



STATISTICAL SERVICE  
OF CYPRUS

# **PEER REVIEWERS' RECOMMENDATIONS AND STATISTICAL SERVICE OF CYPRUS'S IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS IN RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

## Peer reviewer's recommendations and improvement actions in response to the recommendations

### *Strengthen the institutional environment*

**1. A new Cypriot Statistics Law should be prepared and adopted to ensure compliance with the recently amended European Statistical Law. This new Law should explicitly mention the professional independence of the Statistical Service of Cyprus, either as a department of the Ministry of Finance or as an independent agency. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 1.1.)**

**2. The new Cypriot Statistics Law should state that the head of the Statistical Service of Cyprus has sole responsibility for deciding on statistical methods, standards and procedures, and on the content and timing of statistical releases. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 1.3 and 1.4.)**

**3. The role of the Statistical Council as an advisory board should be reinforced in the new Cypriot Statistics Law. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 7.2 and 15.1.)**

**6. The new Cypriot Statistics Law should designate the Statistical Service of Cyprus as the coordinator of the National Statistical System. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 1 and 3.)**

#### **Current situation:**

The Statistics Law, No 15 (I) of 2000, includes, amongst others, provisions for the functioning of the Statistical Service of Cyprus (CYSTAT) as the competent authority for the development, production and dissemination of official statistics in the country and the establishment and functioning of a Statistical Council and sets general conditions for other public bodies carrying out work of a statistical nature related directly to their activities. The Law lays down the functions and responsibilities of the Statistical Service regarding the choice of statistical methods, standards and procedures, and on the content and timing of statistical releases but does not explicitly assign these responsibilities to the head of the office. It should be noted that not explicitly assigning such responsibilities to the head of a public body is a standard practice in national legislation for public bodies.

Even if in practice the Statistical Service of Cyprus is professionally independent, autonomous in technical matters and its credibility and trustworthiness are publicly acknowledged, it recognises the merits of incorporating in law clearer provisions regarding professional independence and the responsibilities of the head of CYSTAT, as they are prescribed in Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 amended by Regulation (EU) 2015/759.

According to the Statistics Law, the Statistical Council provides advice with regard to the preparation and implementation of the programmes of statistical activities. However, due to its composition, the Statistical Council often serves as a forum for presenting user needs for new statistics to be initiated or for giving the members' feedback on the output produced by CYSTAT.

Due to the centralised nature of the national statistical system, the vast majority of European statistics is produced and disseminated by CYSTAT. The

national statistics law does not provide CYSTAT with a clear mandate for monitoring and coordinating the national statistical system.

**Improvement action 1/2/3/6 - Revise the Statistics Law, No 15 (I) of 2000**

The Statistical Service of Cyprus intends to revise the Statistics Law, No. 15(I) of 2000, in order to incorporate provisions, amongst others, which:

- reflect the changes stemming from the revision of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European Statistics;
- define the professional independence of CYSTAT;
- list the duties and responsibilities assigned to the head of CYSTAT;
- reinforce the role of the Statistical Council and amend its composition;
- clearly define the coordinating role of CYSTAT in the national statistical system and establish a Coordination Committee on Official Statistics to which all ONAs will be represented.

**Timeline:**

CYSTAT is already working on preparing a revised draft law. Once debated internally, public consultation will follow in order to take into account the views of the various stakeholders. Then the draft law will be submitted to the Attorney General for legal vetting and thereafter to the House of Representatives for voting. The timeframe for the completion of this action is difficult to predict since it does not solely depend on CYSTAT, but a reasonable deadline would be the second semester of 2017.

**4. The working arrangements between the Ministry of Finance and the Statistical Service of Cyprus as regards the professional independence of the latter should be formalised and made public. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 1.)**

**Current situation:**

The Statistical Service of Cyprus is functioning under the Ministry of Finance and its head is answerable to the Director General of the Ministry of Finance on administrative issues and procedures. Nevertheless, the Statistical Service maintains its autonomy in technical matters and has exclusive responsibility for the choice of methodology, technique, definitions and procedures for the realisation of the annual and five-year programmes of statistical activities, as well as for prescribing the time and manner of dissemination of the statistical output, as explicitly stipulated in Article 12(2) of the Statistics Law, No 15(I) of 2000.

The working arrangements between the Ministry of Finance and the Statistical Service are not formalised nor publicly documented but in practice there is no ministerial interference or need for ministerial approval in decisions which are purely technical, such as the choice of statistical methods, standards and procedures.

**Improvement action 4 - Formalise and publicise the working arrangements with the Ministry of Finance**

The Statistical Service of Cyprus intends to launch a dialogue with the Ministry of Finance in order to discuss the options for formalising their relationship and publicising the working arrangements regarding the professional independence of CYSTAT.

**Timeline:**

This action is envisaged to start in the first quarter of 2016.

**5. Cypriot financial authorities should ensure adequate resources to enable the Statistical Service of Cyprus to fulfil its legal obligations. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 3.)**

**7. Adequate resources should be allocated for the implementation of coordination of the National Statistical System. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 1 and 3.)**

**Current situation:**

The budget of CYPSTAT is firstly debated and approved by the Ministry of Finance, prior to its submission to the House of Representatives. Due to the difficult economic situation the budget has been decreasing over the last years. The budget constraints imposed, along with staff retirements and the policy of temporarily freezing the filling in of vacant posts in the public sector until the end of 2016, are impeding the smooth implementation of the statistical work programme and are making it difficult to fulfil the legal obligations relating to the production of European statistics. There are currently 20 vacant positions (15% of the total positions) that cannot be filled.

In addition, according to the national procedures regarding income incurred, either originating from EU funding for statistical activities or from the sale of publications in hard copy/CDs or from the fees charged to researchers for the provision of microdata and other tailor made requests, is deposited to the Consolidated Fund of the Republic and is not credited to the Statistical Service's budget. Therefore, the income incurred cannot be directly used by CYPSTAT.

CYPSTAT does not at the moment have the capacity, in terms of resources available, to monitor and coordinate the national statistical system.

**Improvement action 5/7.1 - Lobby for the increase of budget appropriations**

The Statistical Service of Cyprus plans to intensify its lobbying with the Ministry of Finance in order to highlight once more the increased role that statistics plays in society, especially for decision-making and policy monitoring, so as to demonstrate the need for increasing the budget appropriations devoted to statistical production.

**Timeline:**

This action is envisaged to start in the first quarter of 2016.

**Improvement action 5/7.2 - Filling of vacant positions - staff recruitment**

The Statistical Service of Cyprus will immediately act when the moratorium imposed by law on the recruitment of new staff in the public sector is lifted and proceed with the filling of the 20 vacant positions. Also, when the economic situation allows it, it will try to secure more staff positions in order to effectively execute its coordinating role in the national statistical system.

**Timeline:**

This action is envisaged to start from the beginning of 2017 onwards

**8. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should offer its training programme, in particular training related to quality management and reporting, to the staff of other national statistical authorities. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 4 and indicator 7.6.)**

**Current situation:**

The Statistical Service participates or conducts training programmes in a variety of subjects. However, due to the budget cuts it has been experiencing in recent years, participation in training programmes abroad has been restricted and training is limited to in-house courses. Therefore, on an ad-hoc basis and when a need arises, experienced members of staff in a specific topic offer training courses to other staff members. For example, CYSTAT has organised in-house training courses on “Sampling Techniques”, “Short-term Statistics” and the “Business Register” to support the quality policy.

CYSTAT offers methodological guidance to other national authorities, such as how to use the SDMX converter or about classifications, upon request.

**Improvement action 8 - Invite staff of other national authorities to CYSTAT’s in-house training**

The Statistical Service of Cyprus intends to invite staff of other national authorities to future in-house training programmes regarding quality matters. There is no legal obstacle or related cost to prevent this.

**Timeline:**

This action is envisaged to be implemented from the first quarter of 2016.

**9. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should establish and maintain a common dissemination portal for official statistics with the contribution of the other national producers, including a common release calendar. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 15.)**

**Current situation:**

The provisions of the Statistics Law, No 15(I) of 2000, do not explicitly empower CYSTAT with the authority to monitor and coordinate the national statistical system. As a result, there is not a common dissemination policy with Other National Authorities (ONAs) neither a direct link to the ONAs’ website on CYSTAT’s website.

**Improvement action 9 - Establish a common dissemination portal for official statistics**

As soon as the Statistics Law is revised and the coordination role of CYSTAT in the national statistical system is clearly defined, a common dissemination portal for official statistics can be established. Provisions will be made for this portal during the design and development of the new CYSTAT’s website in order to accommodate statistics produced by other national producers.

**Timeline:**

The portal will be available as soon as the Statistics Law is revised and the new website is launched, i.e., by the end of 2017.

## ***Enhance cost-effectiveness***

**10. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should establish a unit explicitly dealing with quality management. The head of the unit should have a high hierarchical standing, reporting directly to the Director of the Statistical Service of Cyprus. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should also establish a Quality Management Committee to regularly discuss needs and potential for improvement in cost-effectiveness and quality. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 4.1.)**

### **Current situation:**

Currently, quality management is decentralised within CYSTAT as it is part of the responsibility of each production unit. The Methodology Unit of CYSTAT, established in 2011, follows developments in quality issues at European and international level and tries to adopt methods and procedures that would improve the quality of the statistical output. Since its creation, the work of the Methodology Unit has been directed towards a more centralised role as regards quality (e.g. centralised sampling for household surveys, development in BLAISE for CATI and CAPI, register for administrative sources, etc.). However, the activities managed by the Methodology Unit, although beneficial, do not constitute a total quality management system.

### **Improvement action 10.1 - Establish a Quality Management Unit in CYSTAT**

In order to enhance cost-effectiveness, CYSTAT intends to establish a Quality Management Unit. Due to lack of resources the Unit will be small, but the Head of the Unit will be of a high hierarchical standing in CYSTAT, so as to ensure that he/she has the appropriate mandate and authority to supervise and co-ordinate quality management. He/she will report directly to the Director of CYSTAT. This Unit will have to deal with issues relating to the statistical production processes followed within CYSTAT and their possible improvement, based on quality indicators.

### **Timeline:**

The establishment of the Quality Management Unit will take place by the end of 2015.

### **Improvement action 10.2 - Establish a Quality Management Committee in CYSTAT**

A Quality Management Committee will be established in CYSTAT to ensure continuous improvement in terms of quality through the continuous lookout for potential to enhance the quality of processes and products. The Committee shall include top management but also other CYSTAT staff from various levels of the hierarchical standing. This will facilitate the exchange of experience, ideas and proposals.

### **Timeline:**

The establishment of the Quality Management Committee will take place by the end of 2015.

**11. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should adopt quality guidelines which describe in detail the implementation of quality management within the statistical production processes. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 4.1 and 4.2.)**

**Current situation:**

Apart from the document “Strategic Plan for Quality” which refers to the quality assessment criteria and to the basic principles of the Declaration on the Quality of the ESS which should be implemented by CYSTAT, currently there are no written guidelines on how to implement quality management within the statistical production process at CYSTAT. Each production unit is responsible on its own for applying the necessary methods and procedures.

**Improvement action 11 - Issue quality guidelines regarding the statistical production process**

CYSTAT will prepare guidelines with the aim to introduce standardised processes for quality management within the office. It is envisaged that this task will be carried out by the Quality Management Unit.

**Timeline:**

The development of quality guidelines will be completed by the first half of 2017.

**12. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should further align its internal organisation with the Generic Statistical Business Process Model for better cost-effectiveness, and for this purpose seek cooperation with other European National Statistical Institutes. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 4 and 10.)**

**Current situation:**

The stove-pipe model is currently applied at CYSTAT. As indicated by the Peers, the implementation of the GSBPM is perhaps the most promising project for enhancing CYSTAT's cost-effectiveness. However, the experience of the other NSIs shows that the efforts needed for the implementation of GSBPM are tremendous and its implementation is rather a long-term project.

**Improvement action 12 - Implement GSBPM**

CYSTAT intends to consult with other NSIs and exchange experiences in order to carefully plan the implementation of the GSBPM. Implementation plan will be drafted based on consultation and exchanges of experiences.

**Timeline:**

Upon the condition that adequate financial resources are secured within 2016 the action could start in the third quarter of 2016. In this case the implementation plan could be available in the second quarter of 2017 and the implementation could start in the third quarter of the same year.

**13. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should provide users with quality reports for all statistics. Reports should be improved by standardising the format and enhancing the content, where necessary. Producer-oriented quality reports should be made available for internal purposes and for expert users. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 4.3, 6.4 and 15.5.)**

**Current situation:**

Methodological information regarding the compilation of statistics is available on CYSTAT's website under the methodology tab in each statistical subtheme. Quality reports are either available in free format (pdf or word files) or structured format following metadata standards such as the Euro SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS) and the ESS Standard for Quality Reports Structure (ESQRS). Additionally, when an ESMS/ESQRS file for Cyprus is published on Eurostat's website, there is a link to the file from CYSTAT's website.

**Improvement action 13 - Produce and publish quality reports for all statistics**

CYSTAT aims to fully adopt ESMS/ESQRS standards for all statistics and make them available at the CYSTAT website.

**Timeline:**

It is envisaged that by the fourth quarter of 2017, ESMS/ESQRS files will be available from CYSTAT's website for all statistics.

**14. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should extend the training programme for its staff to technical topics, including quality management, taking into consideration the needs expressed in the annual review process. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 7.6 and 10.1.)**

**Current situation:**

The Learning Unit is responsible for determining the training needs of employees through questionnaires, which are circulated and filled out by the staff of CYSTAT on a regular basis. The Director is informed of the training needs of the staff and approves suggestions for further actions.

However, in recent years the budget of CYSTAT for training has been effectively eliminated and thus, it is almost impossible for staff to attend any external training courses. When participation is considered by CYSTAT to be of utmost importance, then a request needs to be addressed to the Ministry of Finance in order to appropriate the necessary funds. In addition, CYSTAT staff may attend training courses organised in the framework of ESSnet projects only if it is provided that participants are directly reimbursed. The staff is also able to participate in webinars organised by Eurostat. Therefore, CYSTAT usually conducts in-house training, on an ad-hoc basis and when a need arises.

**Improvement action 14.1 - Enrich the in-house training programmes delivered by CYSTAT's staff**

CYSTAT intends to extend the variety of the in-house training that it offers, especially on quality related issues.

**Timeline:**

This action is envisaged to start in the first quarter of 2016.

**Improvement action 14.2 - Participate more regularly in training programmes abroad**

When budget appropriations for training are given, CYSTAT's staff will have the chance to participate more extensively in training programmes abroad, especially to those regarding quality matters or any other statistical domain where a need arises.

**Timeline:**

This action largely depends on the timing of the government's decision to allow the allocation of budget appropriations for training to each government body separately. In any case, the action is not envisaged to start earlier than the year 2017.

**15. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should foster the circulation of information in the office by strengthening internal communication and conducting regular staff opinion surveys. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 10.1.)**

**Current situation:**

Internal communication within CYSTAT is based on the electronic Office Automation System (eOASIS), e-mail exchanges, ad hoc meetings and informal contacts between staff members.

**Improvement action 15.1: Enhance internal communication**

Acknowledging the importance of establishing formal procedures for internal communication, using appropriate tools, CYSTAT will investigate all possible solutions (e.g. intranet, corporate social networks) and implement the best feasible solution.

**Timeline:**

CYSTAT, in cooperation with the Department of Information Technology Services, will evaluate several options in the second quarter of 2016 and the best feasible solution will be implemented by the end of 2016.

**Improvement action 15.2: Staff Opinion Survey**

Establish a staff opinion survey.

**Timeline:**

A staff opinion survey will be conducted every two years, starting from the fourth quarter of 2016.

**16. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should complete formal agreements with all providers of administrative data and develop systematic documentation of these data. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 2.2.)**

**Current situation:**

Currently, no written arrangements are in place between owners of administrative data and CYSTAT to facilitate the use of administrative data for statistical purposes. Existing arrangements are based on bilateral contacts between CYSTAT and the owners of administrative data, followed by official correspondence which includes references to the relevant provisions of the Statistics Law. Additionally, the documentation available provides only limited information regarding the administrative data sources in use.

**Improvement action 16.1 - Formalise agreements with owners of administrative data**

CYSTAT will proceed to formalise the arrangements made with administrative data owners, by establishing bilateral written agreements (such as memoranda of understanding) which will lay out the specifics of the data exchange. The specifics could include, among others, a description and definition of the data and variables to be received, relevant technical specifications regarding data transmission, etc.

**Timeline:**

The first contacts are planned to start in the first quarter of 2016.

The whole process is expected to be completed by the end of 2018.

**Improvement actions 16.2.1 and 16.2.2 - Develop systematic documentation regarding administrative data sources used by CYSTAT**

16.2.1 CYSTAT will develop documentation relevant to the administrative data sources used. The documentation shall include an inventory of all administrative sources in use, which will be updated on a regular basis.

16.2.2 Additionally, for each administrative data source, metadata files will be compiled, containing detailed information relevant to the data received, such as a description of all variables, frequency of transmission, concepts and definitions, etc.

**Timeline:**

16.2.1 Develop an inventory of all administrative data sources in use by the end of 2015.

16.2.2 Develop metadata files for all administrative data sources by the end of 2018.

**Improvement action 16.3 - Develop a central database to store metadata relevant to administrative sources**

CYSTAT will develop a central database to store the metadata relevant to all administrative sources used. The database will be accessible to all CYSTAT staff, thus promoting the broader use of administrative sources.

**Timeline:**

The analysis and design of the database will be completed by the end of 2017.

The development of the database will be completed by the end of 2018.

**17. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should further develop data collection by Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing, Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing and e-questionnaires to gain efficiency and data quality. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 9.3 and 10.2.)**

**Current situation:**

Currently, for household surveys, data collection at CYSTAT is carried out either by personal or telephone interviews. In both cases the Blaise software is used for data capture (CAPI and CATI). As regards business surveys, Blaise is used as the platform for data capture in the ICT usage survey in enterprises. This includes the design of a web questionnaire on a pilot basis (CAWI). For the time being, data collection for other business surveys is carried out either by personal or telephone interviews using paper questionnaires (PAPI). The development of electronic questionnaires with Blaise is carried out by the Methodology Unit.

**Improvement action 17 - Establish the Blaise software as the main platform for data collection and data entry**

CYSTAT aims at establishing the software Blaise as the main platform for data collection and data entry. In order to achieve standardisation in the processes of data entry and coding within CYSTAT, it has been decided to examine the possibility to use Blaise in more business surveys for data collection (CATI, CAPI and CAWI), as well as to use Blaise for data entry in surveys which are still using paper questionnaires (PAPI). Additionally, CYSTAT intends to increase the number of household surveys which are using telephone interviewing for data collection (CATI with Blaise).

**Timeline:**

**2015:** - Implement Blaise CAPI in the following business surveys: Structure of Earnings, Employment Survey, Innovation Survey.

**2016:** - Implement mixed mode data collection (CAPI, CAWI) in the ICT usage survey in enterprises.

- Implement Blaise CAPI in the following business surveys: Labour Cost Survey, Continuous Vocational Training Survey.
- Implement Blaise in data entry for the Building Permits and Housing Survey (PAPI).
- Set up of call centre for CATI surveys

**18. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should supplement its Code of Practice for the Collection, Publication and Storage of Statistical Data with practical guidelines for the staff on the protection of confidentiality in the processes of production and dissemination of statistics. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 5.5.)**

**Current situation:**

The current version of the Code of Practice for the Collection, Publication and Storage of Statistical Data already contains some practical guidelines for the staff on the protection of confidentiality, both in the processes of production and dissemination of statistics.

**Improvement action 18 - Update of the Code of Practice for the Collection, Publication and Storage of Statistical Data**

The internal Committee on Statistical Confidentiality will review the Code of Practice for the Collection, Publication and Storage of Statistical Data and propose, if necessary, additional guidelines towards the protection of confidentiality in the processes of production and dissemination of statistics.

**Timeline:**

The updating of the Code of Practice for the Collection, Publication and Storage of Statistical Data is expected to be completed by the end of 2016.

**19. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should further develop a policy for backing up and archiving its statistical data in order to ensure security and preservation. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 5.5 and 15.1.)**

**Current situation:**

Currently, there is no written policy regarding archiving and backing up statistical data at CYSTAT. Depending on the data set to be archived different procedures are followed. Printed publications are stored in CYSTAT's library which is open to the public. The website offers an archive of all its releases, tables of key figures and publications since 2004. Statistical data collected and processed by CYSTAT are stored and archived on the PCs of statistical experts, which are administered according to standards provided by the Department of Information Technology Services. The computers used by CYSTAT are protected by means of user passwords, a firewall and antivirus programmes.

**Improvement action 19 - Develop a policy for archiving and backing up statistical data**

In order to enhance security and preservation of the statistical data collected and produced, CYSTAT intends to develop a policy for archiving and backing up statistical data. The policy will include clear guidelines and procedures to be followed by CYSTAT staff and will cover all stages of the statistical production process.

**Timeline:**

The policy for archiving and backing up statistical data will be developed by the end of 2016.

**20. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should assess the risk of disclosure of confidential data stored in its information technology system, which is part of the government administration network, and take appropriate action if needed. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 5.5.)**

**Current situation:**

As is the case with IT equipment of all government bodies, CYSTAT's IT equipment belongs to the Department of Information Technology Services (DITS), which is also in charge of maintaining the system and application software. As a consequence, the statistical data collected and processed by CYSTAT are stored and archived on computers which are administered according to standards provided by the DITS that are common to all government entities. The computers used by CYSTAT are protected by means of user passwords, a firewall and antivirus programmes.

**Improvement action 20 – Carry out a risk assessment study**

In cooperation with DITS, CYSTAT will carry out a risk assessment study to evaluate the risk of data disclosure. If needed, appropriate measures will be implemented.

**Timeline:**

It is envisaged that the risk assessment study will be completed within the second quarter of 2016.

***Develop user orientation***

**21. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should establish a platform for communication with users allowing discussion of users' needs and collection of users' feedback. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 11.3.)**

**Current situation:**

Through the User Satisfaction Survey, which is conducted on an annual basis, users are able to make comments and suggestions. There is no user forum or platform for communication with users. However, some user groups are represented at the Statistical Council which sometimes serves as a user consultation forum.

**Improvement action 21 - Establish a users' consultation mechanism**

In the process of preparing the multiannual and annual programmes of statistical activities, CYSTAT will collect adequate information on the needs of different user groups for statistical data, such as the public sector, the business community, the academic and research community and the civil society. This will be done through user consultations. It is envisaged that in the design of the new website a dedicated section on user consultation will be added.

**Timeline:**

A first users' consultation will be initiated in the first quarter of 2017 within the framework of preparing the next multiannual programme of statistical activities, to be repeated for future exercises.

**22. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should fully adopt the procedure of a fixed-date release of official statistics and disseminate an annual release calendar by November of the previous year. (European Statistics Code of Practice, indicator 6.5.)**

**Current situation:**

CYSTAT publishes on its website a release calendar that contains (a) all announcements which are scheduled to be released in the current and in the following week and (b) the announcements for almost all short term statistics to be released in the current and in the following three months (some of which do not have a fixed date of release).

**Improvement action 22 - Disseminate an Annual Release Calendar**

CYSTAT will adopt an annual release calendar for all short term statistics. A fixed date of release will be adopted. The Annual Release Calendar of each year will be available in November of the previous year.

**Timeline:**

The first annual release calendar referring to 2016 will be made available in November 2015.

**23. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should establish a revision policy following standard, well-established, transparent procedures and publish it on its website, including a revision calendar to inform users of when revisions of statistical results are planned to be published. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 6.6 and 8.6.)**

**Current situation:**

There is currently no written revision policy available at CYSTAT. Revisions of the national accounts statistics and various other statistics are not conducted and announced in a standardised way. Major revisions are documented in the statistical work programme and in the methodology section on CYSTAT's website. However, there is no revision calendar in place to inform users of upcoming major revisions of data.

**Improvement action 23 - Prepare a revision policy**

CYSTAT will prepare a revision policy establishing transparent procedures to be followed when revising official statistics. The policy will also include a calendar for major revisions, enabling CYSTAT to announce revisions in a standardised and timely manner and providing users with precise information about the timing of revisions. Both the revision policy and the revision calendar will be published on CYSTAT's website.

**Timeline:**

The revision policy and the revision calendar will be prepared and published on CYSTAT's website by the end of the third quarter of 2016.

**24. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should develop stronger relations with academia, by developing and promoting its service of access to anonymised microdata to researchers, by offering internships to students and by promoting the use of statistical data for research purposes. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 7.7 and 15.4.)**

**Current situation:**

Although CYSTAT occasionally seeks advice on methodological issues from academic experts, there is no organized collaboration of CYSTAT with academia for the development of methodologies and the production of official statistics. Moreover, academia may not be familiar with the possibility of getting microdata from CYSTAT for research purposes. Additionally, due to the heavy workload and limited financial resources, the number of training courses offered to the staff of CYSTAT has been reduced significantly over the years.

**Improvement action 24 - Develop stronger relations with academia**

CYSTAT recognizes the importance of maintaining strong relations with academia and for this reason will contact the universities in Cyprus and investigate the possibility of collaboration along the following lines:

- 1) Organise regular meetings for discussing methodological or other issues related to the production of official statistics.
- 2) Propose the organisation of seminars or training courses by academics on topics related to the production of official statistics (e.g. sampling techniques, data analysis, introduction to R) for CYSTAT's staff.
- 3) Organise presentations for informing researchers on the possibility and the procedure of getting access to microdata from CYSTAT for research purposes, on the availability of data and other relevant issues.
- 4) Student internships at CYSTAT.

**Timeline:**

CYSTAT will initiate contacts with the universities in Cyprus during the first quarter of 2016.

### ***Improve dissemination***

**25. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should upgrade its website as the main dissemination channel, by improving its structure, navigation, design and responsiveness for devices with small screens. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 15.)**

**26. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should develop advanced functionalities on its website to provide access to detailed statistical data in an interactive way. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 15.)**

**27. The Statistical Service of Cyprus should further supplement its statistical products with visualisation such as graphs, maps and infographics. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 15.)**

#### **Current situation:**

CYSTAT's website is the main dissemination channel for official statistics. The Department of Information Technology Services is responsible for the development of all government websites, based on a standard layout. CYSTAT's website was released for the first time in 1997 as one of the first governmental websites and its current platform is from 2003. The last change in its layout was in 2010. Due to this fact, CYSTAT's website conforms only partly to the universal web content accessibility guidelines and the content does not adapt to small screens.

In addition to the printed publications, CYSTAT's data are also available in excel and pdf format on its website. Charts are only available in the publications (pdf files). Maps, infographics and other applications are not available.

#### **Improvement action 25/26/27 - Develop a new website**

In order to improve the accessibility and presentation of the data on its website, CYSTAT will develop a platform for a new modern website, deviating from the standard government layout. The new website, with a user friendly design and visualization tools, will provide interactive access to detailed data and be adaptable for devices with small screens.

#### **Timeline:**

By the end of 2015, CYSTAT will define its needs and specifications and in 2016 the Department of Information Technology Services will outsource the development. The new website is estimated to be available for the public in the first quarter of 2017.