



DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS OF FINLAND 2017–2019

Table of contents

Foreword.....	3
1. Vision and task of the statistical service.....	4
2. Development strategy 2017 to 2019	4
2.1 Efficient collection	5
2.2 Relevant products	6
2.3 Reliable statistics.....	7
3. Systems of official statistics.....	8
3.1 National statistical service.....	9
3.2 OSF activities and quality assurance.....	10
3.3 European Statistical System ESS	10
3.4 European Statistics Code of Practice	12
Appendix 1. The basic principles of official statistics of the United Nations Statistics Division	13
Appendix 2. OSF quality criteria.....	13
Appendix 3. ESS administrative organisation.....	14
Appendix 4: European Statistics Code of Practice	17
Appendix 5: Abbreviations used.....	18

Foreword

The vision of Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Union for the production of European statistics, (ESS vision 2020) emphasises customer needs, the quality of statistics, utilisation of new data sources and improving the efficiency, dissemination and communication of statistical production. The aim of the European statistical system (ESS) is to produce relevant and reliable data fit for the future. Innovative solutions are sought, for example, by developing the use of big data.

Nationally, an important strategic programme is Prime Minister Sipilä's national government programme that challenges public agencies on many fronts. In accordance with the programme, public services should be made user-oriented and primarily digital and data are asked only once. New business ideas are created with open data and better utilisation of existing data sources. Innovativeness and service orientation are also new requirements for civil servants.

Mega trends arising from the operating environment concern technological development and its effect on modes of operation and production processes, the increasing importance of describing global phenomena (e.g. migration, immigration, global trade, climate change) and the use of natural resources when promoting economic growth.

National statistics compiled by public agencies commit to the objectives of the above-mentioned programmes and the challenges posed by development trends are met with joint development strategy. The development strategy cover the activities for the years 2017 to 2019.

The development strategy have been compiled in cooperation with the producers of official statistics that form the national statistical system and who are also responsible for implementing the objectives. The task of the official statistical service is to produce and publish high-quality, independent and impartial statistical data from Finland that the society needs.

*Marjo Bruun
Statistics Finland's Director General*

1. Vision and task of the statistical service



Vision

Official statistics production offers good customer service, produces high-quality and comprehensive statistics and operates objectively, independently and impartially.

Task

Producers of statistics produce official statistics following consistently the legislation on statistics and data protection, the general ethical principles of official statistics and the European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP), as well as the quality criteria of the Official Statistics of Finland (OSF) that are based on these. The legal protection of the data supplier is respected and a high level of data protection and security is maintained in all activities. The data providers' response burden is minimised and overlapping data collection is not present in the activities

2. Development strategy 2017 to 2019

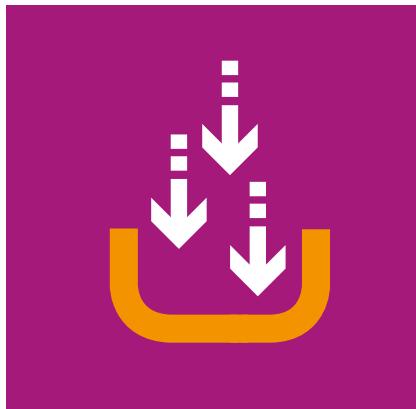
The producers of official statistics have together defined the strategic points and development strategy for statistical production, the implementation of which promote customer-friendly, high-quality and efficient production of official statistics. The producers of statistics commit to the implementation of the development strategy in accordance with the strategy of their own agency. Statistics Finland, as the general statistical authority and the party that coordinate unification, monitors and reports on the implementation of the strategy on its web pages.

The strategic points of emphasis to which the producers of statistics commit are:

- Efficient collection
- Relevant products
- Reliable statistics



2.1 Efficient collection



In Finland, a considerable amount of statistical data are collected from administrative registers and other existing data sources. Direct data collections are only used when other data are not available. The efficiency of data collections has been developed for years but new opportunities have arisen as the operating environment has changed and technology has developed. In 2017 to 2019, the aim is to develop the utilisation of big data, continue the digitalisation of data collections and the statistical production process, focus on motivating data providers and increase data cooperation between authorities. The common solutions and recommendations of public administration (e.g. the National Architecture for Digital Services, KAPA and the Common Data Management, YTI) are utilised when increasing the efficiency of data collections.

Utilisation of big data: The aim is to utilise private sector big data as basic data for statistics, which enables improving the quality of statistics, reducing direct data collections and/or developing new statistical products. In utilising big data, the aim is to focus on developing statistical methods in cooperation with enterprises and actors that develop methods. The availability of data is influenced with communication, emphasising the significance of data and data protection in statistics production, and by agreeing on data use with the owners of the data.

Digitalisation of data collections and production as well as motivating data providers: Continue focusing on digitalising data collections and statistical production by developing collection and production systems and by taking new solutions into use. In addition, responding to data collections is made easier by developing online surveys, usability testing of online questionnaires in OSF statistics and by improving the clarity of questionnaires. Communicate to data providers the importance of official statistics and data collections in society and otherwise encourage data providers to respond.

Data cooperation and exchange of data: Promote data cooperation and exchange of data between OSF and ESS producers so that once collected data can be re-utilised and thus reduce the response burden for society. Modes of data cooperation is recorded in cooperation agreements.

The implementation of the objectives is promoted through the following activities:

- Recognise most important big data and focus on testing the data, develop methods and implementation.
- Usability testing of online questionnaires in data collections of OSF statistics and clarifying methods, questions and data.
- Develop data provider feedback to maintain the willingness to respond.
- Promote the utilisation of advanced statistical methods in the production process of official statistics.
- Develop the description of statistical metadata in cooperation to increase further utilisation of data.

2.2 Relevant products



Production of official statistics serves society and various data users extensively. The customer approach is becoming increasingly emphasised in all activities. Production of official statistics also commits to a customer approach in their activities by developing their products and distribution channels in cooperation with customers and other stakeholders. Promote further use and combinability of data with more detailed description of data, standardisation of metadata and implementation of the recommendations of public administration standards. The needs of the National Architecture for Digital Services (Suomi.fi) are considered in development work.

Considering the customer approach in service production: Develop user orientation of statistical data in cooperation with stakeholder groups.

Modern distribution channels and combinability of data: Develop the dissemination of data and enable the combinability of data in joint use services.

The implementation of the objectives is promoted through the following activities:

- Increase the dissemination of statistical data in accordance with the principles of open data.
- Ensure the combinability of data when developing services by utilising common identification codes, standardised classifications and metadata.
- Increase visualisation of statistical data and easy of use of data.

2.3 Reliable statistics



The production of official statistics is based on international and national quality criteria and ensuring quality in every production phase of the statistical process. Production of high quality statistics also requires skilled and professional personnel. The use of statistics and other data in society is increasing and it is increasingly important to maintain and increase the understanding of the importance of data, methods and quality in producing statistics. The following objectives ensure the production and use of reliable statistics.

Commitment to quality: Commit to the implementation of the renewed OSF quality management system and implement the OSF quality criteria and recommendations exhaustively.

Improving the correct use of statistics in society: Communicate the importance of statistical skills in society and support the maintenance and development of citizens knowledge.

Sharing of competence between producers of statistics: Share competence concerning new data collection and data processing methods (mixed-mode, web-scraping, automation) between producers of statistics.

The implementation of the objectives is realised through the following activities:

- Renew the quality descriptions and quality reports of OSF and ESS statistics.
- Perform regular quality assessments of ESS statistics and statistical production.
- Market the OSF portal as a source of high-quality statistical data.
- Maintain and develop the eCourse in Statistics and communicate about it actively to citizens.
- Promote the development of statistical professionalism through the Training Programme in statistical skills (TIKO) and with seminars for OSF and ESS producers, as well as joint development projects.

3. Systems of official statistics

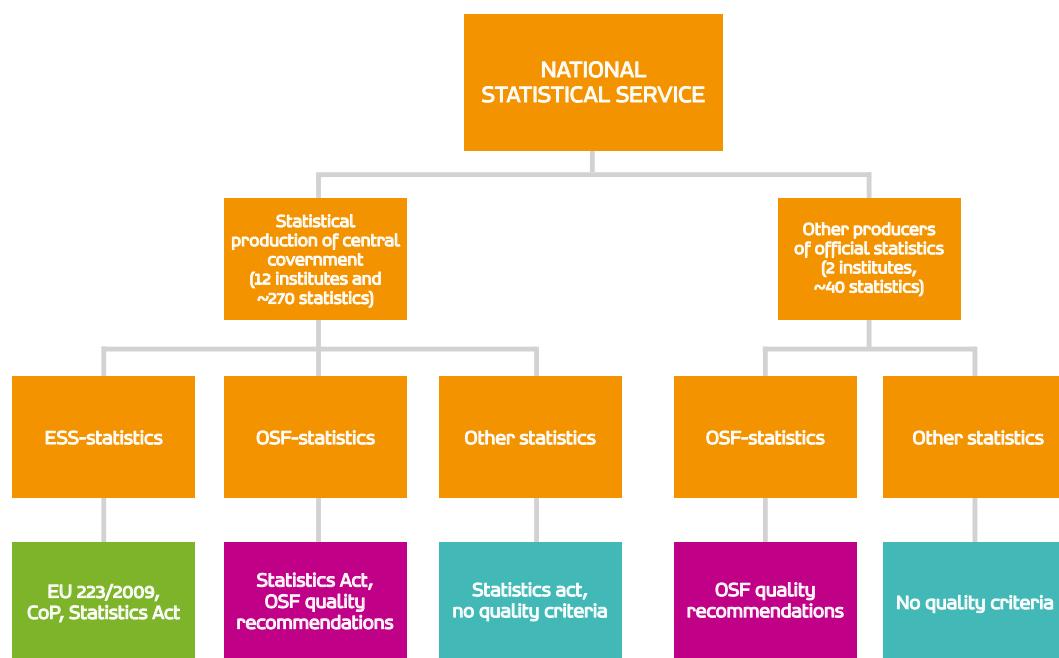
The development strategy for the production of official statistics defines the objectives of which promote the development of high-quality official statistics (Official Statistics of Finland, OSF and European Statistical System statistics, ESS) that serve users in Finland. Authorities belonging to the national statistical system produce statistics for national, European Union and other international needs.

Produced data are part of the statistical system of Official Statistics of Finland (OSF) and part of the statistics belong to the European Statistical System (ESS). National statistics production is governed by the Statistics Act (280/2004) and European statistics production is governed by Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European statistics. In addition, statistical data requirements defined by international organisations (OECD, UN, IMF, etc.) are produced for these organisations based on international agreements.

The principle of official statistics is to act as a public commodity that is distributed for free, equally and simultaneously to all users. The statistics must give an exhaustive picture of the social phenomenon it has been established to describe. Official statistics must fulfil the national and international quality criteria set for them and their release schedule is communicated to users well in advance.

Section 3.1 describes the national statistical system and Section 3.2 describes the OSF statistical system that is an integral part of the national system, as well as its quality control mechanism. Section 3.3 describes the European Statistical System (ESS) and Section 3.4 the related quality control of the statistics.

Figure 1: National statistical service



3.1 National statistical service

The **national statistical service** is a network of authorities in the field of statistics that produces Official Statistics of Finland (OSF), statistics for the European Statistical System (ESS) and other statistics. The national statistical service covers central government's official statistics and other official statistics (Figure 1).

The central government statistical production is conducted by 12 government agencies and institutions of which four act as statistical authorities and the remaining eight as authorities producing other statistics.

The Statistics Act (280/2004) defines Statistics Finland, Finnish Customs, the Natural Resources Institute Finland and the National Institute for Health and Welfare as the statistical authorities. The statutory task of the statistical authorities is to compile statistics and they are by virtue of law entitled to collect data for the purpose of compiling official statistic based on the data supply obligation. Statistical authorities produce Official Statistics of Finland (OSF), statistics for the European Statistical System (ESS) and other statistics. Statistics Finland is the only authority with the main task to produce statistics. Statistics Finland acts as the national statistical institute (NSI) and represents Finland in the EU and other international statistical cooperation.

In addition to the statistical authorities, other government authorities producing official statistics include the Finnish Meteorological Institute, the Finnish Transport Agency, the Finnish Transport Safety Agency, National Land Survey of Finland, the Finnish Immigration Service, the Finnish Environment Institute, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. These authorities compile statistics from their own field of activity from data at their disposal that have been collected for other purposes. They also can compile statistics using data collected on voluntary basis. In terms of compilation of statistics, the Statistics Act is applied to these authorities. The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health and the Finnish Immigration Service produce ESS statistics from their own field. The other above-mentioned authorities produce OSF statistics and some also produce ESS statistics.

In addition, the Finnish Centre for Pensions and the Social Insurance Institution of Finland act as producers of official statistics outside the budget economy of the state. The act on the Finnish Centre for Pensions (397/2006) and the act on the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (731/2001) require that these institutions produce statistics from their own field. Both institutions produce OSF statistics and other statistics from data they have collected for other administrative purposes.

Figure 2: Producers of OSF and ESS statistics



The **Statistics Act** requires that when collecting data for the production of statistics, data that have been accumulated when handling the tasks of general government are primarily to be used. Data providers are only asked for data that are essential for statistics compilation and identification data can only be collected and saved when it is necessary for the combination of data or when it is otherwise necessary. When data collected for statistical purposes are being processed it is ensured that no person's protection of private life or personal data, or business or professional secret is endangered. Data collected for statistical purposes may not be released for use in an investigation, surveillance, legal proceedings, administrative decision-making or other similar handling of a matter concerning an individual, enterprise, corporation or foundation. Confidential data can, however, be released for the purposes of scientific research and statistical surveys.

The EU Regulation on European Statistics (223/2009) defines the production of European statistics. The content of the regulation is discussed in more detail in Section 3.2.

The statutory **task of Statistics Finland** is to ensure the development of the national statistical service in cooperation with other government officials. In addition, the EU Regulation on European Statistics (223/2009) defines that Statistics Finland's task as the NSI is to coordinate the development, production and dissemination of ESS statistics in Finland.

3.2 OSF activities and quality assurance

The statistical system of the Official Statistics of Finland includes around 200 statistics on various areas of society. The number of statistics produced annually varies somewhat as some OSF statistics are only produced at set intervals.

The Advisory Board of Official Statistics of Finland that was founded in 2002 is a key cooperation forum that handles the development needs of OSF statistics. All the above-mentioned (Section 3.1) producers of statistics belong to the Advisory Board.

The task of the Advisory Board is to promote the visibility and knowledge of official statistics and to develop the production of uniform, high-quality and reliable official statistics corresponding to customer needs. In addition, the Advisory Board promotes the coordination and cooperation of the national statistical service in line with the objectives of the European Statistical System. At the meetings of the Advisory Board, current national and international development projects are presented, development strategy for the official statistical service and other recommendations and instructions are prepared in cooperation, and seminars and meetings with foreign statistical institutes (especially those of the Nordic countries) and international organisations are presented.

In order to improve the coordination and development work on statistics, development and cooperation working groups have been founded for example in the following areas:

- Statistical working group in the field of social affairs and health,
- Statistical working group of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's area of responsibility,
- Statistical working group of legal and criminal matters,
- Expert group on equality statistics,
- Statistical working group of traffic accidents,
- Expert group on labour market statistics,
- Working group of statistics on the population with foreign background,
- Strategic group of statistics on foreign trade.

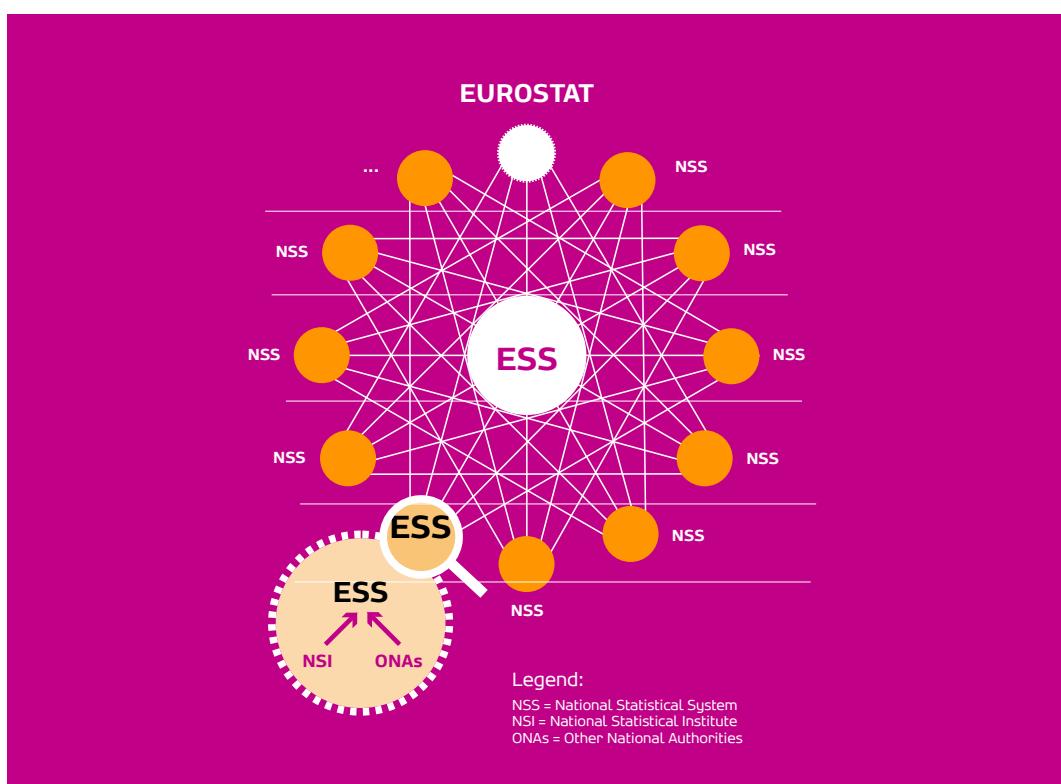
On its web pages, Statistics Finland annually reports on the development of the national statistical service, the costs of the national statistical service and the work of the Advisory Board of Official Statistics of Finland.

The Advisory Board of Official Statistics of Finland has compiled quality recommendations for official statistics (Appendix 2), which have been harmonised with the Code of Practice for statistics issued by the European Commission (Appendix 4). The aim of the recommendations is to develop and maintain the usability of OSF statistics for society's data needs as producers of OSF commit to ensure the quality of statistics, unbroken time series and transparent methods in accordance with the OSF quality recommendations.

3.3 European Statistical System ESS

A key European statistical cooperation partner is Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities, which is one of the DGs of the Commission. The European Statistical System (ESS) has been organised to develop, produce and distribute European statistics and to assist the Commission. The ESS (Figure 3) consists of Eurostat, National Statistical Institutes (NSI) of each member states, and Other National Authorities (ONA) that produce, distribute and develop European statistics. Statistics Finland acts as the national statistical institute in Finland. The administrative organisation of the ESS is described in more detail in Appendix 3.

Figure 3: National Statistical System as part of the ESS system



Läbde: The ESS Report 2014.

The main task of the European Statistical System (ESS) is to serve the European Union in its decision-making and administration. The objectives of EU's joint EU2020 strategy are reflected in the vision concerning the statistical system (ESS Vision 2020) and through that also the national statistical service and the development strategy within it. In addition to the vision, a key document that steers the activities of the ESS system is the European statistical programme 2013 to 2017 (Regulation (EC) No 99/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council) that has been extended to the period 2018 to 2020.

In the ESS vision, satisfaction of customer needs, ensuring quality, utilisation of new data sources, promoting the efficiency of statistical production and improving dissemination and communication have been recognised as development objects. The long-term programme and the complementing annual programmes, in turn, concretise the development objects of the vision into actions.

The European Statistical System is controlled by the EU Regulation on European Statistics (223/2009). The Regulation on European Statistics defines the common statistical principles and quality requirements of the statistical service, the administrative organisation of the ESS and issues related to the dissemination of statistics and statistical confidentiality. It also defines the cooperation between Eurostat and national statistical offices. In connection with the amendment of the Statistics Act (759/2015), the coordination task of the NSI was revised, the independence of the statistical office and its Director General were strengthened, and the use of administrative data in official statistics was guaranteed.

The Regulation on European Statistics is directly applicable legislation in the member states and it surpasses the national statistics act but, in practice, there are no conflicts between the Regulation and Finland's Statistics Act. In addition, statistics production is regulated by some 400 other EU regulations, decrees and decisions. Eurostat annually compiles a handbook on these (Statistical requirements compendium - 2016 edition).

The Ministry of Finance has set up the statistical co-operation group on EU affairs to handle EU questions in the statistical system. The group's tasks include preparation of Finland's responses to statistical regulations proposed by the EU.

3.4 European Statistics Code of Practice

In order to ensure the quality, uniformity and common principles of ESS statistics, the commission has compiled the European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP). The Code of Practice form instructions on which the production of European statistics should be based. The position of the Code of Practice has been determined in the Regulation on European Statistics (223/2009) and the realisation of the principles is monitored regularly.

The Code of Practice concerns the independence and accountability of statistical authorities and the quality of processes and data to be published. The principles are in line with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics approved by the United Nations Statistics Division (Appendix 1) and are supplementary to them. The principles are also compatible with those of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). Appendix 4 describes the CoP in more detail.

The first peer review of the Code of Practice that focused on national statistical institutes was carried out in 2006 to 2008, and the second more comprehensive review was made in 2013 to 2015. In the peer review, Finland received 22 recommendations of which three applied to the national statistical system. The recommendations suggested that

- Statistics Finland should promote the practice of systematic quality audits by other statistical authorities, and foster the participation of external reviewers in the auditing process (recommendation 18).
- The quality marks to identify official statistics should be extended to data collection operations, for example by inserting the logo on questionnaires and information documents (recommendation 22).
- Statistics Finland should set up a well-branded web portal to all official statistics, including a single calendar covering all of Finland's official statistics (recommendation 23).

The implementation of the recommendations has started and Eurostat monitors the progress of the implementation annually in 2016 to 2019.

Appendix 1. The basic principles of official statistics of the United Nations Statistics Division

In 1994, the United Nations Statistical Commission adopted a set of 10 fundamental principles of official statistics. These principles may be summarised as follows:

1. Official statistics provide an indispensable element in the information system of a democratic society, serving the government, the economy and the public with data about the economic, demographic, social and environmental situation. To this end, official statistics that meet the test of practical utility are to be compiled and made available on an impartial basis by official statistical agencies to honour citizens' entitlement to public information.
2. To retain trust in official statistics, the statistical agencies need to decide according to strictly professional considerations, including scientific principles and professional ethics, on the methods and procedures for the collection, processing, storage and presentation of statistical data.
3. To facilitate a correct interpretation of the data, the statistical agencies are to present information according to scientific standards on the sources, methods and procedures of the statistics.
4. The statistical agencies are entitled to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics.
5. Data for statistical purposes may be drawn from all types of sources, be they statistical surveys or administrative records. Statistical agencies are to choose the source with regard to quality, timeliness, costs and the burden on respondents.
6. Individual data collected by statistical agencies for statistical compilation, whether they refer to natural or legal persons, are to be strictly confidential and used exclusively for statistical purposes.
7. The laws, regulations and measures under which the statistical systems operate are to be made public.
8. Co-ordination among statistical agencies within countries is essential to achieve consistency and efficiency in the statistical system.
9. The use by statistical agencies in each country of international concepts, classifications and methods promotes the consistency and efficiency of statistical systems at all official levels.
10. Bilateral and multilateral cooperation in statistics contributes to the improvement of official statistics in all countries.

Appendix 2. OSF quality criteria

1. Impartiality and transparency

The principles adhered to in the production and reporting of statistics are based on professional statistical considerations and ethics independent of external interest perspectives. The principles are public and detected errors are corrected visibly. The statistics are accessible to everybody under equal conditions.

2. Quality control

The quality of statistical data is monitored continuously with recognised procedures and it has been adequately described. The minimum requirement in quality reporting is an up-to-date quality description approved by the Advisory Board of Official Statistics of Finland. The aim is that approved procedures for quality assurance are in place for OSF statistics.

3. Data protection

The data obtained from data providers are only used for the purpose they have been informed about and their privacy and trade secrets are efficiently protected.

4. Efficiency

Statistics are produced with adequate resources and mandates, professionally and as efficiently as possible while minimising the response burden of data providers.

5. Relevance

OSF statistics contain essential and nationally comprehensive data on the topic they represent to serve the needs of their users.

6. Accuracy and reliability

OSF statistics describe the phenomena being observed, their state and changes in an accurate and reliable manner. Clear descriptions are presented of the used statistical methods and revisions in them. Their effects on the obtained results and other possible uncertainties in the statistics are analysed and reported. The measures for correcting possible errors in the statistics comply with the recommendation approved by the Advisory Board of Official Statistics of Finland.

7. Timeliness and promptness

The data of OSF statistics are as up-to-date as possible. The times of their release are made known in advance. Their releaser maintains a release calendar in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Advisory Board of Official Statistics of Finland (OSF release guidelines).

8. Coherence, consistency and comparability

OSF statistics are coherent and as comparable as possible over time and regionally. General and established, primarily internationally approved concepts and statistical classifications are used in OSF statistics. The factors affecting the coherence and comparability of the statistics are documented and explained in the quality descriptions of the statistics. Definitionally deviating data describing the same phenomenon are clarified by using different concepts.

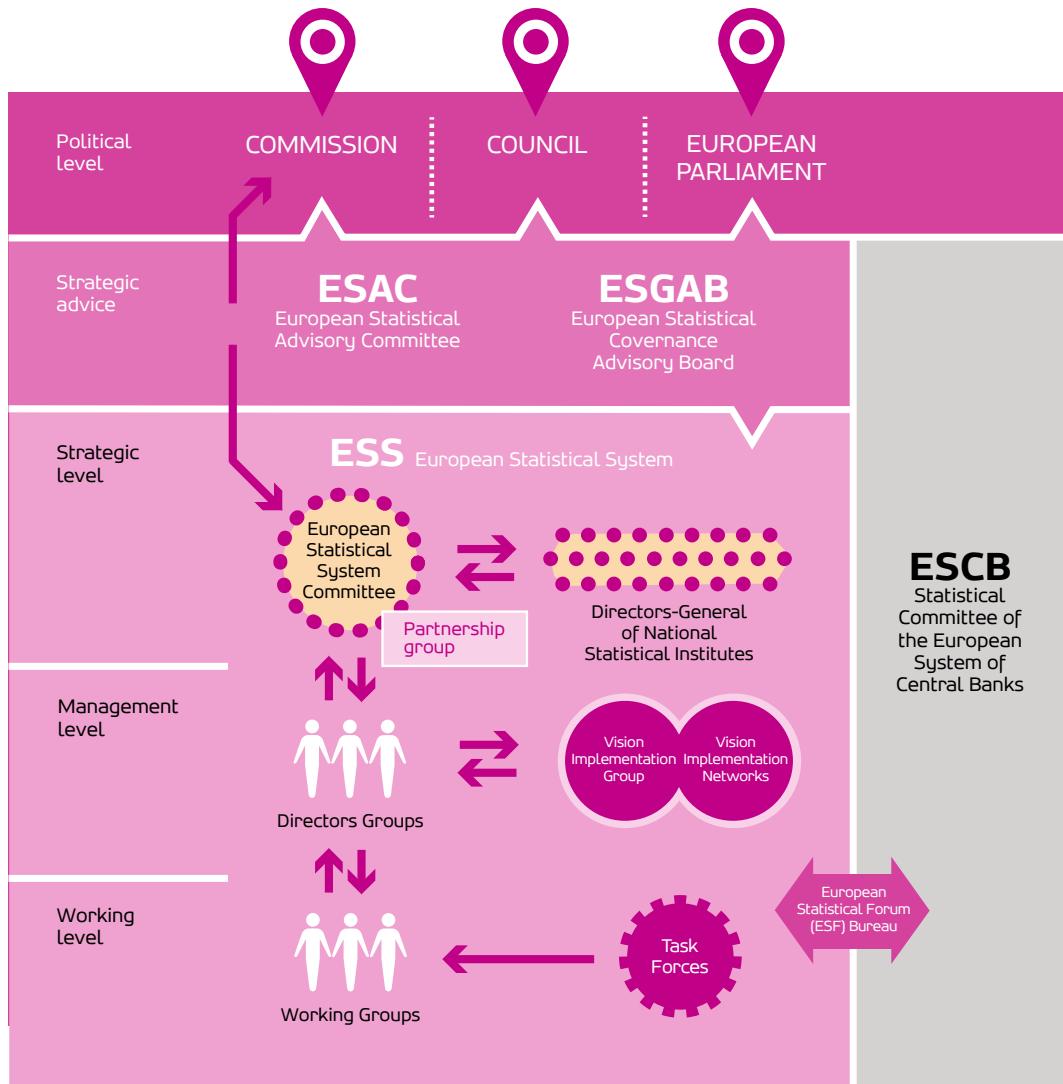
9. Accessibility and clarity

OSF statistics are presented in a clear, transparent and understandable form, and disseminated in a suitable and convenient manner. The data and the supporting metadata, as well as guidance for the users are made impartially accessible. The statistics are presented in a form that facilitates their proper interpretation and comparisons. The basic data of the statistics are available for research purposes without compromising confidentiality. Custom-designed analyses can be produced from the statistics for the needs of an individual user or group of users.

Appendix 3. ESS administrative organisation

The administrative model of the ESS includes several groups on various levels that develop, implement and monitor statistical areas and statistics production.

Figure 4 describes the administrative organisation of the ESS and the key groups and their objectives and purpose are described in more detail below the figure.

Figure 4: ESS administrative organisation 2016

The European Statistical System Committee (ESSC) was established in 2009 (Regulation on European Statistics 223/2009) to continue the work of the Statistical Programme Committee (SPC) and to provide professional guidance for the development, production and dissemination of statistics included in the ESS statistical system in accordance with the statistical principles. In practice, the commission (Eurostat) asks for the opinion of the ESSC on issues related to the development, production and dissemination of statistics, the priorities of the statistical programme, statistical confidentiality, renewals of EU's Code of Practice (CoP), and other possible statistical questions. In addition, as a so-called comitology committee, the ESSC committee comments on the legislative proposals made by the commission to the council and parliament related to statistics. In accordance with the Regulation on European Statistics, the ESSC must be heard before making legislative proposals related to statistics.

Eurostat's Director General act as the chair of the ESSC and each member state is represented by the Director General of the NSI of the member state. From Finland, Statistics Finland's Director General Ms Marjo Bruun participates in the committee meetings.

The national statistical institutes of EFTA/EEA countries and Switzerland are invited to the meetings as third parties, and representatives of the ECB, OECD, the UN and other international institutions can participate in the meetings as observers.

The ESS Partnership Group (PG) has been established for the preparation of the ESSC meetings and its task is to support the work of the ESSC. The group consists of four elected Director Generals of the NSIs and Eurostat's Director General. The Director General of the NSI in the member state responsible for the EU's presidency in the Council Working Group on Statistics also belongs to the group. The task of the groups is, for example, to propose strategic subjects to be discussed by the ESSC meeting, promote the cooperation between Eurostat and NSIs, estimate the activities of the ESSC and related groups, and give opinions on the agendas of the ESSC meetings.

Customer and users are represented by **the European Statistical Advisory Committee (ESAC)** that was established in 2008 (decision 234/2008). The ESAC comprises 24 members who represent users, data providers and other stakeholders of European statistics (e.g. the scientific community, the third sector) and institutional users (e.g. the Commission and European Parliament). The task of the commission is to ensure that the customers' needs and response burden are considered when developing the long-term statistical programme. Currently, Finland is represented in the ESAC by the former head of statistics of City of Helsinki Urban Facts, Ms Asta Manninen.

The European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB) was also founded in 2008 (decision 235/2008). The task of the working group is to produce an independent view on the implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP) in the ESS. The ESGAB can give Eurostat advice on the implementation of the Code of Practice, communicating on it to users and data providers, as well as on the need to update the CoP. The ESGAB annually reports to the Parliament and the Commission on the implementation of the CoP and the ESS. The working group consists of seven members and Finland is represented in the working group by Permanent Secretary of State at the Ministry of Finance Mr Matti Hetemäki, who is also the chair of the working group.

The European Statistical Forum (ESF) was established in 2013 with a cooperation agreement between the European Statistical System (ESS) and the European System of Central Banks (ESCB) with the aim to promote cooperation between the systems. The members of the ESF come from each member state, one representing the ESS and one the ECBS. In addition, Eurostat and the European Central Bank (ECB) both have one representative. The aim of the cooperation is to ensure the development, production and quality of joint statistical areas (such as balance of payment statistics, financial statistics, statistics on macro economy, and national accounts) and to avoid overlapping work. The ESF convenes once a year to discuss strategic issues.

Eight **director groups** operate under the ESSC of which the agricultural statistics, macro statistics, social statistics, environmental statistics and business statistics groups represent statistical areas. In addition, there are director groups related to methods, resources and information management. In the director group, Statistics Finland is represented by the director of the statistical department in question and the representative for agricultural statistics is Natural Resources Institute Finland's head of statistics, Ms Johanna Laiho-Kauranne.

Two types of **preparatory groups** work under each director group – WG and TF. Eurostat appoints the Working Groups (WG) and all member states are invited to them. Task Forces (TF) are more limited groups in terms of topics, composition and duration and their composition is determined based on expertise. Those who participate in the groups (WG, TF) are primarily experts from the member states' national statistical institutes or other national authorities producing European statistics (ONA).

Appendix 4: European Statistics Code of Practice

Institutional environment

1. Professional independence

Professional independence of statistical authorities from other policy, regulatory or administrative departments and bodies, as well as from private sector operators, ensures the credibility of European Statistics.

2. Mandate for data collection

Statistical authorities have a clear legal mandate to collect information for European statistical purposes. Administrations, enterprises and households, and the public at large may be compelled by law to allow access to or deliver data for European statistical purposes at the request of statistical authorities.

3. Adequacy of resources

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

4. Commitment to quality

Statistical authorities are committed to quality. They systematically and regularly identify strengths and weaknesses to continuously improve process and product quality.

5. Statistical confidentiality (statistical data protection)

The privacy of data providers (households, enterprises, administrations and other respondents), the confidentiality of the information they provide and its use only for statistical purposes are absolutely guaranteed.

6. Impartiality and objectivity

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

Statistical output

7. Sound methodology

Sound methodology underpins quality statistics. This requires adequate tools, procedures and expertise.

8. Appropriate statistical procedures

Appropriate statistical procedures, implemented from data collection to data validation, underpin quality statistics.

9. Non-excessive burden on respondents

The reporting burden is proportionate to the needs of the users and is not excessive for respondents. The statistical authorities monitor the response burden and set targets for its reduction over time.

10. Cost effectiveness

Resources are used effectively.

Statistical output

11. Relevance

European Statistics meet the needs of users.

12. Accuracy and reliability

European Statistics accurately and reliably portray reality.

13. Timeliness and punctuality

European Statistics are released in a timely and punctual manner.

14. Coherence and comparability

European Statistics are consistent internally, over time and comparable between regions and countries; it is possible to combine and make joint use of related data from different sources.

15. Accessibility and clarity

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

Appendix 5: Abbreviations used

CoP	European Statistics Code of Practice
DGINS	Director Generals of the National Statistical Institutes
ESAC	European Statistical Advisory Committee
ESCB	European System of Central Banks
ESSC	European Statistical System Committee
ESF	European Statistical Forum
ESS	European Statistical System
NSI	National Statistical Institute
ONA	Other National Authority producing European statistics
PG	Partnership Group

