



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

## HUNGARY

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April 2023

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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Hungarian Central Statistical Office has a long history of being a forward-looking, professionally ambitious and highly appreciated statistical office.

The new Official Statistics Act from 2016 strengthens the legal framework for the Hungarian statistical system and establishes more precise conditions for the appointment and dismissal of the President of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office. The President is the Chief Statistician of Hungary and is responsible for the coordination of official statistics in the country.

The Official Statistics Act defines the Official Statistical Service and strengthens the role of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office. It provides a strong mandate to coordinate the production of all official statistics. The Act also designates a new and rather unique role to the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, namely to carry out an accreditation process to verify and ensure that organisations compiling official statistics follow the criteria set out in the Act itself. This accreditation is required for organisations to produce official statistics and to be part of the Official Statistical Service. The accreditation has been a driving force for development actions carried out in the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics and participating in the peer review (Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority, Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Interior).

The strong governance of the Hungarian statistical system is supported by two forums with separate tasks. The National Statistical Coordination Board, chaired by the President of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office and including members representing the other organisations of the Official Statistical Service, is the main forum for coordinating statistical production. The National Statistical Council, composed of representatives of data providers, data users and producers of statistics and appointed by the Prime Minister, acts as an advisory body to the President of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office.

According to the Official Statistics Act, the Hungarian Central Statistical Office has a clear mandate to access data from administrative data sources and privately held data, excluding personal data. This legal mandate still requires some work, however, to be fully operationalised.

The Hungarian Central Statistical Office is considered a trusted and valued independent institution. The statistics are regarded as objective, of high quality, reliable and timely. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office is perceived as responsive to problem-solving and open to technical discussions. Co-operation between the Hungarian Central Statistical Office and the scientific community and academia is in place and very active.

The Hungarian Central Statistical Office has well-established procedures to guarantee the protection of confidential data and preserve anonymity. This is embedded in the culture of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office and gives assurance to data providers.

The long-standing methodological solutions act as the backbone of statistical production, such as the metadata-driven IT architecture, which has been developed since the 1970s. The statistical registers are well-defined, and there is good cooperation with the owners of those administrative data sources where the dataset is used as a frame.

It is noted that qualified staff with motivation and dedication towards scientific-based methodological innovation is an important requirement for forward-looking developments. The cooperation with academia on methodology-related developments has been valuable to the Hungarian Central Statistical Office in acquiring new knowledge. The methodological unit in the Hungarian Central Statistical Office is active in international cooperation and, thus, contributes to new relevant developments internationally.

The peer review team noted that despite resource limitations, there are many plans and efforts to develop and improve the statistical processes and methodology. There is a culture of innovation within the organisation of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, and many innovative projects are carried out in cooperation with other administrative organisations, academia, and private companies.

Focus on users and their needs has progressed over recent years, and the Strategy 2030 of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office gives top priority to user needs. In addition to improved web services, recent accomplishments include additional and more frequent data during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as a sub-site for small and medium-sized enterprises with an application designed specifically for these users.

Generally, the peer review team considers that the Hungarian Statistical System demonstrates compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice. There are 22 recommendations, grouped under five main headings, with 19 of them focused on improvements going beyond compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice, and three recommendations addressing compliance issues.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### I. Strengthening the Hungarian statistical system and promoting confidence in official statistics in society

There is currently no common approach across the members of the Hungarian statistical system as to how official statistics are branded and identified. The use of a shared logo could help strengthen public perception of the professional independence of these members and underline their adherence to the ES CoP.

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

***1. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office and all Other National Authorities should develop a common brand, which would allow better recognition of the value of the data they disseminate and contribute to increasing confidence in official statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1.6)***

The distinctive accreditation process has provided effective guidance for the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics to improve and standardise statistical processes and assisted them in advancing beyond operational tasks and focusing on development. There is a growing demand for the Hungarian Central Statistical Office to provide further support after accreditation to develop the statistical capacity of the Official Statistical Service beyond meeting the standards of the National Statistics Code of Practice in the face of new data ecosystem requirements.

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

**2. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should design and implement a capacity-development programme for the Official Statistical Service, particularly for the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics, to ensure that the Official Statistical Service has the necessary skills to deal with the new data ecosystem's current and future challenges. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 7.6 and 3.1)**

Although the new Official Statistics Act adopted in 2016 introduced detailed rules for the appointment of the President of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (e.g. the requirement for the appointee to be an individual with recognised statistical qualifications and at least ten years of professional experience within the Official Statistical Service or the European Statistical System, of which at least five years spent in a managerial position), there is no full transparency at the start of the process, especially when there is no advertisement of the vacancy. This may have the potential to impact negatively on the perception of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office as a professionally independent organisation.

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

**3. The relevant government authorities should improve the transparency of the procedure for the appointment of the President of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, for example, by advertising the post. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 1.8)**

Pre-release access to first releases and leading indicators is granted to a large number of public administrations and media organisations and there is no specific IT-based security mechanism (e.g. encryption) in place for the transmission of the information. However, as required by the ES CoP, any privileged pre-release access to outside users should be limited, well-justified, controlled and publicised. In particular, the absence of secure transmission protocols is at odds with the principle of privileged pre-release access being controlled.

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

**4. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should ensure that privileged pre-release access to outside users is justified more clearly, more limited in number and granted in accordance with secure and controlled transmission protocols. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 6.7)**

The legal status of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office as a head governmental office (central governmental administrative organisation) has advantages such as full autonomy within its allocated budget, but it also generates limitations for human and financial resources as well as for procurement procedures that increase the administrative burden and adversely affect its flexibility and optimal functioning. For example, the centralised management of human resources features fixed categories and salary limits, making it difficult for the Hungarian Central Statistics Office to recruit highly skilled talent. Also, the centralised IT procurement processes increase costs and are not sufficiently agile. This situation puts the organisation in a difficult position in the context of growing demands on it to expand the role of official statistics and be a driver of change in a rapidly evolving national data ecosystem.

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

**5. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should analyse and define options to address issues related to the management of human, financial and IT resources and other ways to ensure increased agility in managing these resources. In particular, the Hungarian Central Statistical Office should examine the potential of a change of its legal status from a head governmental office to an autonomous public administration body or an autonomous regulatory body (including an analysis of the risks and benefits of all possible options) and discuss with the Cabinet Minister of the Prime Minister the prospect of such a change. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 3.1 and 10.4).**

In a number of cases, the Hungarian Central Statistical Office is using new data sources for the production of official statistics in the context of partnerships established with private data holders. Despite these positive experiences, there remain obstacles preventing a more systematic reuse of privately held data for official statistics that goes beyond the production of experimental statistics. In particular, the absence of a legal framework, addressing notably issues such as the conditions for access, the data protection or the protection of business secrets, is hampering a more extensive use of these new data sources. Relevant supporting mechanisms (e.g., the development of a methodological framework for the use of such data for official statistics purposes or the development of participatory and public consultation mechanisms leading to a stronger dialogue with and engagement of private data holders, statistical users and citizens) could also be developed to that end.

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

**6. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office and the relevant government authorities should ensure that an appropriate legal framework and other supporting mechanisms are in place to grant the Hungarian Central Statistical Office authority to access and use privately held data. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 2.4)**

## **II. Enhancing user orientation**

The Hungarian Central Statistical Office has developed services for scientific use of the microdata. However, so far, to use these services, researchers need to use a safe centre or request the release of anonymised microdata sets. This limits the use of individual-level microdata to a couple of locations. A secure environment for remote access to microdata would make it possible to provide better services to researchers.

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

**7. The Hungarian Central 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 Hungarian Central Statistical Offices website has recently been redesigned. However, there is still need for further modernisation, to ensure that the website and statistical databases are the main means for disseminating statistical outputs. Some users also pointed out that the release calendar would benefit from being more intuitive and transparent.

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

**8. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should continue improving the service to users, for example, by further modernising the website, enhancing the release calendar, striving to publish increased statistical insights and ensuring the systematic monitoring of user satisfaction. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 15.2, 1.4 and 11.3)**

Health statistics are produced by several institutions in Hungary. Users have difficulties in gaining access to different statistical data and researchers would benefit from the ability to use and interlink microdata on health from various sources.

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

**9. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office and the institutions producing health statistics should step up their efforts towards making health statistical data more easily accessible to users, paying special attention to access to microdata for research purposes and ensuring increased opportunities to interlink different datasets. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.4)**

The Hungarian Central Statistical Office provides additional services upon request. These may be additional analyses based on user needs. For statistical services to be transparent and impartial, the public should be able to know about custom-designed analyses provided, e.g. through the publication of a list of these user requests.

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

**10. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should ensure that the public is informed about custom-designed analyses and datasets provided upon request. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 15.3)**

The National Statistical Council acts as an advisory and review body to the President of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office. The Council's role is to monitor the implementation of the principles set out in the European Statistics Code of Practice. Another important role is to review the draft National Statistical Survey Programme as well as the annual dissemination programme of the Official Statistical Service. To ensure that the Council is able to fulfil its role in reviewing plans for coming years, it is important that these future-oriented issues are reflected in its agenda.

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

**11. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should reflect on ways to involve the National Statistical Council more proactively in forward-looking strategic discussions and making it more supportive for the development activities of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1bis.3)**

### III. Ensuring adequate financial and human resources

Building on its unique position as an independent organisation and on its wide experience in terms of data management, a stronger role could be envisaged for the Hungarian Central Statistical Office in the data governance system in Hungary. This would also contribute to improving the quality of administrative data and would enable the potential of new data sources for official statistics to be explored. However, such a strengthened role requires adequate resources to be granted to the Hungarian Central Statistical Office.

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

**12. The relevant government authorities should ensure adequate resources for the Hungarian Central Statistical Office to assume an increasing role in the emerging data ecosystem in Hungary, to investigate new data sources, to increase the outreach to users and their needs and to enhance innovation within the Hungarian statistical system. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 3.1, 7.1 and 11.1)**

The primary reason for staff turnover at the Hungarian Central Statistical Office is the comparatively low remuneration level, which puts the Hungarian Central Statistical Office at a disadvantage compared with other talent recruiters, such as the private sector and other public sector institutions offering higher salaries. Workplace incentives to attract and retain talent to counteract this effect, such as considering motivational approaches in human resource management and non-financial incentives, are a pressing priority.

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

**13. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should build on its People Strategy and implement practical measures to strengthen and improve incentives for staff retention and motivation to compensate for low remuneration. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 3.1)**

The Official Statistics Act includes an ample mandate for the Hungarian Central Statistical Office's involvement in the design, development and discontinuation of administrative data sources for official statistical purposes. In practice, however, the Hungarian Central Statistical Office may face impediments to effectively intervening in the design of and subsequent changes in administrative data sources, which ultimately can hamper the production and quality of official statistics.

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

**14. The relevant government authorities should ensure the increased involvement of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office in the design, development and discontinuation of administrative data sources maintained by public administrations and should strengthen the role and resources of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office in the context of national data governance, specifically with regard to the quality issues of administrative data sources. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 2.2 and 9.4)**



## IV. Improving the overall system of quality management

Even though there is a legal mandate in the Official Statistics Act for the Hungarian Central Statistical Office to access administrative data sources and their metadata, in practice, several administrative data holders have difficulties in providing the necessary metadata. However, due to quality reasons, it is essential for a statistical office to have procedures in place ensuring the regular provision of standardised metadata by the administrative data holders.

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

**15. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office, along with the administrative data holders, should continue to work together to improve the quality of administrative data sources, including the availability of metadata, and increase the interoperability of administrative data sources. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 8.7 and 2.2)**

The Hungarian Central Statistical Office has a strong commitment to quality and has been working on modernising its processes, products, and management system continuously, for years. The recently developed quality policy is published on the website, however, it would be easier for users to access information on quality if the website contained a dedicated section for quality issues. An external review of the quality system might be helpful both in assuring and communicating quality.

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

**16. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should develop and implement a quality management system, including regular assessments of the quality of statistical processes, and publicise it on its website in a visible place. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 4.1 and 4.4)**

User-oriented quality reports are not produced regularly and are not available in accordance with the European Standard, the Single Integrated Metadata Structure. Such quality reports are important as they enable users to assess output quality and give relevant feedback to the Hungarian Central Statistical Office. User satisfaction surveys and other methods to monitor user needs are not implemented on a regular basis either, and surveys aiming to measure satisfaction with data quality are rare. The main results from user satisfaction surveys should be publicly available and the feedback should be carefully considered by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office as this can provide important input to action plans improving output quality.

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

**17. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should regularly monitor output quality according to the European Standard. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 4.3 and 4.4)**

The Hungarian Central Statistical Office is in the process of finalising the mapping of processes before revising the national quality guidelines, last published in 2015. The guidelines include quality criteria for the different stages of the business process model and are available as a stand-alone document on the website, although not in a prominent place.

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

**18. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should revise, update and publicise the national quality guidelines, making them easily accessible (visible place on the website). (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1bis.2, 4.1 and 4.2)**

## **V. Further strengthening and clarifying the role and statistical activities of the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics**

The reviewed Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics have a clear commitment to the European and National Statistics Code of Practice. However, on the websites of these organisations, there is little mention of the statistical role of the organisation, information on statistical production processes or statistical data. Official statistics and participation in the Hungarian statistical system are not visible to the public. Furthermore, so far, public perception associates official statistics mostly with the data published by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office while the activities of the Other National Authorities are less well known or visible. However, the public should know about these producers and the methodology of their statistics published.

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

**19. The reviewed Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics (the Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Interior) should pursue their efforts towards full adherence to the European Statistics Code of Practice; in particular, they should undertake measures to be more visible as part of the Official Statistical Service. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1bis.2 and 15.2)**

Since its reorganisation in 2022, the Ministry of Interior has several background institutions (organisations subordinate to the Ministry of Interior) producing official statistics. In the current set-up, the Ministry of Interior is defined as Other National Authority developing, producing and disseminating European statistics, unlike the specific organisational entities (background institutions) that are responsible for statistical production. Coordination and cooperation between several statistical authorities is complicated and ineffective in its present configuration and set-up. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should be able to coordinate and assess all official statistical production directly with the organisations producing the statistics rather than through a ministerial or other governing body.

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

**20. The Ministry of Interior together with the Hungarian Central Statistical Office should review the role of the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating European statistics, possibly in the context of the forthcoming accreditation procedure, and assign it to those institutions within the Ministry of Interior that are independently responsible for the production of European statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 10.4)**

The Ministry of Agriculture has made visible progress over the last few years, featuring developments such as yearly metadata revisions, the production of quality reports and the development of a dedicated statistical website, different from the Ministry's main site.

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

***21. The Ministry of Agriculture should further develop its webpage by adding more information on statistics, such as quality reports and information in English. (Improvement-related: ES CoP 15.7)***

The Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority is in the process of establishing agreements with holders of administrative data to gain access to and exchange data. These agreements should be extended to other institutions also, in order to be able to improve and extend its statistical output.

The Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority has gradually improved its quality management system. Nevertheless, the quality management can be further improved by e.g. including on its website metadata and quality information according to European Standards. It is also noted that its website lacks a statistical database facilitating self-tabulation, although there is an ongoing project to develop a dissemination database.

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

***22. The Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority should further enhance compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice by producing regular quality reports and publishing these on its website and, in addition, developing a dynamic dissemination database and actively cooperating with the holders of relevant administrative data sources. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 15.5 and 15.2)***

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

## 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 (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 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 Principle 3 regarding the adequacy of resources as well as Principle 6 on impartiality and objectivity. Resources are always limited and there are ways to manage with scarce resources. However, when considering the challenges of statistical production and the fast changes in the data landscape, the resource needs of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO) should be reassessed. Principle 6 requires close attention in the HCSO since, in order to maintain confidence in official statistics, it is important to inform the public about all datasets offered to special data users on request.

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 legal basis for official statistics in Hungary is [Act No. CLV of 2016 on Official Statistics](#). It establishes the Official Statistical Service (OSS) and provides a comprehensive legal framework for the organisation, production and dissemination of official statistics in Hungary. Notably it contains provisions on the status, tasks and management of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO), on statistical bodies, on statistical surveys and on the dissemination of statistics.

The implementation of the Official Statistics Act is the subject of [Government Regulation 184/2017 \(VII. 5.\)](#), which describes the process for the accreditation of the members of the OSS. There is a [National Statistics Code of Practice](#) that determines the detailed contents of the principles of official statistics, also taking into account the European Statistics Code of Practice.

Act No. CXXV of 2018 on Governmental Administration is also relevant as it provides the legal framework for all governmental administrative bodies. This act applies to the HCSO subject to the exceptions laid down in the statistical law.

#### Organisation

The HCSO is a head governmental office, which is a central governmental administrative organisation with specific competence operating under the direction of the Government. The minister supervising the HCSO is the Minister heading the Cabinet Office of the Prime Minister. The professional independence of the HCSO is guaranteed by the Official Statistics Act (Section 7 point (1) provides that “The HCSO shall be a professionally independent, publicly-financed organisation operating as a head governmental office.”).

By law, the HCSO is a member of the OSS. The Central Bank of Hungary is also a member of the OSS by law. Other members of the OSS are the subject of an accreditation procedure, whereby the President of the HCSO ascertains the compliance of the body requesting accreditation with the National Statistics Code of Practice and the Regulation on European statistics (No. 223/2009, as amended). The accreditation is reviewed every five years. The list of organisations that have been accredited is published on the [HCSO website](#).

The [National Statistical Council](#) (NSC) is an advisory body of the President of the HCSO. It comprises representatives of data providers and data users, such as ministries, administrative data holders, the scientific community, Chambers of Commerce and local governments. Its role is to follow up on the implementation of the principles in the European Statistics Code of Practice and the National Statistics Code of Practice. It also provides advice on the content of the National Statistics Code of Practice, on the National Statistical Survey Programme from the point of view of users’ needs and the burden on respondents, on the annual dissemination programme of the OSS as well as on rules for access to statistical data for scientific purposes.

The [National Statistical Co-ordination Board \(NSCB\)](#) is chaired by the President of the HCSO and is composed of representatives of the OSS members. Its mission is to ensure a continuous dialogue amongst the members of the OSS, to exchange information and discuss issues relating to official statistical activity. In particular, the NSCB discusses priorities and strategic issues for the development, production and publication of official statistics, and issues related to resources needed or to the quality of official statistics. It also provides opinions on the content of the National Statistics Code of Practice, on the National Statistical Survey Programme and on methodological issues, concepts, classifications, recommendations, positions and guidelines.

### **Appointment procedure for the Head of the NSI**

The President of the HCSO is appointed by the Prime Minister for a period of 7 years. The appointment may be renewed twice. The Official Statistics Act (Section 13) establishes clear criteria to be fulfilled by a person to be appointed President of the HCSO. In particular, the person must be someone with recognised statistical qualifications and must possess professional experience of at least ten years within the OSS or the ESS, of which at least five years have been spent in a managerial position. The appointment can be made based on an invitation or following an open call for applications.

The different conditions for dismissal are set out in the numerous subsections and items of Articles 16 and 17 of the new Official Statistics Act.

### **Statistical work programmes**

The HCSO compiles the National Statistical Survey Programme (NSSP) of the Official Statistical Service as part of an annual planning process and monitors its implementation. The NSSP describes the characteristics of the statistical surveys conducted by the members of the OSS. For example, it describes the type and title of the statistical survey, the mandatory or voluntary nature of the survey, the data categories, the data source, the scope of respondents, the frequency, deadlines of the statistical data collection or transmission, and the national and European legal basis for the statistical survey or the outputs produced.

The NSSP is compiled by the HCSO based on the proposals of the members of the OSS and consultation with the NSC and is approved by the President of the HCSO. The NSSP is published on the website of the HCSO.

### **Resources**

On the 31st of December 2022 the allowed quota for positions at the HCSO was 1042 (1027 permanent positions, 15 temporary positions).

The HCSO has a comprehensive budgeting and expenditure management system which is managed and monitored by the Financial Department. The HCSO has its own section in the State Budget in Hungary. The budget is mainly based on the previous years' allocations, additional resources may be granted for new tasks in specific justified cases, mainly if the new task is due to EU or national legislation.

The HCSO's gross budget allocation for 2022 was approximately 61,123,857 euros, including the budget of the Population and Housing Census in October-November 2022. The "regular" annual budget is approximately 26,929,620 euros.

### **Coordination of the National Statistical System**

The President of the HCSO performs the tasks of the Chief Statistician in Hungary. As part of these tasks, the President of the HCSO is responsible for the coordination and coherence of the official statistical activities performed by the members of the OSS, except for the Central Bank of Hungary. In particular, it is for the President of the HCSO to decide on the accreditation to be granted to an institution requesting to be a member of the OSS as well as on the renewal of the accreditation of existing members of the OSS every five years.

The President of the HCSO may also issue guidelines concerning the performance of official statistical activities and monitors and supervises their implementation. Such guidelines have been issued, for instance, in relation to the planning of questionnaires and related documentation, access to statistical data for scientific purposes and the publication of official statistical data.

### **Other National Authorities participating in this peer review**

The **Ministry of Interior (BM)** is a single ONA with a very large number of organisational units responsible for official statistical activities across a variety of areas. While some statistics are produced directly within the Ministry, others are produced by background institutions. The statistical activities are coordinated by the Strategic Department of the Deputy State Secretariat for Strategic Affairs. In particular, the Ministry covers the following department or background institutions carrying out specific statistical activities in their respective domains:

- the Law Enforcement and Regulatory Department in charge of crime statistics;
- the National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing (OIF) in charge of statistics on migration and asylum;
- the National Public Health Centre (NNK) in charge of statistics on occupational diseases;
- the National Healthcare Service Centre (OKFŐ) in charge of healthcare statistics;
- the Educational Authority (OH) in charge of public education statistics.

On the 31st of December 2022, there were 37 employees (FTE) working on statistical activities at the Ministry of Interior (32 permanent positions and 2 temporary positions).

The **Ministry of Agriculture (AM)** is responsible for the production and dissemination of statistics in the areas of agriculture, food industry and nature protection. There is a longstanding cooperation with the HCSO in the development, production and dissemination of agricultural statistics. The Ministry of Agriculture also cooperates closely with the Institute of Agricultural Economics and the Central Bank of Hungary as far as statistical activities are concerned.

On the 31st of December 2022, there were 12 employees (FTE) working on statistical activities at the Ministry of Agriculture (7 permanent positions and 5 temporary positions).

The **Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority (MEKH)** is responsible for the production of statistics on energy and for implementing the relevant legislation in this field. It



disseminates monthly data on the domestic supply of coal and petroleum products as well as electricity and natural gas. It also disseminates annual data on the supply and consumption of coal and petroleum products and on electricity, natural gas and renewable energy sources and disseminates annual energy balances.

On the 31st of December 2022, there were eight employees (FTE) in permanent positions working on statistical activities at the Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority.

### **Data access**

According to the Official Statistics Act, the members of the OSS have a clear mandate for access to data, which can be based on primary and secondary data sources.

Data collections are considered primary data sources and can be mandatory (ordered by an Act of law or the Government Decree on the mandatory surveys of the NSSP), or voluntary (these do not need an additional legal basis). Administrative data and privately held data are considered secondary data sources.

In principle, the HCSO has unlimited access to administrative data sources, including personal data, while other members of the OSS may only access administrative data sources if the sectoral legislation allows it. Access to privately held data cannot extend to personal data. ONAs usually produce statistics on the basis of their own administrative data, however, the Ministry of Agriculture also uses administrative data transmitted by the National Central Bank.

### **Dissemination of statistical products and services / Relations with users**

The HCSO aims to provide data and information to the broadest possible spectrum of users. The HCSO's statistical products and services are produced and delivered through controlled processes that are regularly monitored and checked. These regulate, inter alia, the selection of data sources, the choice between methods to be applied, the mechanism of choice between dissemination channels, and the procedures concerning the correction of errors. HCSO products are produced in a standardised way, in a format and to an audience defined in advance.

HCSO products and services take the form of numerical products (e.g. databases; predefined tables; yearbooks and pocketbooks; microdata), textual products (e.g. regular and ad hoc analyses; journals), data visualisations (e.g. dashboards, charts, infographics, interactive applications), communication and promotional products (e.g. press releases, social media content, podcasts, videos, leaflets), and services (such as ad hoc data and information delivered on request). All these products and services are framed by methodological information, which is provided in various forms, the most important of which is the Metainformation database, publicly available on the website.

The HCSO is committed to recognising user demands and their changes actively and consciously and reacting to them rapidly, which is also one of the objectives specified in HCSO's Strategy until 2030 ([Strategy 2030](#)). User satisfaction is measured and monitored through both quantitative tools (e.g. ad hoc or regular online questionnaires, pop-up opinion boxes allowing to receive direct feedback, 'Contact us' interface, etc.) and qualitative tools (such as focus groups and in-depth interviews). Complementary data are also used such as web analytical data, information on media coverage, sales data, data on safe centre usage, and data on user requests, including unfulfilled requests, etc. Results are fed back and built into the product planning processes. The main findings of the opinion surveys are published on the HCSO website along with the follow-up improvement actions.

## 4. PROGRESS/ADVANCEMENT IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS

### **Institutional governance and legal framework**

The new Official Statistics Act (2016) and the accompanying government decrees on its implementation (2017) deploy a comprehensive legal framework for the Hungarian statistical system. The new legislation solves several concerns pointed out in the previous peer review, advancing to a more modern and solid OSS and strengthening the role of the HCSO within it.

The new Official Statistics Act includes a clear definition of the Hungarian statistical system, for example. It also establishes more precise conditions for the appointment and dismissal of the President of the HCSO. In order to be appointed, an individual must have recognised statistical qualifications and at least ten years of professional experience within the OSS or the ESS, of which at least five years in a managerial position, and cannot have held an important political position in the four years prior to their appointment. The different conditions for dismissal are set out in the numerous subsections and items of Articles 16 and 17 of the new Official Statistics Act.

The new Act also sets out the official statistics principles by which all OSS members should abide during the development, production, and dissemination of official statistics, and features tighter provisions on HCSO access to administrative data sources for statistical purposes. Reportedly, a large number of legal acts have been amended to allow the HCSO to access data as stipulated by the new Official Statistics Act.

The new legislation also features a definition of official statistics in Hungary, clarifying that only members of the OSS can perform official statistical activities and disseminate official statistical data as part of their public duties. The new Official Statistics Act also brings more clarity by establishing the compliance criteria for OSS members rather than just listing their names, as was the case in previous legislation.

### **Coordination of the National Statistical System**

The new statistical legal framework incorporates the practice of the accreditation of OSS members. This practice is a pioneering innovative approach and a distinctive element and strength of the Hungarian statistical system, as specified in more detail in the next section. Accreditation has proven successful and enabled the HCSO to independently assess compliance with the National Statistics Code of Practice and make the results public, as the previous peer review suggested. The reason for accreditation was to comply with the Regulation on European statistics (No. 223/2009 as amended), and the peer review process methodology inspired the development of its procedural architecture.

The Official Statistics Act confers a clear coordination mandate on the HCSO, which has been supplemented with soft law mechanisms such as the National Statistics Code of Practice and HCSO quality and methodological guidelines. Another essential advancement in this area is combining the set-up of the National Statistical Council (NSC) as the main forum for user discussions with the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) as the leading forum of discussion with the producers of official statistics.

## **Quality management**

There has also been tangible, ongoing progress in developing a quality management system, including setting up a quality coordination function and structure, such as a quality unit under the direct supervision of the President of the HCSO. This unit works in close cooperation with the Methodology Department.

With regard to internal processes, the reorganisation of the quality management within the HCSO has been a significant improvement, as it provides a basis for the effective implementation of the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) methodology for continuous improvement in the future.

The accreditation process has also taught the members of the OSS, ONAs in particular, more about broader quality aspects such as the development of metadata definitions and their publishing, improvements in documenting statistical processes, the establishment of central coordination units within OSS member organisations, and a more intense focus on links with users, and user satisfaction.

## **User orientation**

Another area that has experienced tangible progress over the last five years is the focus on users, which is markedly intense. The HCSO website is more user-friendly and complete, and information is more easily accessible, as recognised by users. The HCSO has introduced a standard evaluation box, allowing users to share feedback in a straightforward and concise form.

The HCSO has intensified consultation with a broader user community and improved service provision. It has increased its presence in and use of social media, including Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram. The HCSO also provides better and faster services to scientific users of statistical microdata in a safe centre environment. Institutional users, particularly line ministries, praise the HCSO's pre-defined ready-to-use tables and interactive tools. Indeed, the HCSO website now features an increasing presence of interactive tools among statistical products, such as interactive charts, maps, and the presentation of geocoded data. National media representatives commended improvements in data diversity and the fact that it is highly reliable, manageable, and easy to find.

The HCSO has also made progress in strengthening communication among users regarding the value of statistics. Its representatives are members of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) group on the value of statistics. The HCSO is working with journalists to convey which statistical data they can use to extract value. It has also organised competitions for secondary school and university students and planned open days on how data visualisation works. Such events often include academia, as was the case of the Night of Researchers in 2019, a public event that revolved around aspects of statistics in everyday life.

## **Administrative registers**

The only aspect mentioned in the last peer review, where efforts have been intense but progress is limited, is the interoperability of administrative registers. The HCSO has sought active participation in the Government Interoperability Project, which aims to identify all administrative registers of the Hungarian public administration. However, the project's development has faced uncertainties, and

the HCSO has been working to find alternative solutions to move closer to a more integrated solution to facilitate the use of administrative data sources for official statistics purposes.

## **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**

#### **Effective legal environment**

With the new Official Statistics Act, adopted in 2016 (Act No. CLV of 2015 on Official Statistics), Hungary has an effective and comprehensive framework for ensuring professional independence. This is combined with a package of organisational safeguards, which confirm the solid institutional system.

The President of the HCSO is the Chief Statistician of Hungary and responsible for the coordination and coherence of official statistics produced by members of the Official Statistical Service (OSS). The main forum for governance of the OSS is the National Statistical Coordination Board, chaired by the President of HCSO, with members appointed by the President of the HCSO based on nominations from the members of the OSS.

In addition, the National Statistical Council, comprising representatives of data providers and data users and appointed by the Prime Minister, acts as an advisory body of the President of the HCSO.

The two bodies have different compositions and different roles supporting the functioning of the OSS, with the former having a governance objective and the latter taking account of users' needs as well as producers' perspectives.

The Official Statistics Act gives the HCSO a prominent role in the production of official statistics and in the coordination of other producers within the Official Statistical Service.

#### **Accreditation procedures**

The peer review team highlights a unique feature of the Official Statistics Act where a mechanism of accreditation of ONAs is defined. The Act defines the purpose and principles that shall apply to all official statistical activities within the Official Statistical Service. The criteria for becoming a producer of official statistics are laid down in the accreditation procedures ensuring compliance with the National Statistics Code of Practice and the Regulation on European statistics (No. 223/2009, as amended). The final decision on membership of the Official Statistical Service is made by the President of the HCSO as Chief Statistician.

The ultimate purpose of the accreditation process is the coordination of official statistical activities, processes, procedures, the identification of good practices, and identification of future improvement actions. Whereas the accreditation procedures take place every five years, there is an annual report on the implementation of the National Statistical Survey Programme (NSSP), which aims to monitor the statistical activities of the members of the OSS.

It was noted that the three ONAs participating in the peer review (Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority (MEKH), Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Interior) viewed the accreditation process as of value added and important as a process of continuous improvement. Similarly, the accreditation process helps ONAs focus on development aspects in a context where most of their regular efforts are devoted to operational tasks. In this regard, the accreditation process generates a space for genuine discussions around development priorities, a crucial element that would probably not take place without accreditation.

### **Trusted institution**

During the peer review, feedback from stakeholders clearly indicated that the HCSO is considered a trusted and highly valued independent institution. The statistics are regarded as objective, of high quality, reliable, and timely. In addition, the individual services provided by the HCSO are highly appreciated. The HCSO is perceived as responsive to problem-solving and clarifications and always open to technical discussions. Both producers and data users alike praise the high level of professionalism of the HCSO staff and the excellent quality of their answers and solutions to methodological, legal and operational aspects.

The HCSO has well-established procedures to guarantee the protection of confidential data and preserve anonymity. This is deeply embedded in the culture of the HCSO and gives assurance to data providers.

The statistics produced are used as a reference by academia, the country's media and institutional users. In addition, the HCSO cooperates extensively with the scientific community and with academia. Scientists make extensive use of the HCSO's safe centre, researching micro-data under secure conditions. The HCSO has also a specific co-operation agreement with the Centre for Economic and Regional Studies, an organisation of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS). Based on the agreement, a separate safe centre for the researchers from the Academy was established.

The peer review team noted that users pointed to Hungarian society as becoming gradually more data driven, which is creating a demand for statistical literacy. This is a role where users see the HCSO, with all its expertise, as a key player.

### **Sound statistical methodology**

The metadata-driven IT architecture, which the HCSO has been building since the 1970s, is the backbone of the HCSO's production process. This provides a strong basis for standard solutions used in practice. The statistical registers are well-defined and there is good cooperation with the holders of those administrative data sources where the dataset is used as a frame. There is ongoing work to model all internal processes (data production, management and supporting processes) including a description of the business architecture. Integrated IT systems are supporting data production processes and the quality monitoring of most phases.

It is noted that highly qualified staff, who are motivated and dedicated to scientific-based methodological innovation, is an excellent foundation for forward-looking developments. The cooperation with academia on methodology-related developments has been valuable to the HCSO in the acquisition of new knowledge. Continued cooperation is seen as important for the future

development of methodology also. The methodological unit at the HCSO is active in international cooperation and, thus, contributes to new relevant developments internationally also.

#### **..... and a strong focus on innovation**

Despite limitations in resources, the peer review team noted the prevailing tendency of the Hungarian statistical system to improve and test out new statistical methods as well as avoid duplications and reduce the response burden. Examples of this include: i) the government-wide project on developing an integrated system for data submission related to employment based on the “only once” principle, ii) the cooperation with the Hungarian real estate website ingatlan.com on transmission of data and a common commitment to developing a rental price index, and iii) the new collaboration with telecommunication companies in Hungary where, following the amendment of the law on telecommunication, the HCSO is given a mandate to receive subscribers’ phone numbers and is now exploring the possible use of mobile phone location data. A similar example is the collaboration between the Ministry of Agriculture and The Central Bank of Hungary in the use of credit register data, allowing the Ministry to replace surveys with relevant administrative data sources.

Innovative solutions to modernise official statistics, such as robotic process automation (RPA), are being trialled to improve product quality with fewer resources. In addition, several methodological projects are currently being tested using machine learning and artificial intelligence to further modernise statistical business processes.

#### **Focus on user perspective**

The HCSO’s Strategy 2030 gives major priority to user needs. Ad hoc user needs are also taken into consideration, e.g. by taking steps to provide additional data as well as more frequent data during the COVID-19 pandemic. A sub-site for small and medium-size enterprises has recently been launched, with an application designed specifically for the targeted enterprises.

The HCSO has enhanced the user focus of its website. The website was redesigned in 2019, the search software has become smarter, and the menu has expanded significantly. Users welcome the improvements, which they see as appealing, user-friendly and useful. Users explicitly mention appealing data visualisation and infographics as a strength, particularly in the context of the recent 2022 Population and Housing Census. The peer review team also noted the production of podcasts on topics of interest, another innovative strength of the service for users.

#### **Innovative practices**

The peer review team identified innovative practices that could serve as an inspiration for other NSS. We would like to highlight the following:

- The accreditation procedure for ONAs;
- Innovative solutions to modernise official statistics, such as robotic process automation (RPA), are being trialled to improve product quality with fewer resources;
- Developing an integrated system for data submission related to employment based on the “only once” principle. This benefits data providers that only need to submit information to the

public sector once and represents a gain in efficiency and quality for the administrative registers and data system per se;

- Data visualisation and infographic development (e.g. the visualisation of the 2022 Population and Housing Census);
- Podcasts on topics of interest, such as inflation, real estate market, farmlands, etc.

## 5.2 ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.2.1 STRENGTHENING THE SYSTEM AND PROMOTING CONFIDENCE IN OFFICIAL STATISTICS IN SOCIETY

There is currently no common approach across the members of the Hungarian statistical system as to how official statistics are branded and identified. This may create confusion in distinguishing between official statistics and other reports and analysis at dissemination, particularly for data published by the ONAs. The peer review team noted the work underway to strengthen the brand of the Official Statistical Service through the use of a shared logo, which would underline the independence of official statistics from other outputs and adherence to the ES CoP of all members of the Hungarian statistical system.

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

**R1. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office and all Other National Authorities should develop a common brand, which would allow better recognition of the value of the data they disseminate and contribute to increasing confidence in official statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1.6)**

Official Statistical Service (OSS) member accreditation is a unique feature of the Hungarian statistical system and ensures compliance with the National Statistics Code of Practice (NCoP) and the Regulation on European statistics (No. 223/2009, as amended). Accreditation has provided effective guidance for ONAs to improve and standardise the statistical process and assisted them in advancing beyond operational tasks and focusing on development. There is a growing demand for the HCSO to provide support after accreditation and develop the statistical capacity of the OSS beyond meeting NCoP standards in the face of new data ecosystem requirements.

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

**R2. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should design and implement a capacity-development programme for the Official Statistical Service, particularly for the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics, to ensure that the Official Statistical Service has the necessary skills to deal with the new data ecosystem's current and future challenges. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 7.6 and 3.1)**

The new Official Statistics Act adopted in 2016 (Act No. CLV. Of 2016 on Official Statistics) introduced detailed rules for the appointment of the President of the HCSO. It further specifies that the President is appointed by the Prime Minister for a period of 7 years, renewable twice. However, the peer review team considers that the appointment procedure does not fully ensure the transparency requirement, particularly in relation to the start of the process and the advertisement of the vacancy. This may have



the potential to impact negatively on the perception of the HCSO as a professionally independent organisation.

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

**R3. The relevant government authorities should improve the transparency of the procedure for the appointment of the President of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, for example, by advertising the post. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 1.8)**

The procedures for pre-release access at the HCSO are laid down in an internal regulation (Regulation 15/2022) and described in an annex to the dissemination and communication policy. The peer review team noted that pre-release access to first releases and leading indicators is granted to a large number of public administrations and media organisations and there is no specific IT-based security mechanism (e.g., encryption) in place for the transmission of the information. However, as required by the ES CoP, any privileged pre-release access to outside users should be limited, well-justified, controlled and publicised. In particular, the absence of secured transmission protocols is at odds with the principle of privileged pre-release access being controlled.

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

**R4. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should ensure that privileged pre-release access to outside users is justified more clearly, more limited in number and granted in accordance with secure and controlled transmission protocols. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 6.7)**

The HCSO's legal status is that of a head governmental office. Although this set-up has advantages, as it confers full autonomy on the HCSO within its allocated budget, it also generates limitations for human and financial resources as well as for procurement procedures that affect the optimal functioning of the HCSO. The centralised management of human resources features fixed categories and salary limits, making it difficult for the HCSO to recruit highly skilled talent and enhance career development prospects and staff promotion pathways. Budgetary planning procedures for yearly financial resource allocation are based on the previous year's budget, which allows the continuation of regular operations but leaves little room for the development budget to finance innovation and modernisation. This situation is aggravated since centralised IT procurement processes increase costs and are not sufficiently agile to maintain the time schedule required to upgrade infrastructure and modernise statistical processes. Such limited flexibility and additional administrative burdens put the HCSO in a difficult position in the context of increasing demands on it to expand both data production and the role of official statistics as well as to be a cornerstone of change in the rapidly developing national data ecosystem.

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

**R5. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should analyse and define options to address issues related to the management of human, financial and IT resources and other ways to ensure increased agility in managing these resources. In particular, the Hungarian Central Statistical Office should examine the potential of a change of its legal status from a head governmental office to an autonomous public administration body or an autonomous regulatory body (including an analysis**

**of the risks and benefits of all possible options) and discuss with the Cabinet Minister of the Prime Minister the prospect of such a change. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 3.1 and 10.4)**

Several projects have been developed by the HCSO in partnership with private data holders to use new data sources for the production of official statistics. For instance, a new rental index has been produced on an experimental basis thanks to a partnership established with Hungary's leading real estate advertising portal. Other examples include the use of data held by mobile network operators (e.g. phone numbers, traffic data or location data) for various statistical purposes and the use of scanner data for the production of the consumer price index.

Despite these positive experiences, legal obstacles remain that prevent a more systematic reuse of privately held data for official statistics that extends beyond the production of experimental statistics. Without an appropriate legal framework that provides the necessary legal security (for example, in terms of data protection and protection of business secrets), private data holders may hesitate to engage in sustainable partnerships with the HCSO. Similarly, supporting mechanisms (e.g. the development of a methodological framework for the use of such data for official statistics purposes or the development of participatory and public consultation mechanisms leading to a more robust dialogue with and engagement of private data holders, statistical users and citizens) could be developed in parallel. Furthermore, the question of compensation for making the data available remains an issue, particularly when the data at stake have a market value and are part of the company's business model.

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

**R6. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office and the relevant government authorities should ensure that an appropriate legal framework and other supporting mechanisms are in place to grant the Hungarian Central Statistical Office authority to access and use privately held data. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 2.4)**

## **5.2.2 ENHANCING USER ORIENTATION**

The HCSO has developed services for scientific use of microdata. To use individual-level statistical data that cannot be directly identified, users have to use a safe centre located either at the HCSO building in Budapest or at the two other access points that were added in 2021. These access points serve some researchers well, however, for others these locations are difficult to reach, and the service is not similarly accessible to all scientific researchers.

The value of statistical data is considerable for scientific research and such data should be used more effectively to benefit society as a whole also. Using microdata reduces the need to duplicate data collection, saving resources, it also improves the relevance of data and offers researchers significant opportunities to study developments in society over time. A secure environment for remote access to microdata would make it possible to improve the services to researchers.

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

**R7. The Hungarian Central 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 HCSO's website was redesigned in 2019, the search software has become smarter, and the menu has expanded significantly. The users interviewed during the peer review visit welcomed the improvements and mentioned the infographic visualisation as a strength in particular. Another strength in the service to users is the production of podcasts on topics of interest.

However, there is still a need to further modernise the website, to ensure that the website and statistical databases are the main means for disseminating statistical outputs. The HCSO should continue its strategy to fully implement the open data standard and further develop the dissemination databases. This will also enable the dissemination of datasets with longer time series, which are requested by users.

Some users also pointed out that the release calendar would benefit from being more intuitive and transparent. The preparations related to implementing a common release calendar for the Hungarian statistical system are strongly supported.

User satisfaction surveys cover topics and products such as the general database, but there is no systematic user survey published on the website. The main results of user satisfaction measurement should be publicly available, informing users about them and the action taken to address concerns and proposals.

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

**R8. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should continue improving the service to users, for example, by further modernising the website, enhancing the release calendar, striving to publish increased statistical insights and ensuring the systematic monitoring of user satisfaction. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 15.2, 1.4 and 11.3)**

Data about the health situation and issues related to health in societies have become even more important since the recent COVID-19 pandemic and decision makers need accurate, fast and diverse data on health issues.

In Hungary statistics on health are compiled by several institutions and, in addition to statistical data, plenty of data on various health aspects are collected by health organisations. To benefit the decision makers and offer fact-based outlooks and solutions for the future, these data should be available to researchers and scientists. It should also be possible to combine various data sources in order to offer an even richer source of information.

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

**R9. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office and the institutions producing health statistics should step up their efforts towards making health statistical data more easily accessible to users, paying special attention to access to microdata for research purposes and ensuring increased opportunities to interlink different datasets. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.4)**

The HCSO offers a custom-designed analysis service to data users. These data analyses can be requested through the Contact Centre by a special app or by telephone. This is a commonly used channel for various government organisations to receive accurate information fast.

Special attention should be paid by the HCSO to keeping track of all such custom-designed data analysis requests and to keeping the public informed of these requests. A list of all custom-designed analyses could be published on the HCSO's website, for example, also allowing the public to request access to these analyses.

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

**R10. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should ensure that the public is informed about custom-designed analyses and datasets provided upon request. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 15.3)**

The National Statistical Council has several tasks, such as following up on the implementation of the principles in the ES CoP and National Statistics Code of Practice, advising on the content of the National Statistics Code of Practice and the annual dissemination programme of the OSS as well as advising on the National Statistical Survey Programme from the point of view of user needs and the burden on respondents. It acts as an advisory and review body to the President of the HCSO. The peer review team considers the Council to be active and committed to its work; the Council meets regularly and follows up on statistical work and the annual programmes of statistics. However, the peer review team noticed that the new forward-looking strategy of the HCSO has not been discussed in the Council, for example. The production of statistics is developing rapidly as data landscape is evolving. Both the members of the National Statistical Council and the HCSO could benefit from adding more future-oriented discussions to the agenda of the Council.

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

**R11. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should reflect on ways to involve the National Statistical Council more proactively in forward-looking strategic discussions and making it more supportive for the development activities of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1bis.3)**

### **5.2.3 ENSURING ADEQUATE FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES**

As in many European countries, various actions are ongoing in Hungary with the objective of contributing to the emergence of new data ecosystems and fostering data sharing and re-use. The HCSO is cooperating closely with the National Data Asset Management Agency in charge of the management of public data and the establishment of a public data catalogue and a public data portal, in particular.

Building on its unique position as an independent organisation and its considerable experience in terms of data management (particularly with regard to data quality or data interoperability), a stronger role could be envisaged for the HCSO in Hungary's data governance system. This would contribute to improving the quality of administrative data sources as well as the relationships with

both public and private data holders. In return, it would also allow the HCSO to explore the potential of new data sources for official statistics and eventually to enhance their overall quality.

However, such a strengthened role could only be envisaged if the HCSO receives adequate resources to that end and in line with the requirements set out in the ES CoP. In particular, more resources dedicated to investigating new data sources and for new methodology developments to use them for producing official statistics could be secured with the objective of strengthening the methodological and innovation capacities of the HCSO.

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

**R12. The relevant government authorities should ensure adequate resources for the Hungarian Central Statistical Office to assume an increasing role in the emerging data ecosystem in Hungary, to investigate new data sources, to increase the outreach to users and their needs and to enhance innovation within the Hungarian statistical system. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 3.1, 7.1 and 11.1)**

The primary reason for staff turnover at the HCSO is the comparatively low remuneration level, which puts the HCSO at a disadvantage compared with other talent recruiters, such as the private sector and other public sector institutions offering higher salaries. Workplace incentives to attract and retain talent are essential to counteract this effect. Considering motivational approaches in HR management and non-financial incentives becomes a pressing priority. Options that stand out as incentives that could work are more flexible working arrangements, including teleworking opportunities, intensified participation in training programmes, international networking and development projects, promoting cross-sector subject matter domain joint work and knowledge exchanges, and participation in international projects.

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

**R13. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should build on its People Strategy and implement practical measures to strengthen and improve incentives for staff retention and motivation to compensate for low remuneration. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 3.1)**

There has been a marked increase in the use of administrative data sources over the last years in the Official Statistical Service. The Official Statistics Act from 2016 includes an ample mandate for the HCSO's involvement in the design, changes in set-up and content of administrative data sources for official statistical purposes. In addition, there is fluid cooperation between the HCSO and some administrative data holders, which includes feedback on data quality. In practice, however, in some cases, public administration decision-makers' and data owners' needs prevail over official statistics needs, in a context where the provisions of relevant legal acts limit administrative data scope and access. As a result, the HCSO may face impediments to effectively intervening in the design of and subsequent changes in administrative data sources, which ultimately can pose problems in using these data for the production of official statistics, using them for improving the quality of statistics and reducing the reporting burden.

Such difficulties add to the challenge of integrating administrative data sources for the purposes of official statistics, which is a consequence of the currently low interoperability levels between these

sources. The previous peer review improvement actions included this issue, which remains unsolved due to factors beyond the HCSO's control.

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

**R14. The relevant government authorities should ensure the increased involvement of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office in the design, development and discontinuation of administrative data sources maintained by public administrations and should strengthen the role and resources of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office in the context of national data governance, specifically with regard to the quality issues of administrative data sources. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 2.2 and 9.4)**

#### **5.2.4 IMPROVING THE OVERALL SYSTEM OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

Even though there is a legal mandate in the Official Statistics Act for the HCSO to access administrative data and their metadata, in practice, several administrative data holders have difficulties in providing the necessary metadata. Additionally, some of the administrative data sources are not aligned with statistical concepts, taking into account that these data sources are designed for administrative purposes and do not have the purpose of producing statistics. The use of administrative data sources in the production of official statistics, however, is important to reduce the response burden and is also cost effective. Nevertheless, the implementation can be challenging, e.g. standards used may differ from statistical concepts and it could be difficult to link them with other data sets, the accuracy of the data may not be satisfactory, etc. In order to produce statistics of good quality it is therefore crucial that the HCSO receives regular information about the quality of administrative data ensuring the usability of the datasets as well as making it possible to provide feedback to the administrative data holder regarding improvements. Furthermore, it could be useful for the HCSO to organise methodological support and put procedures in place to ensure the regular provision of standardised metadata from administrative data sources.

In order to increase the provision of standardised metadata for administrative data sources, the HCSO is developing a specific quality report for administrative data. This will be important in the cooperation with the administrative data holders when improving data quality.

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

**R15. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office, along with the administrative data holders, should continue to work together to improve the quality of administrative data sources, including the availability of metadata, and increase the interoperability of administrative data sources. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 8.7 and 2.2)**

The HCSO has a strong commitment to quality and has been working on modernising its processes, products and quality management system continuously, for years. Several achievements have been made, for example, the establishment of the Strategy and Quality Management Section within the office of the President of the HCSO (since December 2021) and the inclusion of the TOGAF Standard as an architecture management method. The TOGAF Standard (of The Open Group Architectural

Framework) is a proven Enterprise Architecture methodology and framework used to improve business efficiency.

The recent quality policy developed is published on the HCSO's website under the heading "About – Policies and Guidelines". It would be easier for users to access this if the website contained a dedicated section for quality issues. An external review of the quality system as a whole, e.g. through certification (which is under planning) and involving persons outside the production process, might also be helpful in assuring and communicating quality and would provide an external perspective.

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

**R16. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should develop and implement a quality management system, including regular assessments of the quality of statistical processes, and publicise it on its website in a visible place. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 4.1 and 4.4)**

Though user-oriented quality reports are prepared for statistical domains, they are not produced regularly and are not available in accordance with the Single Integrated Metadata Structure European Standard. Such quality reports are important as they enable users to assess output quality and give relevant feedback to the Hungarian Central Statistical Office. User satisfaction surveys and other methods to monitor user needs are not implemented on a regular basis either, and surveys aiming to measure satisfaction with data quality are rare. The main results from user satisfaction surveys should be publicly available and the feedback should be carefully considered by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office as this can provide important input to action plans improving output quality.

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

**R17. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should regularly monitor output quality according to the European Standard. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 4.3 and 4.4)**

As mentioned above, the HCSO's quality management system combines ISO 9001 and TOGAF Standards and divides all the processes into standard building blocks. In this context, the HCSO decided to integrate quality criteria into the different parts of the process map, a currently ongoing task. The HCSO is waiting to finalise this task before revising the national quality guidelines, last published in October 2014. Currently, the quality guidelines can be read as a stand-alone document available on the website (although not in a visible place) or as quality criteria in the different parts of the process model.

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

**R18. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office should revise, update and publicise the national quality guidelines, making them easily accessible (visible place on the website). (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1bis.2, 4.1 and 4.2)**

## **5.2.5 FURTHER STRENGTHENING AND CLARIFYING THE ROLE AND STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES OF THE OTHER NATIONAL AUTHORITIES DEVELOPING, PRODUCING AND DISSEMINATING OFFICIAL STATISTICS**

The reviewed ONAs have a clear commitment to both the European and National Statistics Code of Practice and there has been real improvement since the last peer review for several ONAs. The accreditation programme has been developed allowing the HCSO to assess the activities of the ONAs and their adherence to the European and National Statistics Code of Practice. Furthermore, the professional independence of statistical activities of the ONAs reviewed improved based on the Official Statistics Act. However, neither the statistical activities of the ONAs, nor official statistics produced by them and being part of the Hungarian statistical system are clearly visible to users. Thus, it is necessary to communicate official statistics produced by the ONAs and make their meaning and value more visible to the stakeholders as well as to the wider public.

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

**R19. The reviewed Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating official statistics (the Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Interior) should pursue their efforts towards full adherence to the European Statistics Code of Practice; in particular, they should undertake measures to be more visible as part of the Official Statistical Service. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1bis.2 and 15.2)**

The Ministry of Interior has several background institutions (organisations under the Ministry of Interior) since its reorganisation in 2022. These background institutions are in fact those directly responsible for producing the majority of the official statistics of the Ministry of Interior. The coordination structures of statistical activities within the organisation of the Ministry of Interior are somewhat complicated. The Ministry of Interior, being assigned as a single ONA, needs to coordinate statistical activities that are very diverse in nature and in scope. As such, this may be regarded as an indication that a better delineation of the responsibilities could be sought. Furthermore, the existing set-up seems to make the coordination role of the HCSO too remote in respect of those background institutions actually producing official statistics.

Accreditation of the Ministry of Interior as an ONA has been carried out prior to the reorganisation and thus a new accreditation process would be an excellent possibility to reconsider which organisations are implementing functions of an ONA in the Hungarian statistical system.

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

**R20. The Ministry of Interior together with the Hungarian Central Statistical Office should review the role of the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating European statistics, possibly in the context of the forthcoming accreditation procedure, and assign it to those institutions within the Ministry of Interior that are independently responsible for the production of European statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 10.4)**

The Ministry of Agriculture has made visible progress over the last few years, featuring developments such as the wide use of administrative data, good cooperation with the HCSO and the Institute of



Agricultural Economics in the area of methodological development, the performance of yearly metadata revisions, the production of quality reports and the development of a dedicated statistical website, different from the Ministry's main site. However, further improvements are possible in its outreach to users.

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

**R21. The Ministry of Agriculture should further develop its webpage by adding more information on statistics, such as quality reports and information in English. (Improvement-related: ES CoP 15.7)**

The Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority (HEA/MEKH) produces energy statistics using sound methodology. There is a written agreement between the HEA and HCSO which covers data exchange between the institutions. In addition, similar agreements have been made with other holders of statistical administrative registers, i.e. National Tax and Customs Administration of Hungary. However, there is still a need for good cooperation with other relevant holders of data to gain access to and use their data, thus improving and extending the statistical output of the HEA.

The HEA has gradually improved the quality management system. Nevertheless, there is room for further improvement. It is noted that detailed metadata and quality information are available only on the Eurostat website in SIMS format and the HEA website contains only simplified information.

The HEA does not provide access to microdata for external users due to a lack of experience in handling confidentiality issues. Finally, it is noted that the HEA website lacks a statistical database facilitating self-tabulation though there is an ongoing project to develop a dissemination database.

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

**R22. The Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority should further enhance compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice by producing regular quality reports and publishing these on its website and, in addition, developing a dynamic dissemination database and actively cooperating with the holders of relevant administrative data sources. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 15.5 and 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**

None

## ANNEX A – AGENDA OF THE VISIT

Timing	Topic	Participants
<b>Day 1 – 20 March 2023</b>		
<b>09:00 – 09:45</b>	<b>Preparatory meeting with the national coordination desk and, possibly, other national participants in the visit</b>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b> Eszter Nagy (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, Head of Department, National PR Coordinator) Andrea Zavagyák (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Head of Section) Tamara Pál (International Relations Section, Head of Section) Eszter Szentmiklósi (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Statistical Coordinator) Beatrix Hidvégi (International Officer of International Relations Section)</p>
<b>09:45 – 10:00</b>	<b>Welcome and introduction of the programme, adopting the agenda and organisational matters</b>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b> Dr Gabriella Vukovich (President of the HCSO) Kornélia Mag (Deputy President of Architectural Services Directorate) Eszter Németh (Deputy President of Data Collection Directorate) Eszter Nagy (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, Head of Department, National PR Coordinator) Andrea Petres (Strategy and Quality Management Section, Head of Section) Angéla Kátainé Marosi (Chief Adviser on Dissemination, Dissemination Directorate) Zoltán Vereczkei (Architectural Services Directorate, Methodology Department, Head of Department), Gábor Valkó (Statistics Directorate, Sectoral Statistics Department, Head of Department)</p>
<b>10:00 – 11:00</b>	<b>Presentation of the National Statistical System</b>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b> Dr Gabriella Vukovich (President of the HCSO)</p>

		<p>Kornélia Mag (Deputy President of Architectural Services Directorate)</p> <p>Eszter Németh (Deputy President of Data Collection Directorate)</p> <p>Eszter Nagy (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, Head of Department, National PR Coordinator)</p> <p>Andrea Petres (Strategy and Quality Management Section, Head of Section)</p> <p>Angéla Kátainé Marosi (Chief Adviser on Dissemination, Dissemination Directorate)</p> <p>Zoltán Vereczkei (Architectural Services Directorate, Methodology Department, Head of Department)</p> <p>Gábor Valkó (Statistics Directorate, Sectoral Statistics Department, Head of Department)</p>
<b>11:00 – 11:15</b>	Coffee break	
<b>11:15 – 12:45</b>	<p><b>Coordination and cooperation (ES CoP principle 1bis)</b></p>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b> Dr Gabriella Vukovich (President of the HCSO) Kornélia Mag (Deputy President of Architectural Services Directorate) Eszter Nagy (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, Head of Department, National PR Coordinator) Tamara Pál (International Relations Section, Head of Section) Andrea Zavagyák (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Head of Section)</p>
<b>12:45 – 13:45</b>	Lunch	
<b>13:45 – 15:15</b>	<p><b>Professional independence and the Law on Official Statistics and related legislation (ES CoP principles 1, 2, 5 and 6)</b></p>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b> Dr Gabriella Vukovich (President of the HCSO) Kornélia Mag (Deputy President of Architectural Services Directorate) Eszter Nagy (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, Head of Department, National PR Coordinator) Angéla Kátainé Marosi (Chief Adviser on Dissemination, Dissemination Directorate) Katalin Kása (Dissemination Directorate, User Relations Department, Head of Department)</p>
<b>15:15 – 15:30</b>	Coffee break	
<b>15:30 – 17:00</b>	<p><b>Programming, planning and resources (ES CoP principles 1, 3, 9 and 10)</b></p>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p>

		<p><b>The NSI:</b>  Dr Gabriella Vukovich (President of the HCSO)  Kornélia Mag (Deputy President of Architectural Services Directorate)  Eszter Nagy (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, Head of Department, National PR Coordinator)  Gábor Csutorás (Human Resources Strategy and Training Department, Head of Department)  Eszter Németh (Deputy President of Data Collection Directorate)  Andrea Petres (Strategy and Quality Management Section, Head of Section)  Márta Tóth (Financial Management Department, Budget Chapter Section, Head of Section)</p>
<b>17:00 – 18:00</b>	<b>Peer review team discussion</b>	
<b>Timing</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Participants</b>
<b>Day 2 – 21 March 2023</b>		
<b>09:00 – 10:15</b>	<b>Quality (organisational structure, tools, monitoring) (ES CoP principles 4 and 11 to 15)</b>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b>  All</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b>  Dr Gabriella Vukovich (President of the HCSO)  Kornélia Mag (Deputy President of Architectural Services Directorate)  Eszter Nagy (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, Head of Department, National PR Coordinator)  Andrea Petres (Strategy and Quality Management Section, Head of Section)  Angéla Kátainé Marosi (Chief Adviser on Dissemination, Dissemination Directorate)  Zoltán Vereczkei (Architectural Services Directorate, Methodology Department, Head of Department),  Gábor Valkó (Statistics Directorate, Sectoral Statistics Department, Head of Department)</p>
<b>10:15 – 10:30</b>	Coffee break	
<b>10:30 – 12:00</b>	<b>Dissemination and confidentiality (ES CoP principles 5, 6 and 15)</b>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b>  All</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b>  Dr Gabriella Vukovich (President of the HCSO)  Kornélia Mag (Deputy President of Architectural Services Directorate)</p>

		<p>Eszter Nagy (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, Head of Department, National PR Coordinator)</p> <p>Eszter Regős (Data Protection Officer)</p> <p>Ferenc Csanádi (IT Security Officer)</p> <p>Angéla Kátainé Marosi (Chief Adviser on Dissemination, Dissemination Directorate)</p> <p>Katalin Kása (Dissemination Directorate, User Relations Department, Head of Department)</p>
<b>12:00 – 13:00</b>	Lunch	
<b>13:00 – 14:30</b>	<p><b>Methodology, data collection, data processing and administrative data (ES CoP principles 2, 7 and 8)</b></p>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b>  Dr Gabriella Vukovich (President of the HCSO)  Kornélia Mag (Deputy President of Architectural Services Directorate)  Eszter Németh (Deputy President of Data Collection Directorate)  Eszter Nagy (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, Head of Department, National PR Coordinator)  Pál Bóday (Multi-domain Statistics Department, Head of Department)  Katalin Janák (Quality of Life Statistics Department, Head of Department)  Zoltán Vereczkei (Architectural Services Directorate, Methodology Department, Head of Department)  Gábor Valkó (Statistics Directorate, Sectoral Statistics Department, Head of Department)  Gábor Józsa (External Trade Statistics Department, External Trade in Goods Section, subject matter expert)  István Macsári (Business Statistics Department, Internal Trade, Information and Research and Development Statistics Section, subject matter expert)  Ágnes Andics (Methodology Department, Survey and Data Preparation Methodology Section, methodology expert)  Gábor Lovics (Methodology Department, Sampling and Processing Methodology Section, methodology expert)</p>
<b>14:30 – 14:45</b>	Coffee break	

14:45 – 15:45	Progress and plans for the future	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b> Dr Gabriella Vukovich (President of the HCSO) Kornélia Mag (Deputy President of Architectural Services Directorate) Eszter Németh (Deputy President of Data Collection Directorate) Eszter Nagy (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, Head of Department, National PR Coordinator)</p>
15:45 – 16:00	Coffee break	
16:00 – 17:00	Meeting with junior staff	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p> <p><b>Junior staff:</b> Dr Erzsébet Baranyai (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, Lawyer) Orsolya Kenderes (Business Services Statistics Data Collection Department) Viktor Subert (Household Surveys Data Collection Department) Gergely Balázs Vida (Information Technology Services Department) Attila Gergely Kiss (Methodology Department) Bianka Mádi (Quality of Life Statistics Department) Nóra Licsik (Sectoral Statistics Department) Martina Kökény (Dissemination Directorate)</p>
17:00 – 18:00	Peer review team discussion	
Timing	Topic	Participants
<b>Day 3 – 22 March 2023</b>		
09:00 – 10:00	Meeting with 1 <sup>st</sup> Other National Authority (ONA) producing European statistics	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p> <p><b>1<sup>st</sup> ONA: Ministry of Interior with its background institutions</b> Dr Gellért Sölch (Deputy State Secretary for Strategy) Karolina Molnár (Deputy State Secretary for Strategy - Strategic Department, Head of department) Dr Ildikó Lelkes (Health Financing, Performance Improvement and Analysis, Head of Department)</p>

		<p>Zoltán Tajti (Health Financing, Performance Improvement and Analysis, Head of the Statistical and Data Analysis Division)</p> <p>Ábel Ferenc Urbán (Educational Authority, Deputy President for Public Education)</p> <p>Dr Katinka Pohner (Deputy State Secretary for Legal Affairs and Coordination - Law Enforcement Codification Department - Unit for General Law Enforcement Regulation, Head of Department)</p> <p>Erika Keresztes (Deputy State Secretary for Legal Affairs and Coordination - Law Enforcement Codification Department - Unit for General Law Enforcement Regulation, Administrator)</p> <p>Andrea Éva Bányai (International Analysis and Coordination Unit, Head of Unit - National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing) (Interpreter)</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b></p> <p>Eszter Németh (Deputy President of Data Collection Directorate)</p> <p>Eszter Nagy (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, Head of Department, National PR Coordinator)</p> <p>Andrea Zavagyák (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Head of Section)</p>
<b>10:00 – 10:15</b>	Coffee break	
<b>10:15 – 11:45</b>	<b>Meeting with 1<sup>st</sup> Other National Authority (ONA) producing European statistics (continued)</b>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p> <p><b>1<sup>st</sup> ONA: Ministry of Interior with its background institutions</b></p> <p><b>The NSI:</b></p> <p>Eszter Németh (Deputy President of Data Collection Directorate)</p> <p>Eszter Nagy (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, Head of Department, National PR Coordinator)</p> <p>Andrea Zavagyák (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Head of Section)</p>
<b>11:45 – 12:45</b>	Lunch	
<b>12:45 – 14:15</b>	<b>Meeting with 2<sup>nd</sup> Other National Authority (ONA) producing European statistics</b>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> ONA: Ministry of Agriculture</b></p> <p>Zsombor Páll (Statistical Coordinator at the Deputy State Secretariat for Agro Economy)</p>



		<p>Szilvia Reiter (Statistical Officer at the Deputy State Secretariat for Agro Economy)</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b>          Andrea Zavagyák (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Head of Section)</p>
<b>14:15 – 14:30</b>	Coffee break	
<b>14:30 – 16:00</b>	<b>Meeting with 3<sup>rd</sup> Other National Authority (ONA) producing European statistics</b>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b>          All</p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> ONA: Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority</b>          László Szabó (Head of Department of Statistics)          Ákos Gerencsér (Deputy Head of Department of Statistics)</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b>          Andrea Zavagyák (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Head of Section)</p>
<b>16:00 – 16:15</b>	Coffee break	
<b>16:15 – 17:15</b>	<b>Meeting with the Statistical Council</b>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b>          All</p> <p><b>Statistical Council</b>          Andrea Bognár – Chair (National Tax and Customs Office)          Prof. Dr Éva Sándorné Kriszt. – Member (Budapest Business School)          Dr Attila Tamás Szabó – Member (National Office for the Judiciary)          Dániel Horn – Member (Director of the Institute of Economics and Head of the Education and Labour Economics Research Unit at the Centre for Economic and Regional Studies, Institute of Economics)</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b>          Dr Gabriella Vukovich (President of HCSO)          Eszter Nagy (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, Head of Department, National PR Coordinator)          Andrea Zavagyák (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Head of Section) (interpreter)</p>
<b>17:15 – 18:15</b>	<b>Peer review team discussion</b>	

Timing	Topic	Participants
<b>Day 4 – 23 March 2023</b>		
<b>09:00 – 10:30</b>	<b>Meeting with main data providers</b>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b> Andrea Zavagyák (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Head of Section) (Interpreter)</p> <p><b>Main data providers:</b> MOL Hungarian Oil and Gas Plc., Hartmann Hungary National Tax and Customs Office, Head of Department National Tax and Customs Office, Head of Unit Hungarian Central Bank, Statistics Directorate, Head of Department</p>
<b>10:30 – 10:45</b>	Coffee break	
<b>10:45 – 11:45</b>	<b>Meeting with providers of new data sources</b>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b> Andrea Zavagyák (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Head of Section)</p> <p><b>Providers of new data sources:</b> ingatlan.com Ltd Magyar Telekom Ltd., REGULATORY &amp; WHOLESALE TRIBE</p>
<b>11:45 – 12:45</b>	<b>Meeting with main users – Media</b>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b> Dr Gabriella Vukovich (President of the HCSO) Katalin Kása (Dissemination Directorate, User Relations Department, Head of Department) Andrea Zavagyák (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Head of Section) (Interpreter)</p> <p><b>Media:</b> Info Rádió Trend FM</p>
<b>12:45 – 13:45</b>	Lunch	

13:45 – 14:45	<p><b>Meeting with main users – Ministries and other public/private institutions</b></p>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b> Dr Gabriella Vukovich (President of the HCSO) Gábor Valkó (Statistics Directorate, Sectoral Statistics Department, Head of Department) Andrea Zavagyák (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Head of Section)</p> <p><b>Ministries and other public/private institutions:</b> Hungarian Central Bank, Executive Director for Economic Analysis and Competitiveness Hungarian Central Bank, Director of Statistics Regulated Activities Supervisory Authority, Head of Department Ministry of Interior, Head of Unit Ministry of Finance, Head of Department</p>
14:45 – 15:45	<p><b>Meeting with main users – business associations and federations and trade unions</b></p>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b> Kornélia Mag (Deputy President of Architectural Services Directorate) Katalin Kása (Dissemination Directorate, User Relations Department, Head of Department) Andrea Zavagyák (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Head of Section) (Interpreter)</p> <p><b>Main users:</b> Fejér County Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Secretary General Győr-Moson-Sopron County Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Secretary KKVHÁZ Association Dean, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration Chair, Associate Professor, Department of Statistics and Demography University of Szeged</p>
15:45 – 16:00	Coffee break	
16:00 – 17:00	<p><b>Meeting with main users – Scientific community</b></p>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b> All</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b> Kornélia Mag (Deputy President of Architectural Services Directorate)</p>

		<p>Katalin Kása (Dissemination Directorate, User Relations Department, Head of Department)          Andrea Zavagyák (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Head of Section)</p> <p><b>Scientific community:</b>          Eötvös Loránt Research Network          Semmelweis University, Centre for Epidemiology and Surveillance          Óbuda University, Vice-Rector for Science          Databank of Centre for Economic and Regional Studies MTA KRTK          Mathias Corvinus Collegium          Századvég Konjunktúrakutató Ltd.</p>
<b>17:00 – 18:00</b>	<b>Peer review team discussion</b>	
<b>Timing</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Participants</b>
<b>Day 5 – 24 March 2023</b>		
<b>09:00 – 10:30</b>	<b>Per review expert team discussion</b>	
<b>10:30 – 10:45</b>	Coffee break	
<b>10:45 – 12:45</b>	<b>Clarifications, remaining or additional issues and focus areas</b>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b>          All</p> <p><b>The NSI:</b>          Dr Gabriella Vukovich (President of the HCSO)          Kornélia Mag (Deputy President of Architectural Services Directorate)          Eszter Németh (Deputy President of Data Collection Directorate)          Eszter Nagy (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, Head of Department, National PR Coordinator)          Angéla Kátainé Marosi (Chief Adviser on Dissemination, Dissemination Directorate)          Katalin Kása (Dissemination Directorate, User Relations Department, Head of Department)          Zoltán Vereczkei (Architectural Services Directorate, Methodology Department, Head of Department)          Andrea Zavagyák (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Head of Section)</p>
<b>12:45 – 13:45</b>	Lunch	
<b>13:45 – 15:45</b>	<b>Meeting with the senior management of the NSI: conclusions and recommendations</b>	<p><b>The peer review expert team:</b>          All</p>

		<p><b>The NSI:</b>  Dr Gabriella Vukovich (President of the HCSO)  Kornélia Mag (Deputy President of Architectural Services Directorate)  Eszter Németh (Deputy President of Data Collection Directorate)  Eszter Nagy (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, Head of Department, National PR Coordinator)  Andrea Petres (Strategy and Quality Management Section, Head of Section)  Angéla Kátainé Marosi (Chief Adviser on Dissemination, Dissemination Directorate)  Zoltán Vereczkei (Architectural Services Directorate, Methodology Department, Head of Department)  Gábor Valkó (Statistics Directorate, Sectoral Statistics Department, Head of Department)  Andrea Zavagyák (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Head of Section)</p> <p><b>ONAs:</b>  <b>Ministry of Interior:</b>  Dr Gellért Sölch (Deputy State Secretary for Strategy)  Karolina Molnár (Deputy State Secretary for Strategy - Strategic Department, Head of Department)</p> <p><b>Ministry of Agriculture:</b>  Zsombor Páll (Statistical Coordinator at the Deputy State Secretariat for Agro Economy)  Szilvia Reiter (Statistical Officer at the Deputy State Secretariat for Agro Economy)</p> <p><b>Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority:</b>  László Szabó (Head of Department of Statistics)  Ákos Gerencsér (Deputy Head of Department of Statistics)</p>
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## **ANNEX B – LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

### **Hungarian Central Statistical Office management**

Dr Gabriella Vukovich (President of the HCSO)

Dr Áron Kincses (Deputy President of Statistics Directorate)

Kornélia Mag (Deputy President of Architectural Services Directorate)

Eszter Németh (Deputy President of Data Collection Directorate)

### **Hungarian Central Statistical Office coordination team**

Eszter Nagy (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, Head of Department, National Coordinator of PR)

Andrea Zavagyák (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Head of Section)

Tamara Pál (International Relations Section, Head of Section)

Eszter Szentmiklósi (Statistical Coordination and Legal Affairs Department, General Statistical Coordination Section, Statistical Coordinator)

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### **Other staff of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office**

Ágnes Andics (Methodology Department, Survey and Data Preparation Methodology Section, Subject matter expert)

Pál Bóday (Multi-domain Statistics Department, Head of Department)

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Ferenc Csanádi (IT Security Officer)

Gábor Csutorás (Human Resources Strategy and Training Department, Head of Department)

Csaba Gilyán (Business Statistics Department, Head of Department)

Katalin Janák (Quality of Life Statistics Department, Head of Department)

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Katalin Kása (Dissemination Directorate, User Relations Department, Head of Department)

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Eszter Regős (Data Protection Officer)

Gáborné Székely (Population Census and Demographic Statistics Department, Housing Statistics Section, Head of Section)

Adrienn Szöllősiné Szép (Data Collection Directorate, Business Statistics Data Collection Department, Head of Department)

Márta Tóth (Financial Management Department, Budget Chapter Section, Head of Section)

Gábor Valkó (Statistics Directorate, Sectoral Statistics Department, Head of Department)

Zoltán Vereczkei (Architectural Services Directorate, Methodology Department, Head of Department)

### **Hungarian Central Statistical Office junior staff**

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Martina Kökény (Dissemination Directorate)

Nóra Licsik (Sectoral Statistics Department)

Bianka Mádi (Quality of Life Statistics Department)

Viktor Subert (Household Surveys Data Collection Department)

Gergely Balázs Vida (Information Technology Services Department)

### **Representatives of Other National Authorities (ONAs)**

#### **1<sup>st</sup> ONA: Ministry of Interior with its background institutions**

Dr Gellért Sölch (Deputy State Secretary for Strategy)

Karolina Molnár (Deputy State Secretary for Strategy - Strategic Department, Head of Department)

Dr Ildikó Lelkes (Health Financing, Performance Improvement and Analysis, Head of Department)

Zoltán Tajti (Health Financing, Performance Improvement and Analysis, Head of the Statistical and Data Analysis Division)

Ábel Ferenc Urbán (Educational Authority, Deputy President for Public Education)

Dr Katinka Pohner (Deputy State Secretary for Legal Affairs and Coordination - Law Enforcement Codification Department - Unit for General Law Enforcement Regulation, Head of Department)

Erika Keresztes (Deputy State Secretary for Legal Affairs and Coordination - Law Enforcement Codification Department - Unit for General Law Enforcement Regulation, Administrator)

Andrea Éva Bányai (International Analysis and Coordination Unit - National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing The International Analysis and Coordination Unit, Head of Unit)

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> ONA: Ministry of Agriculture**

Zsombor Páll (Statistical Coordinator at the Deputy State Secretariat for Agro Economy)

Szilvia Reiter (Statistical Officer at the Deputy State Secretariat for Agro Economy)

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> ONA: Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority**

László Szabó (Head of Department of Statistics)

Ákos Gerencsér (Deputy Head of Department of Statistics)

### **Representatives of the National Statistical Council (NSC)**

National Tax and Customs Office, Chair of the NSC

Budapest Business School, Member of the NSC

National Office for the Judiciary, Member of the NSC

Director of the Institute of Economics and Head of the Education and Labour Economics Research Unit at the Centre for Economic and Regional Studies, Institute of Economics, Member of the NSC

#### **Representatives of main data providers**

MOL Hungarian Oil and Gas Plc., Head of Accounting, Reporting and Statistics

Hartmann Hungary, Chief Accountant

National Tax and Customs Office, Head of Department

National Tax and Customs Office, Head of Unit

Hungarian Central Bank, Statistics Directorate, Head of Department

#### **Representatives of providers of new data sources**

ingatlan.com Ltd., Senior economic expert

Magyar Telekom Ltd., REGULATORY & WHOLESALe TRIBE, Wholesale partner & product expert

#### **Representatives of the media**

Info Rádió

Trend FM

#### **Representatives of the Ministries and other public/private institutions**

Hungarian Central Bank, Executive Director for Economic Analysis and Competitiveness

Hungarian Central Bank, Director of Statistics

Regulated Activities Supervisory Authority, Head of Department

Ministry of Interior, Head of Unit

Ministry of Finance, Head of Department

#### **Representatives of main users**

Fejér County Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Secretary General

Győr-Moson-Sopron County Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Secretary

KKVHÁZ Association, President

Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Dean

Department of Statistics and Demography University of Szeged, Chair, Associate Professor



**Representatives of the scientific community**

Eötvös Loránt Research Network, Head of Institute

Semmelweis University, Centre for Epidemiology and Surveillance, Director

Óbuda University, Vice-Rector for Science

Databank of Centre for Economic and Regional Studies MTA KRTK, Head of the Databank

Mathias Corvinus Collegium, Senior Researcher

Századvég Konjunktúrakutató Ltd., Director