing and new administrative data for statistics will help the CzSO exploit readily available information without conducting surveys. Therefore, the CzSO should investigate the availability of such administrative sources to produce European statistics proactively and explore their full potential in the most effective way.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R10. The Czech Statistical Office should develop a proactive approach in using administrative data relevant to produce European statistics and exploit their full potential for reducing the reporting burden. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 10.3, 9.4 and 2.2)

The peer review team was informed that no mechanism is in place to avoid companies providing the same information to the Czech administration, including the CzSO, several times. In case of too high a burden, reporting units may give priority to tax reporting obligations rather than responding to statistical surveys. There is no "Tell us once" mechanism in the Czech Republic guaranteeing companies that information will be requested once only and shared between the different institutions that need it. The risk is that statistical obligations appear as an additional burden and lead to lower response rates.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R11. The Czech Statistical Office, in cooperation with relevant authorities, should pro-actively consider the creation of a common platform for government data sharing in order to collect information from businesses once only. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 9.3 and 10.3)

5.2.4 Embedding quality management throughout the National Statistical System

Over the years, the CzSO has developed various important elements of the quality management system, including a quality commitment and policy, which guide and support the implementation of quality management throughout the organisation. The improvement of the quality management system has also been significantly supported by a nationwide initiative for public sector organisations. As a good practice, technical project descriptions and requirements are made and used for each iteration of statistical activities in the central IT system, as the standardised and harmonised methodological and technological basis for guaranteeing quality throughout the production line.

Nevertheless, currently there is no fully comprehensive, central approach to the organisation's quality management system. The interrelationships of the existing elements are not systematically described and organised. Therefore, the quality management system is only partially functioning and effective, without applying a comprehensive approach.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R12. The Czech Statistical Office should further progress in the development of a systematic, comprehensive and centrally organised approach to the organisation's quality management system and its interrelated processes. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 4.1)

The CzSO has defined the production of statistics and its activities in relation to the GSBPM model. Quality guidelines have been developed in the organisation according to internal needs for descriptive guidance, and it is a good and systematic practice in the CzSO to review existing guidelines at least once a year, and if necessary, update them on an ongoing basis (for example, in case of changes in processes or software). Domain- and process-specific guidelines are mainly described by the statistical domains themselves, therefore, their detail and content differ across the CzSO and its structural units. Domains also provide input to the technical projects for the production of statistics; such input includes quality requirements and parameters for the subprocesses, but also domain- and process-specific guidance to some extent.

Recently, the CzSO has started a development project to harmonise all processes and related guidance. A list of all organisational processes has been prepared containing information on whether and in what form the guidance exists, in order to support and ensure the quality of production and output. Currently, the project is still in progress, but it is already known that many descriptions and guidance for processes are either incomplete or missing. Therefore, it is recommended to continue with the initiative and ensure coverage across all processes in order to manage risks and ensure quality.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R13. The Czech Statistical Office should enhance and widely promote standardised descriptions and quality guidelines for all processes, to ensure the quality of the production of European statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 4.2)

The Czech Statistical Council debates the draft Programme of Statistical Surveys, which does not include all European statistics, and issues opinions on proposed voluntary statistical surveys. Moreover, the CzSO is in close contact with academia, which advises it on certain methodological issues. However, neither the Council nor the scientific community plays a role in the development of European statistics methodology. To ensure the quality of methodology, it would be necessary to establish a Methodology Committee consisting of internal and external experts to review the methodology of new European statistics produced by the NSS, or major revisions of existing statistical operations, including evaluating statistical methods and proposing new methodological solutions.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R14. The Czech Statistical Office should establish a Methodology Committee with the objective of advising on the methodology of new European statistics produced in the National Statistical System or on major revisions of existing statistical operations. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 7.1, 7.2 and 4.2)

The peer review team recognised the positive image and trust that the CzSO enjoys in the scientific community. The scientific community is an intensive user of survey microdata provided by the CzSO and regular exchanges take place to assist researchers in using these data. Representatives of the scientific community including experts in statistical methodology are regular members of methodology audit teams. However, the scientific community can also provide feedback on how to improve the quality of statistical information, the relevance of survey methodology, the consistency between domains, or the creation of links between registers for improved granularity, thus making statistics more relevant for research purposes. Therefore, the CzSO should cooperate more systematically and reinforce the links with the scientific community.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R15. The Czech Statistical Office should reinforce cooperation with the scientific community. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 7.7)

5.2.5 Making the most of the evolving data ecosystem

User consultations take place in several ways: through the Czech Statistical Council, thematic users' groups and user satisfaction surveys, which are regularly conducted on the opinion of users on products and services provided by the CzSO. The Czech Statistical Council was established by the CzSO as an advisory body. The Council discusses the draft Programme of Statistical Surveys and gives its opinion on proposed non-mandatory statistical surveys. The members of the Council are experts in statistical theory and practice, statistical research and academia, important representatives of the public service dealing with statistics, important data providers and users. However, users are under-represented: only four out of 17 members are user representatives and, moreover, they are only from the business sector (President of the Czech Chamber of Commerce, President of the Czech Traditional Retail Association, Director General of the Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic, President of the Czech Confederation of Trade and Tourism). Other sectors of society such as trade unions, civil society associations and the media are not represented.

In addition, the CzSO has set up thematic user groups, for example, on the consumer price index, to provide information on methodological changes and collect new needs. However, only regular and well-identified users are invited to participate in these groups.

Although these mechanisms are useful, they only concern identified users. In order to meet the needs of all components of Czech society, the National Statistical System must also take into account potential users who could benefit from the current statistical production, and express needs for statistical information on topics not yet covered by the National Statistical System.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R16. The Czech Statistical Office and the Other National Authorities reviewed (Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports) should actively engage in reaching new user groups and involving wider sections of society. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, indicator 11.1)

The CzSO is producing consumer price statistics based on scanner data on a regular basis. Additionally, experimental statistics on tourism, satellite accounts of households and job vacancies have been produced successfully. As new and innovative data sources are emerging from increased connectivity and digitalisation of processes, having already defined a cooperation model with providers of scanner data, the CzSO should seek to identify new data sources and statistical domains of application, developing methodologies in cooperation with the scientific community, and establish agreements with other private data providers to experiment and produce official statistics on a regular basis.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R17. The Czech Statistical Office should enhance research and development activities for exploring new data sources and methodologies for the production of European statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 10.3 and 2.4)

The CzSO provides anonymised microdata files to researchers, under contract, through the Safe Centre (a room located at its headquarters that allows secure access to microdata), but data can only be

processed using software provided by the CzSO. Although the procedures for accessing microdata are working well, they make access to microdata difficult for researchers who wish to log in from outside the CzSO and use the software they work with.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R18. The Czech Statistical Office should further develop access to microdata for scientific purposes including by providing researchers with a secure environment for remote access to microdata. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.4)

To date data from surveys and other statistical operations of the CzSO are stored in the data warehouse used for dissemination. Although the CzSO does not yet have many past surveys and censuses, partly because of a serious flood in 2002, which destroyed a large number of archives, the CzSO does not have a proper archiving policy. Beyond the obligations required by the National Archives, it is essential to preserve the heritage formed by the surveys, censuses and other statistical operations, in the form of files regularly maintained in a readable format and accompanied by the metadata necessary for their use. Therefore, a concrete archiving policy is necessary, as well as a structure in charge of implementing it.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R19. The Czech Statistical Office should develop a policy and fully implement processes for archiving statistical data and metadata. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.1)

In addition to publishing the main indicators derived from the statistics it produces on its website, the CzSO publishes certain analyses based on the data obtained. However, it does not take advantage of all the information available in the National Statistical System to perform cross-cutting analyses. Performing this type of analysis makes it possible to provide users with in-depth information on the characteristics of certain population groups or phenomena, without increasing costs or the burden on respondents. Therefore, the peer review team believes that the CzSO should develop this type of study by taking advantage of the sources available in the National Statistical System and establishing links between them.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R20. The Czech Statistical Office should develop cross-cutting analyses by taking advantage of the different sources of information available in the National Statistical System and enable the establishment of links between the different data sources. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 9.5 and 9.6)

The CzSO website together with the public database and other applications provided by the CzSO are the main channels of disseminating statistics, in accordance with the CzSO's dissemination policy. The website and statistical database are updated almost every working day and are very actively used. Users are generally satisfied with the products and services offered by the CzSO.

Nevertheless, during the peer review meetings with various representatives of user groups, concerns regarding the user-friendliness of the CzSO website and public database were raised repeatedly. Low levels of user comfort and intuitiveness were highlighted mainly, which is why new and less active users often have trouble finding the right section or dataset on the website. Problems with the website's search engine, which does not always provide the best answers, were also highlighted. Regarding the database, the peer review team noted that although experienced visitors already know its functionalities and, therefore, know how to create suitable outputs, new users usually find it very

difficult to understand and use without the help of an experienced specialist. Therefore, it is recommended that the CzSO address its user expectations in more detail regarding the website and the public database, plan improvement actions accordingly and invite users to participate in of development projects, if deemed reasonable.

To improve beyond compliance with the ES CoP, the peer review team recommends:

R21. The Czech Statistical Office should improve the usability and functionality of its website as well as the public database, so that the dissemination of European statistics meets the expectations and needs of users and supports a friendlier, more intuitive use of products and services. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.2)

5.3 VIEWS OF THE NSI, AS THE NATIONAL COORDINATOR OF THE NSS AND THE PEER REVIEW, ON THOSE RECOMMENDATIONS WHERE THEY DIVERGE FROM PEER REVIEW EXPERTS' ASSESSMENT

The CzSO would like to thank the peer review team for the overall professional and comprehensive character of the completed peer review process. The CzSO also welcomes the fact that the report generally acknowledges the compliance of the Czech statistical system with the European Statistics Code of Practice requirements, even though there are some areas of possible improvement.

The CzSO has a divergent view on R1:

R1. The relevant authorities should improve the transparency of future appointments of the President of the Czech Statistical Office, for example, by advertising the post and the necessary qualifications; the relevant authorities should also specify in the legal framework the potential reasons for dismissal, which cannot include reasons compromising professional or scientific independence. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 1.8)

The CzSO fully agrees that the appointment and dismissal procedure should be transparent and is of the opinion that the existing legislative framework formed by the directly applicable Regulation (EU) No 223/2009 on European Statistics (RES) and the Act on Official Statistics No 89/1995 Sb on the State Statistical Service (SSSA) and respective long-term constitutional practice of appointing the CzSO President at the highest-possible institutional level that involves a consensus of the two mutually independent organs of executive power (i.e. government and president) fully comply with ES CoP Indicator 1.8.

The position of the CzSO President corresponds to the highest-level posts in the central state administration of the Czech Republic subordinated to neither political ministry, nor any other administrative authority, and enjoys clear guarantees of professional independence clearly stipulated in the RES and the SSSA. According to the SSSA, the CzSO President is appointed and recalled at the highest-possible level by the President of the Czech Republic upon a proposal of the Government of the Czech Republic. This is a long-term established constitutional custom implicating consensus of the two mutually independent highest organs of executive power involved into this process concerning the candidates' profile (in contrast to sole autonomous act in case only one decision making body was involved). The procedure of appointment and dismissal of the CzSO President is therefore transparent. This approach is completely similar to appointment procedures of the heads of independent bodies alike, e.g. of the national President of the Competition Protection Office. Appointment procedure is also based on professional criteria only. High professional requirements for the position originate from the fact, that the CzSO President has sole responsibility for statistical programming, development, production and dissemination of statistics, including its timing and allocation of human and financial resources, in accordance with the respective quality requirements stipulated in the SSSA and the RES. According to the SSSA, the position of the CzSO President is incompatible with membership in a political party or movement. According to legislative explanation it follows, that becoming a member of a political party or movement is an explicit reason for the dismissal of the President from his position. Regarding reasons of professional independence, the post of the CzSO President is excluded from the Civil Service Act along with other heads of independent nation regulatory authorities. In this respect, the CzSO President is not subject to disciplinary authority of the Deputy Minister of Interior for Civil Service. The CzSO President solely approves official regulations binding for the CzSO civil servants and has no obligation to act in accord with the official regulations issued by the Minister of Interior.

ANNEX A – AGENDA OF THE VISIT

Timing	Topic	Participants
Day 1 – 6 March 2023		
09:00-09:45	Preparatory meeting	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Mr Egor Sidorov, Director, Office of the President of the CzSO Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department Ms Martina Górska, Quality Manager
09:45-10:00	Welcome and programme introduction	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Mr Marek Rojíček, President of the CzSO Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO Ms Eva Krumpová, First Vice-President of the CzSO Ms Pavla Trendová, Section Director, General Methodology and Registers Section Mr Petr Musil, Section Director, Macroeconomic Statistics Section Mr Jan Ernest, Section Director, Business Statistics Section Mr Martin Zelený, Section Director, Demography and Social Statistics Section Ms Veronika Zavoralová, Section Director, Financial and Administrative Section Assistance: Mr Egor Sidorov, Director, Office of the President of the CzSO Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department Ms Martina Górska, Quality Manager
10:00-11:00	Presentation of the National Statistical System	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Mr Marek Rojíček, President of the CzSO Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO Ms Eva Krumpová, First Vice-President of the CzSO

		Ms Pavla Trendová, Section Director, General Methodology and Registers Section Mr Petr Musil, Section Director, Macroeconomic Statistics Section Mr Jan Ernest, Section Director, Business Statistics Section Mr Martin Zelený, Section Director, Demography and Social Statistics Section Ms Veronika Zavoralová, Section Director, Financial and Administrative Section Assistance: Mr Egor Sidorov, Director, Office of the President of the CzSO Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department Ms Martina Górska, Quality Manager
11:00-11:15	Coffee break	
11:15-12:45	Coordination and cooperation	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Ms Pavla Trendová, Section Director, General Methodology and Registers Section Mr Marek Rojíček, President of the CzSO Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO Mr Petr Eliáš, Director, General Methodology Department Mr Egor Sidorov, Director, Office of the President of the CZSO Mr Jan Ernest, Section Director, Business Statistics Section Ms Marcela Ernest Jindrová, Head of Unit, European Integration Unit Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department Mr Štěpán Jícha, Head of Unit, Statistical Surveys Coordination Unit expert, Statistical Surveys Coordination Unit Mr Ondřej Vozár, Head of Unit, Unit for Mathematical and Statistical Methods and Statistical Quality On request: expert, Unit for Personnel Training and Fund for Cultural and Social Needs Assistance: Ms Martina Górska, Quality Manager
12:45-13:45	Lunch	

13:45-15:15	Professional independence and the Law on Official Statistics and related legislation	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Mr Egor Sidorov, Director, Office of the President of the CzSO Mr Marek Rojíček, President of the CzSO Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO Mr Petr Eliáš, Director, General Methodology Department Mr David Elischer, Director, Legislation and International Cooperation Department Mr Jan Ernest, Section Director, Business Statistics Section Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department Mr Martin Zelený, Section Director, Demography and Social Statistics Section Mr Jan Cieslar, Spokesman On request: Ms Gabriela Váchová, Head of Unit, Legislative Unit Data protection officer Mr Pavel Charvát, Head of Unit, Unit for Protection of Confidentiality and Security of Information Ms Pavla Trendová, Section Director, General Methodology and Registers Section Mr Ondřej Vozár, Head of Unit, Unit for Mathematical and Statistical Methods and Statistical Quality Assistance: Ms Martina Górska, Quality Manager
15:15-15:30	Coffee break	
15:30-17:00	Programming, planning and resources	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Mr Egor Sidorov, Director, Office of the President of the CzSO Mr Marek Rojíček, President of the CzSO Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO Mr Martin Zelený, Section Director, Demography and Social Statistics Section Mr Petr Eliáš, Director, General Methodology Department Ms Jana Nechvátalová, Director, Human Resources and Wages Department expert, Unit for Personnel Training and Fund for Cultural and Social Needs

		Mr Jan Kožíšek, Director, 21 - Financing and Budget Department expert, IT Section, Solution architect, member of the Board of Architects Mr Jiří Volek, Director, 91 IT - Operation Department Mr Pavel Charvát, Head of Unit, Unit for Protection of Confidentiality and Security of Information On request: Ms Pavla Trendová, Section Director, General Methodology and Registers Section Mr Jan Ernest, Section Director, Business Statistics Section Mr Petr Musil, Section Director, Macroeconomic Statistics Section Mr Ondřej Vozár, Head of Unit, Unit for Mathematical and Statistical Methods and Statistical Quality Mr Petr Lebeda, Head of Unit, Service Desk Unit Mr Štěpán Jícha, Head of Unit, Statistical Surveys Coordination Unit expert, Statistical Surveys Coordination Unit Ms Veronika Zavoralová, Section Director, Financial and Administrative Section Mr Karel Karban, Contractor - Solution architect Assistance: Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department
17:00-18:00	Peer review expert team discussion	

Timing	Topic	Participants
Day 2 – 7 March 2023		
09:00-10:30	Quality	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO Mr Egor Sidorov, Director, Office of the President of the CzSO Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department Mr Petr Musil, Section Director, Macroeconomic Statistics Section

		Mr Jan Ernest, Section Director, Business Statistics Section Mr Martin Zelený, Section Director, Demography and Social Statistics Section Mr Juraj Lojka, Director, Business Statistics Coordination and Business Cycle Surveys Department expert, IT Section, Solution architect, member of the Board of Architects Mr Ondřej Vozár, Head of Unit, Unit for Mathematical and Statistical Methods and Statistical Quality Mr Pavel Skotnica, Director, Department for Methodology of Performing Statistical Processing Mr Petr Eliáš, Director, General Methodology Department On request: Ms Helena Kolářková, Head of Unit, Internet Unit Ms Štěpánka Zelenková, Head of Unit, User Support Unit Assistance: Ms Martina Górska, Quality Manager
10:30-10:40	Coffee break	
10:40-12:10	Dissemination and confidentiality	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CZSO Mr Pavel Charvát, Head of Unit, Unit for Protection of Confidentiality and Security of Information Data protection officer Ms Helena Kolářková, Head of Unit, Internet Unit Ms Štěpánka Zelenková, Head of Unit, User Support Unit Mr Jan Cieslar, Spokesman Mr Ondřej Vozár, Head of Unit, Unit for Mathematical and Statistical Methods and Statistical Quality Mr Martin Zelený, Section Director, Demography and Social Statistics Section expert, Information Services Unit (IS KV) On request: Mr Petr Musil, Section Director, Macroeconomic Statistics Section Mr Jan Ernest, Section Director, Business Statistics Section Mr Martin Zelený, Section Director, Demography and Social Statistics Section

		expert, Output Database Unit Mr Hynek Jordán, 150Marketing and PR Unit expert, Internet Unit Assistance: Ms Martina Górska, Quality Manager
12:10-13:00	Lunch	
13:00-14:45	Methodology, data collection, data processing and administrative data	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Ms Pavla Trendová, Section Director, General Methodology and Registers Section Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO Mr Jan Ernest, Section Director, Business Statistics Section Mr Petr Musil, Section Director, Macroeconomic Statistics Section Mr Martin Zelený, Section Director, Demography and Social Statistics Section Mr Petr Eliáš, Director, General Methodology Department expert, IT Section, Solution architect, member of the Board of Architects expert, Statistical Surveys Coordination Unit Mr Pavel Skotnica, Director, Department for Methodology of Performing Statistical Processing Mr Ondřej Vozár, Head of Unit, Unit for Mathematical and Statistical Methods and Statistical Quality expert, Unit for Technological Support for Processing of Industry and Energy Statistics (KS Plzeň) On request: Mr Michal Čigáš, Director, Statistical Registers Department Mr Štěpán Jícha, Head of Unit, Statistical Surveys Coordination Unit expert, Unit for Personnel Training and Fund for Cultural and Social Needs Assistance: Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department
14:45-15:45	Progress and plans for the future	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Mr Marek Rojíček, President of the CzSO Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO

		Mr Egor Sidorov, Director, Office of the President of the CzSO Ms Pavla Trendová, Section Director, General Methodology and Registers Section Mr Petr Musil, Section Director, Macroeconomic Statistics Section Mr Jan Ernest, Section Director, Business Statistics Section Mr Martin Zelený, Section Director, Demography and Social Statistics Section Ms Veronika Zavoralová, Section Director, Financial and Administrative Section expert, IT Section, Solution architect, member of the Board of Architects Mr Jiří Volek, Director, IT - Operation Department Assistance: Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department Ms Martina Górska, Quality Manager
15:45-16:00	Coffee break	
16:00-17:00	Meeting with main users – Media	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO Mr Jan Cieslar, Spokesman Mr Hynek Jordán, Marketing and PR Unit Assistance: Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department Media: Data journalists: HN - newspapers Open data users: 2 people (ČRo - radio) Election results users: Česká televize - TV General journalists: Česká televize – TV
17:00-18:00	Peer review expert team discussion	

Timing	Topic	Participants
Day 3 – 8 March 2023		

09:00-09:30	General opening session with all the Other National Authorities (ONAs)	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CZSO Mr Petr Eliáš, Director, General Methodology Department Mr Štěpán Jícha, Head of Unit, Statistical Surveys Coordination Unit Ms Pavla Trendová, Section Director, General Methodology and Registers section Ministry of Transport: Mr Luděk Sosna (Head of Statistical Service) 2 experts Ministry of Industry and Trade: Mr Martin Hronza (Head of Statistical Service) 3 experts Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports: Mr Václav Jelen (Head of Statistical Service) 2 experts Assistance: Mr Egor Sidorov, Director, Office of the President of the CzSO
09:30-11:00	Meeting with ONA – Ministry of Transport	The Peer Review Expert Team: All Ministry of Transport: Mr Luděk Sosna (Head of Statistical Service) 2 experts The NSI: Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO Ms Pavla Trendová, Section Director, General Methodology and Registers Section Mr Petr Eliáš, Director, General Methodology Department Mr Štěpán Jícha, Head of Unit, Statistical Surveys Coordination Unit Assistance: Mr Egor Sidorov, Director, Office of the President of the CzSO
11:00-11:15	Coffee break	

11:15-12:45	Meeting with ONA – Ministry of Industry and Trade	The Peer Review Expert Team: All Ministry of Industry and Trade: Mr Martin Hronza (Head of Statistical Service) 3 experts The NSI: Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO Mr Petr Eliáš, Director, General Methodology Department Mr Štěpán Jícha, Head of Unit, Statistical Surveys Coordination Unit Assistance: Ms Martina Górska, Quality Manager
12:45-13:45	Lunch	
13:45-15:15	Meeting with ONA – Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports	The Peer Review Expert Team: All Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports: Mr Václav Jelen (Head of Statistical Service) 2 experts The NSI: Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO Ms Pavla Trendová, Section Director, General Methodology and Registers Section Mr Petr Eliáš, Director, General Methodology Department Mr Štěpán Jícha, Head of Unit, Statistical Surveys Coordination Unit Assistance: Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department
15:15-15:30	Coffee break	
15:30-16:45	Meeting with Czech Statistical Council	The Peer Review Expert Team: All Czech Statistical Council: Ms Marie Bohatá Mr Richard Hindls Mr Eduard Outrata Mr Bedřich Moldan Mr Jakub Fischer

		The NSI: Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO Assistance: Mr Egor Sidorov, Director, Office of the President of the CZSO Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department Ms Martina Górska, Quality Manager
16:45-17:45	Peer review expert team discussion	

Timing	Topic	Participants
Day 4 – 9 March 2023		
09:00-09:30	SIS - demo	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department Mr Petr Eliáš, Director, General Methodology Department Mr Pavel Skotnica, Director, Department for Methodology of Performing Statistical Processing 2 experts
09:30-11:00	Meeting with main data providers	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CZSO Mr Jan Ernest, Section Director, Business Statistics Section Mr Martin Zelený, Section Director, Demography and Social Statistics Section On request: Mr Petr Musil, Section Director, Macroeconomic Statistics Section Assistance: Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department Main data providers:

		General Financial Directorate Ministry of Agriculture CENIA – Czech Environmental Information Agency - Ministry of the Environment Czech Social Security Administration Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Air Navigation Services of the Czech Republic ČEZ Group SIEMENS s.r.o.
11:00-11:15	Coffee break	
11:15-12:00	Meeting with providers of new data sources	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CZSO Mr Petr Musil, Section Director, Macroeconomic Statistics Section Mr Martin Zelený, Section Director, Demography and Social Statistics Section Mr Jiří Volek, Director, IT - Operation Department expert, IT Section, Solution architect, member of the Board of Architects (scanner data) On request: Expert on scanner data Assistance: Mr Egor Sidorov, Director, Office of the President of the CzSO Providers of new data sources: Albert Česká republika, s.r.o
12:00-13:00	Meeting with junior staff	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Expert, European Integration Unit Expert, Government Accounts Unit Expert, Unit for processing of Banking and Insurance Statistics Expert, Unit for Mathematical and Statistical Methods and Statistical Quality Expert, Statistical Projects and Integration Programming Support Unit Expert, Social Surveys Unit Expert, User Support Unit Expert, Information Services and Registers Administration Unit
13:00-14:00	Lunch	

14:00-15:00	Meeting with main users – Ministries and other public/private institutions (including Central Bank as a user)	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CZSO Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department Ms Štěpánka Zelenková, Head of Unit, User Support Mr Jan Ernest, Section Director, Business Statistics Section Assistance: Mr Egor Sidorov, Director, Office of the President of the CzSO Ms Martina Górska, Quality Manager Ministries and other public/private institutions: Czech National Bank Ministry of Finance Ministry of Industry and Trade Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Czech University of Life Sciences Prague Raiffeisen Bank
15:00-16:00	Meeting with main users – business associations and federations and trade unions	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO Ms Štěpánka Zelenková, Head of Unit, User Support Mr Jan Ernest, Section Director, Business Statistics Section Assistance: Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department Main users: Association of entrepreneurs in the construction industry Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions Director for Retail, Czech Confederation of Commerce and Tourism Czech Chamber of Commerce
16:00-16:15	Coffee break	
16:15-17:15	Meeting with main users – Scientific community	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO

		Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department Ms Štěpánka Zelenková, Head of Unit, User Support Mr Ondřej Vozár, Head of Unit, Unit for Mathematical and Statistical Methods and Statistical Quality Assistance: Ms Martina Górska, Quality Manager Scientific community: Charles University – Faculty of Mathematics and Physics Prague University of Economics and Business – 2 persons CERGE-EI Charles University – Faculty of Science Charles University – Environment Centre
17:15-18:15	Peer review expert team discussion	

Timing	Topic	Participants
Day 5 – 10 March 2023		
09:00-10:30	Peer review expert team discussion	
10:30-10:45	Coffee break	
10:45-11:30	Clarifications, remaining or additional issues and focus areas	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Mr Marek Rojíček, President of the CzSO Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO Ms Pavla Trendová, Section Director, General Methodology and Registers Section Mr Petr Musil, Section Director, Macroeconomic Statistics Section Mr Jan Ernest, Section Director, Business Statistics Section Mr Martin Zelený, Section Director, Demography and Social Statistics Section Ms Jan Kožíšek, Director, 21 - Financing and Budget Department expert, IT Section, Solution architect, member of the Board of Architects

		Mr Egor Sidorov, Director, Office of the President of the CzSO Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department Assistance: Ms Martina Górska, Quality Manager On request: Mr Petr Eliáš, Director, General Methodology Department Ms Jana Nechvátalová, Director, Human Resources and Wages Department Mr Ondřej Vozár, Head of Unit, Unit for Mathematical and Statistical Methods and Statistical Quality Mr Pavel Charvát, Head of Unit, Unit for Protection of Confidentiality and Security of Information Data Protection Officer
11:30-13:30	Meeting with the senior management of the NSI: conclusions and recommendations	The Peer Review Expert Team: All The NSI: Mr Marek Rojíček, President of the CzSO Mr Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO Ms Eva Krumpová, First Vice-President of the CZSO Ms Pavla Trendová, Section Director, General Methodology and Registers Section Mr Petr Musil, Section Director, Macroeconomic Statistics Section Mr Jan Ernest, Section Director, Business Statistics Section Mr Martin Zelený, Section Director, Demography and Social Statistics Section Ms Veronika Zavoralová, Section Director, Financial and Administrative Section IT Section, Solution architect, member of the Board of Architects Mr Egor Sidorov, Director, Office of the President of the CzSO Ms Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department Ms Jana Nechvátalová, Director, Human Resources and Wages Department Assistance: Ms Martina Górska, Quality Manager The ONAs: Expert, Ministry of Transport Mr Martin Hronza, Ministry of Industry and Trade

		Mr Václav Jelen Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
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ANNEX B – LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

CzSO participants

CzSO Management:

Marek Rojíček, President of the CzSO
Eva Krumpová, First Vice-President of the CzSO
Jaroslav Sixta, Vice-President of the CzSO
Veronika Zavoralová, Section Director, Financial and Administrative Section
Pavla Trendová, Section Director, General Methodology and Registers Section
Petr Musil, Section Director, Macroeconomic Statistics Section
Jan Ernest, Section Director, Business Statistics Section
Martin Zelený, Section Director, Demography and Social Statistics Section

Peer review team:

Petra Kuncová, Director, Information Services Department
Egor Sidorov, Director, Office of the President of the CzSO
Martina Górska, Quality Manager

Participants:

Jan Cieslar, Spokesman
Michal Čigáš, Director, Statistical Registers Department
Petr Eliáš, Director, General Methodology Department
David Elischer, Director, Legislation and International Cooperation Department
Marcela Ernest Jindrová, European Integration Unit
Data Protection Officer
Pavel Charvát, Unit for Protection of Confidentiality and Security of Information
Štěpán Jícha, Statistical Surveys Coordination Unit
Karel Karban, Contractor - Solution architect
Helena Kolářková, Internet Unit
Jan Kožíšek, Director, Financing and Budget Department
Expert, Unit for Personnel Training and Fund for Cultural and Social Needs
Petr Lebeda, Service Desk Unit
Juraj Lojka, Director, Business Statistics Coordination and Business Cycle Surveys Department
Expert, IT Section Solution architect, member of the Board of Architects
Jana Nechvátalová, Director, Human Resources and Wages Department
Michal Novotný, Director, Department of Communication
Pavel Skotnica, Director, Department for Methodology of Performing Statistical Processing
Expert, Information Services Unit
Gabriela Váchová, Legislative Unit
Jiří Volek, Director, IT - Operation Department
Ondřej Vozár, Unit for Mathematical and Statistical Methods and Statistical Quality
Expert, Unit for Technological Support for Processing of Industry and Energy Statistics
Expert, Statistical Surveys Coordination Unit
Štěpánka Zelenková, User Support Unit
Expert, European Integration Unit
Expert, Government Accounts Unit
Expert, Unit for Processing of Banking and Insurance Statistics and Tourism Statistics
Expert, Unit for Mathematical and Statistical Methods and Statistical Quality
Expert, Statistical Projects and Integration Programming Support Unit

Expert, Social Surveys Unit
Expert, Information Services and Registers Administration Unit
Expert, User Support Unit

Czech Statistical Council:

Ms Marie Bohatá
Mr Richard Hindls
Mr Eduard Outrata
Mr Bedřich Moldan
Mr Jakub Fischer

Ministry of Transport:

Mr Luděk Sosna (Head of Statistical Service)
2 experts

Ministry of Industry and Trade:

Mr Martin Hronza (Head of Statistical Service)
3 experts

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports:

Mr Václav Jelen (Head of Statistical Service)
2 experts

Main data providers:

General Financial Directorate, Ministry of Agriculture
CENIA – Czech Environmental Information Agency - Ministry of the Environment
Czech Social Security Administration
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Air Navigation Services of the Czech Republic
ČEZ Group
SIEMENS s.r.o.
Albert Česká republika, s.r.o

Ministries and other public/private institutions:

Czech National Bank
Ministry of Finance
Ministry of Industry and Trade (on-line)
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Czech University of Life Sciences Prague
Raiffeisen Bank

Main users:

Association of entrepreneurs in the construction industry
Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions
Director for retail, Czech Confederation of Commerce and Tourism
Czech Chamber of Commerce

Scientific community:

Charles University – Faculty of Mathematics and Physics

Prague University of Economics and Business – 2 people

CERGE-EI

Charles University - Faculty of Science

Charles University – Environment Centre