

PEER REVIEW REPORT

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

ARMENIA

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Armstat enjoys professional independence anchored in a strong legislative framework, notably the Law on Official Statistics of 2018, which is based on the European Statistics Code of Practice and the Generic Law on Official Statistics. The State Council on Statistics, chaired by Armstat's President, serves as both the primary body for statistical governance in Armenia and as the management board of Armstat. The State Council on Statistics governs the Armenian statistical system, adopting annual and five-year statistical programmes and ensuring methodological autonomy. Stakeholders confirm Armstat's reputation as an independent, professional, and trusted institution. The peer review team observed a strong team spirit and collaborative culture within Armstat, with staff demonstrating a high level of cooperation and user orientation.

Stakeholders consider Armenia a data-rich country, noting gradual improvements in data availability and timeliness through surveys such as the Integrated Living Conditions Surveys, Labour Force Surveys, Health and Demographic Surveys, and Time Use Survey, often supported by international partners. Armstat has a legal mandate to collect data, access administrative records, and compel responses to surveys. Improvements in the quality of administrative data have enabled innovations, such as conducting the Population Census based on the State Population Register, supplemented by additional data collection from a 25% sample of addresses. It should be noted that both the 2022 Population Census and the 2024 Agricultural Census were conducted without external assistance and were fully funded by the government.

Armstat has also effectively reduced the response burden, achieving a 57.4% decrease since 2010 through increased use of administrative data and streamlined data collection. Despite relatively limited resources, the peer review team was left with the impression that the Armenian statistical system provides outstanding value for money, as it is continuously expanding the production of official statistics, improving quality and seeking efficiency gains. While the use of human and IT resources is efficient and focused on delivering quality services to all its users, anticipated growth in statistical demands and evolving policy priorities—particularly those involving new data sources and technologies—will require allocation of additional resources.

Armstat demonstrates a strong commitment to quality by embedding it throughout its processes and products, supported by a robust quality management system, based on quality declarations for statistical products, Generic Statistical Business Process Model-based process descriptions, and Single Integrated Metadata Structure-compliant metadata.

The peer review team was left with the impression that Armstat has an excellent reputation among users. Official statistics are regarded as a public good, and therefore, Armstat is obliged to provide official statistics to users free of charge. User engagement shapes statistical programmes and is supported by transparent consultation mechanisms. The Public Council of Users, representing diverse user groups, provides active advice on strategic and programmatic issues. Armstat also developed the NADA tool for its Microdata Library, providing researchers with easy access to census and survey data.

Armstat demonstrates high professionalism and strong cooperation with other producers and data providers, formalised through Memoranda of Understanding with institutions like the Central Bank and the Ministry of Finance. Armstat is actively engaged in international statistical cooperation with Eurostat, UNECE, EFTA, the IMF, the World Bank, and the UN.

The peer review team noticed several innovative initiatives, such as a self-assessment tool against the European Statistics Code of Practice, a feedback tool and assessment on the quality of administrative data, a platform for electronic data collection and processing, a systematic consultation on legislative initiatives launched by other government authorities and bodies, and a centralised tool for the assessment of training needs and performance of training programmes.

Generally, the peer review team considers that the Armenian statistical system demonstrates a good level of compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice. There are 30 recommendations, grouped under five broad headings, with 27 of them focused on improvements going beyond the compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice, and three recommendations addressing compliance issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. REINFORCING THE INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND ENSURING ADEQUATE RESOURCES

Professional independence is well understood and firmly established within the Armenian statistical system, supported by Article 6 of the Law on Official Statistics, which mandates that official statistics should be produced with complete independence. The President of Armstat and members of the State Council on Statistics are appointed for six-year terms by the Government, with clear eligibility rules and limits on consecutive terms. The President holds a non-political ministerial rank, ensuring access to high-level policy discussions. However, the peer review team considers a lack of transparency in the appointment procedures, particularly at the commencement of the recruitment process and the lack of advertisement of the vacancy for the President of Armstat, a weakness in the Armenian statistical system that has the potential to impact negatively on the perception of the professional independence of Armstat in the future.

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

1. Armstat and the relevant government authorities are encouraged to increase transparency in the processes related to the selection of the President of Armstat, with particular focus on the commencement of the process. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 1.8)

Privately held data, such as supermarket scanner data, bank transactions, and telecommunications information, can support the production of official statistics, as demonstrated by other national statistical institutes. However, legal and technical barriers often hinder access to such data. A robust legal framework is crucial for facilitating access while also providing technical and procedural safeguards and guarantees, including a high level of security, confidentiality, and respect for privacy. Currently, Armenia's Law on Official Statistics does not support access to privately held data for Armstat or other producers of official statistics. Guidance from the revised EU Regulation 223/2009 and forthcoming updates to the Generic Law on Official Statistics could help Armenia develop an appropriate national law.

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

2. Armstat and the relevant government authorities should amend the Law on Official Statistics to facilitate access to privately held data. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 2.4)

While the Armenian government has increased funding for Armstat and, without external aid, fully financed the Population and Housing Census in 2022 and the Agricultural Census in 2024, additional resources are still needed to produce new statistics and meet Armstat's mandate amid rapid changes. Delivering reliable data requires modern technology, skilled staff, innovation, and effective communication and dissemination tools. If Armstat is to continue modernising and fulfil its potential as an innovative official statistics producer, a systematic increase in budgetary funding is needed to realise the necessary investments in statistical infrastructure.

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

3. The relevant government authorities should ensure that adequate resources are available for Armstat to meet the emerging needs for new statistics, support innovation projects and enable technological developments. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 3.1)

For a relatively small country, a relatively large proportion of Armstat staff is employed in its decentralised units. Nearly half of Armstat's 329 civil servants are based in 11 regional offices, reflecting legacy practices that prioritise local data collection and dissemination. However, technological advances and modern data collection methods are reducing the need for a strong regional presence. While regional offices still contribute to data collection, their future workload is expected to decline. Armstat should reflect internally on an optimal solution and develop a medium-term plan for a better division of work between the headquarters and regional offices.

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

4. Armstat should reflect on reorganising the work between the headquarters and regional offices to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 10.2)

Armstat has a robust system for planning and approval of statistical programmes. However, information on the use of resources associated with individual statistical products is not available, as tools for estimating the cost of statistical products and processes have not been developed. Armstat's existing process documentation, aligned with the Generic Statistical Business Process Model, provides a solid foundation for creating a system that demonstrates a systematic approach to financial management. This approach could help Armstat make the case for additional resources, support management decisions, and enhance quality and efficiency.

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

5. To improve internal planning, Armstat is encouraged to start developing a cost accounting system that will enable an assessment of resource allocation for each statistical product and data processing service. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 10.1)

Armstat primarily hires civil servants through a centralised government system that involves standardised testing and rankings, while non-civil service staff are recruited under the Labour Code via structured interviews. Although Armstat advertises vacancies and engages with universities, it lacks a strategic approach to talent recruitment. An active recruitment policy, combined with a focus on training employees, defining career paths, proactive internal communication, gradual improvement of working conditions and fine-tuning of work arrangements, integrated into a comprehensive Human Resources Strategy, could make Armstat a more attractive place to work.

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

6. Armstat should develop a comprehensive Human Resources Strategy to become more attractive to employees and promote itself as a desirable workplace through relevant communication channels. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 3.1)

II. ENHANCING THE COORDINATION OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM AND COOPERATION WITH DATA PROVIDERS

Armstat has actively worked to foster cooperation with data providers and improve coordination with other producers of official statistics, establishing 19 formal agreements and identifying 12 more areas in which relations could be formalised. Armstat's coordination efforts encompass statistical programmes, advisory bodies, partnerships, dissemination, and standards, aiming to establish a coherent statistical system and enhance the use of administrative data. However, the peer review team noted that the distinction between data providers and data producers is not completely clear. Armstat is encouraged to reflect on the distinction and create a document that will be used in future negotiations with potential producers of official statistics.

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

7. Armstat should create a comprehensive document clearly outlining the differences between data providers and producers of official statistics. The document should establish specific criteria for producers of official statistics and describe the benefits and obligations associated with the status of producer of official statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1bis.1)

Armstat maintains strong cooperation with national authorities that produce official statistics and coordinates an annual joint statistical programme. Armstat arranges meetings and training sessions and manages statistical classifications for the Armenian statistical system. Currently, the Central Bank and the Ministry of Finance are officially recognised as producers of official statistics. Armstat has developed quality guidelines for internal use; however, these are not promoted through the Armenian statistical system, and there is no common platform to ensure that the standards of the Armenian statistical system are met. Establishing a producer committee could strengthen coordination and promote unified quality standards across the Armenian statistical system.

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

8. Armstat is encouraged to create a producer committee and clearly define its role in promoting data quality throughout the Armenian statistical system. National quality guidelines for producers of official statistics, developed by Armstat, should be adopted and monitored by this committee, and a common training programme for the entire Armenian statistical system should be adopted. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1bis.2)

Cooperation between the Ministry of Finance, the Central Bank, and Armstat on Government Finance Statistics at the technical level is excellent and continually improving. To advance further, a formal tripartite agreement should be established, signed by the heads of the three institutions. This agreement should define data flows, deadlines, secure data sharing, and measures to prevent delays and inconsistencies. Such an agreement will help to transform the production of Government Finance Statistics into a unified process and should improve trust between the involved institutions and in official statistics in general.

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

9. The Ministry of Finance, the Central Bank, and Armstat should conclude a tripartite agreement to determine the detailed data flows and transmission deadlines between the institutions participating in the production of Government Finance Statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 8.6)

The Government Finance Statistics Division of the Ministry of Finance is a recognised producer of official statistics, compiling and publishing monthly and quarterly data on government operations and debt. Working closely with Armstat, it determines the sectoral classification according to the SNA 2008/ESA 2010 and contributes to national accounts. Recently established as a separate unit on the IMF's advice, the Division publishes data on the Ministry's website. These statistics are not clearly distinguished from other data, are not highlighted as official statistics and are not announced in advance. Furthermore, the Division adheres to international standards, currently utilising the cash-based IMF's Government Finance Statistics 2001 Manual, but plans to transition to accrual-based accounting in accordance with the IMF's Government Finance Statistics 2014 Manual.

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

10. The Ministry of Finance is encouraged to enhance the visibility of official statistics releases on its webpage, publish a release calendar, and further improve its efforts in implementing the Government Finance Statistics Manual of 2014, while cultivating strong cooperation with Armstat. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 15.1 and 6.5)

The Hydrometeorology and Monitoring Center, under the Ministry of Environment, gathers data on hydrometeorological conditions, forestry, protected areas, aquatic bioresources, emissions, water resources, waste management, pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and land cover, monitoring soil, air, water, and forests. It performs basic quality checks on collected data but lacks a comprehensive quality framework. Data are published monthly and appear in Armstat's release calendar. While responsive to user needs and aiming to modernise data dissemination, the Center does not produce official statistics itself but provides administrative data for Armstat's environmental accounts. It could improve by modernising user services and strengthening data quality processes, leveraging cooperation with Armstat for quality management and user engagement.

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

11. The Hydrometeorology and Monitoring Center of the Ministry of Environment should continue to be classified as a data provider and is encouraged to maintain good cooperation with Armstat on the provision of high-quality input data. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 8.7)

The Migration and Citizenship Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs does not publish its own statistics, but provides Armstat with quarterly, semi-annual and annual data on migration, asylum, residency, and naturalisations from its administrative registers. A new Statistical Division has been established, with further staff training planned in cooperation with Armstat and international experts, including on the ES CoP and quality management. A new draft law aims to establish an administrative population register, assigning the Ministry a central role, with Armstat's involvement being crucial for aligning register data with statistical concepts and definitions. The challenges of establishing such a register could be addressed by a public awareness campaign emphasising the importance of compliance with international standards, along with the integration of data sources and robust validation processes to ensure the quality and accuracy of the administrative population register.

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

12. The Migration and Citizenship Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs should continue to be classified as a data provider. Efforts to develop the administrative population register should continue, involving Armstat to ensure alignment with statistical concepts and definitions. The Ministry of Internal Affairs is encouraged to raise public awareness of the importance of the administrative population register. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 8.7)

The Ministry of Health's National Institute of Health, though not an official statistical authority, produces statistics on deaths, hospitalisations, primary care visits, births, and more, based on data from 800 facilities. Most of the data comes in Excel from various sources, while some comes from the eHealth system; however, the National Institute of Health lacks access to individual-level records. While it cooperates closely with health facilities and the Ministry, it does not systematically gather user needs. Quality checks are manual, and the website, which is only available in Armenian, offers limited access to data, lacking also quality reports and metadata for users. The National Institute of Health demonstrates a high degree of professionalism as a producer of statistics highly relevant to society, and reports excellent cooperation with Armstat. The National Institute of Health, alongside its users, could benefit from becoming a recognised producer of official statistics, thereby transforming highly relevant data on health issues into official statistics.

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

13. The National Institute of Health, under the Ministry of Health, shows significant potential to be labelled as a producer of official statistics. Should it become a producer of official statistics, it is encouraged to improve compliance with the ES CoP, for example, by prioritising user needs and enhancing user-friendliness in data dissemination. In collaboration with Armstat, the National Institute of Health should develop a tool for quality and metadata reporting and establish a quality management system. The relevant government authorities are encouraged to back these enhancements with adequate resources to ensure success. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1bis.1)

Armstat has concluded written agreements with data providers and producers of official statistics in the form of Memoranda of Understanding, Agreements, Decrees and Joint Orders. The peer review team commends this and encourages Armstat to conclude agreements with data providers with whom agreements have not yet been concluded. As existing agreements vary in form and content, developing standardised templates to ensure consistency, clearly defining details like data content, timelines, recipients, formats, and quality requirements could enhance standardisation.

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

14. Armstat should revise, update and conclude standardised agreements (Memoranda of Understanding, Agreements, Decrees and Joint Orders) with data providers based on a newly developed standardised template that clearly outlines the required content for these documents. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 8.6)

III. PREPARING THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM FOR THE FUTURE

Armstat has improved accessibility of statistics through basic infographics and an open-source SDG platform. However, its current website is outdated, difficult to navigate, and lacks thematic

organisation, as well as advanced search and filtering options. Users struggle to find data, which is fragmented and mostly available only in static formats. The site lacks interactive visualisations, GIS tools, and compliance with modern accessibility and search engine standards. The peer review team recommends urgently replacing the website with a modern, user-centred statistical dissemination platform. This new platform could also serve as a national statistics portal and possibly include other data (with clear distinctions from official statistics). As Armstat's IT team lacks the technical capabilities to build a new website, such an effort cannot be completed without additional funds or donor assistance. Armstat should therefore enhance its efforts to secure the necessary funds and begin preparing a detailed technical and functional specification for its development.

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

15. Armstat should urgently develop a new website to increase its user-friendliness and consider transforming it into a national portal for all official statistics produced by the Armenian statistical system. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.2)

Armstat currently operates several separate PDF release calendars for its statistical products, including a "pre-release calendar", Calendar of Statistical Publications, the Standard Dissemination Data Standard Advance Release Calendar, and a Gross Domestic Product revision timetable. Although it has procedures in place to notify users of delays, no delays have occurred to date. Integrating all these calendars into a single, interactive release calendar would improve user-friendliness and could be implemented even before a new website is developed. Additionally, Armstat should analyse if there is a potential trade-off between taking a slightly greater risk to achieve faster publication and increasing the chance of missing the initially planned publication date.

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

16. Armstat should integrate all information on the dissemination dates of its statistical products into a single interactive dissemination calendar, which should also include details on any delays in the publication of statistical releases. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 6.5 and 13.4)

Using open-source software can reduce costs and reliance on proprietary solutions, especially since official statistics often require niche tools. While open-source adoption involves costs for training and customisation, many solutions are supported by other national statistical institutes and active user communities that provide updates, shared experiences, and reusable code. Armstat already has a positive experience using the open-source Sustainable Development Goals dissemination platform, which was praised by interviewed users. Armstat is strongly encouraged to continue exploring this path forward.

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

17. Armstat is encouraged to increase the use of open-source statistical solutions offered by various statistical offices (e.g. STAGE, IST, Pc-Axis and various R packages). (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 10.2, 7.1 and 10.4)

Although Armstat has limited experience with new data sources, it recognises their importance for enhancing the production of official statistics. It has begun collaborating with the Armenian Centre for Socio-Economic Studies, supported by the Asian Development Bank, and plans to utilise web scraping for producing the Consumer Price Index. To use these new data sources effectively, Armstat should strengthen partnerships and invest in developing the necessary skills of staff.

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

18. Armstat is encouraged to accelerate the use of new data sources for statistical purposes. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 8.6 and 9.4)

Administrative registers, when linked through unique identifiers, can significantly enhance official statistics by enabling multivariate analyses, improving data quality through validation, and reducing costs and response burden. Establishing a high-quality system of administrative registers requires defining source registers for unique identifiers to ensure interoperability, thus enabling the introduction of the “once-only principle”.

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

19. To enhance the usability of administrative registers for statistical purposes, the government should ensure the uniform use of unique identifiers across all state administrative registers. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 10.3 and 2.2)

IV. IMPROVING STATISTICAL PROCESSES AND ENSURING APPLICATION OF STANDARDS

Armstat publishes a wide range of statistics on its website and regularly consults users through the Public Council of Users. However, users have expressed a need for more data on topics such as digitalisation, migration, and living conditions, as well as for easier access to reusable data. Concerns were raised about the timeliness of publications and the need to consider flash estimates to strike a balance between accuracy and timeliness. Furthermore, there is a need for more microdata to be available for scientific purposes, as well as more disaggregated data, such as by region and gender, for a more detailed analysis. While Armstat produces some of the requested data, they are only available upon specific request, while other data still need to be produced.

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

20. Armstat is encouraged to continue and enhance its efforts in improving the availability, timeliness and disaggregation of statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 11.1 and 13.3)

Armstat has made significant progress aligning with European standards under the European Union-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement, implementing measures across various statistical domains in cooperation with Eurostat. The peer review team recognises Armstat’s efforts to comply with European standards and encourages Armstat to carry out an internal gap analysis to help set priorities and plan future actions.

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

21. Armstat should determine the steps necessary to comply with European standards in all relevant statistical domains. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 7.1)

Armstat currently performs methodological work in a decentralised way, which strains limited specialised resources and poses challenges for consistency. The peer review team believes that centralising these functions could improve efficiency and recommends that Armstat discusses and decides on the best approach, such as creating a central methods unit or a working group that will serve as the central forum for methodological discussions.

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

22. To ensure the uniform application of methodological requirements, Armstat should investigate the best structure for the management of methodology and apply it during future reorganisation. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 7.2 and 10.4)

Armstat provides detailed documentation for its statistical products through three quality reporting structures: The Metadata Development Plan (2021-2023), the user-focused Euro SDMX Metadata Structure, and the producer-focused European Statistical System Standard for Quality Reports Structure. An older version of quality reports labelled “Quality Declarations” is also available. Armstat has adopted the European Statistical System Single Integrated Metadata Structure Standard, which covers all necessary quality concepts. The peer review team recommends that Armstat should focus on the latter and prioritise publishing user-oriented quality information on its website.

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

23. Armstat is encouraged to consolidate the three existing quality reporting structures into a single, product-specific structure that addresses diverse user needs and includes quality indicators in quality reports. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.7)

Armstat has a quality management system in place as well as a quality policy, published in 2016, outlining its mission, functions, and adherence to the ES CoP. However, the policy lacks details on specific quality practices and commitments. It would benefit from an update aligned with the recent European Statistical System guidelines for quality policies to ensure comprehensive coverage of quality management in statistics.

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

24. Armstat is encouraged to update its quality policy to reflect the latest developments and best practices. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 4.1)

Armstat has established key components of its quality management system, including quality declarations for 139 products, Generic Statistical Business Process Model-based process descriptions, and Single Integrated Metadata Structure-compliant metadata. It has initiated internal quality reviews using self-assessments and quality reports. To strengthen quality assurance, Armstat is encouraged to develop a unified methodology for quality reviews, create a multi-year review plan covering all statistical products, define review types for different products, and establish a system for follow-up actions to ensure ongoing and future improvements.

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

25. Armstat should adopt a more systematic approach to internal quality reviews and ensure follow-ups. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 4.2)

Armstat currently publishes complete microdata sets from key surveys online as public use files, with personal identifiers removed. However, individuals and households could be identified through secondary identification. It is recommended that Armstat should maintain access to these data for research purposes, but it should require researchers to submit an online request form, justify their use, and agree to confidentiality terms. Should Armstat decide to keep the microdata publicly available, the possibility of secondary identification should be significantly reduced.

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

26. Armstat should ensure that anonymised microdata (individual records) are only made available upon request, in accordance with the procedure for accessing microdata for scientific purposes, as required by European regulations. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicators 5.6 and 15.4)

V. ENHANCING THE USER ORIENTATION OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

Armstat's current Information, Dissemination and Communication Policy mixes internal guidelines with elements for external communication. This could confuse users, and therefore, these elements should be separated. Internal guidelines need to be updated to include social media content creation and should be aligned with the new website (once developed). The internal guidelines should also outline the development of organisational culture, staff roles, and the required skills. The dissemination policy oriented towards users should be adjusted by defining user groups, communication channels, branding strategies, social media and crisis management plans. A comprehensive, interactive stakeholder engagement plan is essential for effective external communication.

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

27. Armstat should separate its current dissemination policy into internal (Armstat) dissemination guidelines and an external dissemination and communication policy. The policy should include components related to social media, employer branding, an emergency communication plan for reacting to the misuse of statistics, etc. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.2)

The Public Council of Users was established in 2018 in response to a peer review recommendation. The Public Council of Users represents Armstat users and actively engages in discussions, positively influencing official statistics by involving users in the planning process. However, its visibility could be improved. An active and visible Public Council of Users could become a strong external voice advocating for the value and importance of official statistics, thereby influencing policymakers to allocate necessary resources. Its formal role in advising on strategic development and statistical programmes naturally extends to ensuring these programmes are publicly visible and adequately funded for successful implementation.

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

28. The Public Council of Users should devise measures to establish itself as the voice of official statistics, enhance its visibility, and be more proactive in promoting the allocation of resources to official statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 11.1)

Users interviewed showed strong interest in Armstat's statistical activities. Although Armstat already collaborates with users during the creation of its annual statistical programme, there is an apparent need for more structured and regular dialogue with various user groups and the general public. Continuous engagement with representatives from specific statistical domains would help Armstat adapt to users' evolving needs and ensure the relevance of its data. Regular user group meetings can also clarify concepts and methods, thereby reducing misinterpretation and fostering trust in official statistics. While Armstat can legally establish advisory bodies, it should intensify user engagement through regular, domain-specific meetings.

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

29. Armstat should implement measures to gather input from various user groups on a regular and systematic basis. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 11.1)

The peer review team found that the public visibility of official statistics in Armenia could be improved, with most users first encountering them at university rather than in earlier education. This represents a missed opportunity to build awareness of the value and role of statistics from a young age and to promote Armstat as a trusted information source and potential employer. Connecting official statistics with youth, educators, and the public could help build confidence by highlighting their neutrality and importance for informed decision-making, leading to increased general trust in government institutions. The team recommends that Armstat develop modern statistical literacy initiatives—such as educational materials, interactive content, school partnerships, and outreach campaigns—to increase visibility, relevance, and trust in official statistics.

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

30. Armstat is encouraged to enhance its public communication profile by developing modern statistical literacy materials for students, teachers, and general users in primary and secondary schools, universities, and beyond. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.2)

In the spirit of continuous improvement integral to the process of aligning with European standards, the NSI will translate 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, as well as of the enlargement and Eastern neighbourhood countries, as they have committed themselves to adhering to it.

In this context, peer reviews are crucial for the enlargement and Eastern neighbourhood countries, as they provide a review mechanism that supports this self-commitment to adhering to the ES CoP with credible evidence. The objective of this review mechanism is to enhance the integrity, professional independence and accountability of the statistical authorities in the peer reviewed countries. Previous rounds of peer reviews and similar assessments were conducted in 2009-2013 and 2015-2019. In 2017, the ES CoP was reviewed and extended and now encompasses 16 principles. This revised version of the ES CoP triggered a new round of peer reviews in the peer reviewed countries from 2025 to 2027. This round of peer reviews aims at improving the quality and trust in official statistics by assessing the compliance of the peer reviewed countries with the principles of the revised ES CoP. The peer reviews cover the national statistical authorities of the countries (the National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) and Other National Authorities (ONAs)) developing, producing and disseminating official statistics. The peer reviews will be followed by 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 2025-2027 round of peer reviews has the following two objectives:

- review the compliance/alignment of the statistical authorities of the enlargement and Eastern neighbourhood countries with the ES CoP, in order to demonstrate to the countries' societies and external stakeholders, including EU authorities, that the countries' statistical systems are based on the principles of the ES CoP;
- help National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) and other national authorities (ONAs) developing, producing and disseminating official statistics to further improve and develop the national statistical systems (NSS) 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 three to four statistical experts. The peer review has five phases: completion of the Self-Assessment Questionnaires (SAQs) by a country; analysis of these SAQs by the peer review expert team; a country visit by the peer review expert team; the preparation of the final report and ensuing recommendations by the peer review expert team; and the development of an improvement action plan and its monitoring. The recommendations contained in the peer review report are of two types:

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

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

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 methodology and its annexes, including guidelines and templates, were developed on the basis of the methodology of the peer reviews in the ESS conducted in the period 2021-2023.

3. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

Legislation

Armstat, formally known as the Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia, traces its origins back to 7 January 1922, when the Statistical Department of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia was established. The current legal framework governing the Armenian statistical system, the Law on Official Statistics, was adopted in 2018 and is aligned with the Generic Law on Official Statistics (GLOS). The new Law builds upon the strong legal provisions of the previous law, which defined Armstat (then known as the National Statistical Service of Armenia) as a state body independent of other state and local government bodies, implementing functions aimed at serving the public interest.

Armstat is governed by the State Council on Statistics, which consists of seven members who also act as Armstat's management. The President of Armstat simultaneously serves as the chair of the State Council on Statistics. The Council is responsible for adopting statistical programmes, controlling their implementation, and approving principles for the development, production, and dissemination of official statistics. The Council on Statistics serves a dual role – it functions both as the statistical governance body and the management board for Armstat.

The Law on Official Statistics also defines the roles and responsibilities within the Armenian statistical system, including Armstat as the main producer and coordinator of official statistics. Key provisions cover the coordination of activities, statistical programmes, data collection, and dissemination. Specific articles outline the structure of the Armenian statistical system, the role of other producers, and adherence to international standards.

Organisation

According to the Law on Official Statistics, the Armenian statistical system comprises Armstat as the central body, the Central Bank of Armenia, which operates under separate legal provisions, and other producers of official statistics, which can be organisational units of state and local self-government bodies. Other producers of official statistics are determined by the State Council on Statistics, through a transparent, documented process, based on the following criteria:

- 1) The producer informs the State Council on Statistics of their ability and willingness to comply with the Law on Official Statistics and the fundamental principles of official statistics.
- 2) The planned outcomes and measures do not duplicate those of other producers and do not increase the burden on respondents.

Apart from the Central Bank, the Ministry of Finance is currently the only producer of official statistics. The peer review team also interviewed other potential producers of official statistics, namely specific entities within the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Appointment Procedures for the Head of the NSI

The President of Armstat (Chairman of the State Council on Statistics), the head of the National Statistical Institute, is appointed by the Government of Armenia for a six-year term upon the Prime Minister's recommendation. Eligibility requires Armenian citizenship, a higher level of education in economics, at least five years of statistical experience (including three years in a coordination or leadership role), and fluency in the Armenian language. The President cannot hold party affiliations, other state posts, or paid work outside scientific, educational, or creative fields. The same person cannot be appointed President of Armstat for more than two consecutive terms. Grounds for early termination are also defined and include resignation, disability, loss of citizenship, or legal issues. Similar eligibility criteria and grounds for dismissal are also defined for members of the State Council on Statistics.

Statistical Programmes

The adoption of statistical programmes involves a multi-step process defined by the Law on Official Statistics, which ensures cooperation, public consultation, and formal approval by the State Council on Statistics. Armstat, as the main producer of official statistics, in partnership with the Central Bank and other producers of official statistics, is responsible for developing annual and five-year statistical programmes. The programmes are designed to include statistical information necessary for observing the country's economic, demographic, social, and environmental situation, while also considering existing resource constraints, the burden on information providers, and cost-effectiveness.

The Five-Year Statistical Programme defines strategic development priorities and conceptual approaches to meet the current and emerging needs of users of official statistics. At the same time, the annual programme is developed to establish a legal basis for conducting statistical surveys, receiving administrative data, implementing developmental activities, maintaining and developing statistical registers, and disseminating all official statistics.

Drafts of the programmes are placed on Armstat's official website, and a public call is issued to receive recommendations and comments from users. Following the public consultations, Armstat incorporates the suggestions and comments received into a revised draft, which is submitted to the Public Council of Users for a written opinion. As the Public Council of Users is the main advisory body for strategic issues related to official statistics, its opinions on the programme are public.

Following the completion of public consultations and review by the Public Council of Users, revised drafts of the statistical programmes are submitted to the State Council on Statistics for adoption, no later than two months before the beginning of the reporting period. The adoption of the Annual Statistical Programme occurs within one month after the state budget is approved.

Resources

Of the total 774 employees at Armstat, 72% are women, 46% have completed higher education, and 44% are civil servants. Out of 342 civil servants, 182 are employed in the central office and 160 in the regional offices. 98% of the 342 civil servants have higher education. The budget for 2025 is

approximately 2,059.3 million AMD (about 5.1 million EUR). For IT resources at the end of 2024, Armstat is spending 244 million AMD (about 544,000 EUR).

Coordination of the NSS

Armstat coordinates the NSS, ensuring uniform concepts, definitions, classifications, and methods across producers, except for the Central Bank, which operates independently. Coordination tools include national statistical programmes, standard-setting, the process for adopting statistical programmes, which includes broad consultations and advisory bodies such as the Public Council of Users, and partnerships established through formal agreements. A dedicated working group facilitates engagement with potential ONAs.

Ministry of Finance

The Government Finance Statistics Division of the Ministry of Finance is a recognised producer of official statistics, primarily responsible for compiling and disseminating the monthly and quarterly Government Finance Statistics, including data on General Government operations, Central Government operations, and General Government debt. The Division, which was recently established as a separate unit, cooperates closely with Armstat and provides input for various statistical products, including national accounts. The Division publishes its statistics on the official website of the Ministry. The Division is responsible for determining the sectoral classification of institutional units and states that it strictly adheres to international standards and guidelines in all of its operations. Currently, Government Finance Statistics (GFS) are compiled primarily based on the IMF's GFS 2001 Manual; however, the Division plans to prioritise alignment with GFS 2014.

Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health's National Institute of Health (NIH) is officially not labelled as an ONA. Still, it was invited to participate in the peer review as a producer of statistics regarding health issues. NIH has 15 people working with statistics, and the head of the statistics entity is clearly identifiable.

NIH produces and disseminates statistics on deaths, hospitalisations, visits to primary health care, childbirths, etc. The information is retrieved from 800 medical facilities using 25 different statistical forms, primarily from Excel files. Specialists review the collected data, and any potential mistakes are investigated and corrected as necessary. Some data also come from the electronic eHealth system, which is a private system developed for government use. Cross-checking is performed in the system; however, the system still requires improvement before it is fully functional.

The ICD-10 (International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems used by the WHO, World Health Organisation) was implemented 10 years ago. The NIH is considering implementing the newer version of the disease classification system, ICD-11, but this will entail a significant amount of work for which they will require donor funding.

NIH reported excellent and close cooperation with Armstat.

Ministry of Environment

The Hydrometeorology and Monitoring Center is located under the Ministry of Environment and is responsible for producing information on Hydrometeorological conditions, Forestry (volume of timber, forest fires and illegal logging, annual indicators of deforestation and afforestation), Protected Areas (Forest cover and conservation efforts), Artificial reproduction of aquatic bioresources, Emissions of hazardous substances into the atmosphere from stationary and mobile sources, Water Resource Statistics (Water abstraction, use and pollution), Waste Management Data (Industrial and municipal waste generation and treatment), Environmental pollution monitoring, Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Inventory and Land cover. Overall, it monitors the quality of soil, air, water, pollution and forests. It also produces some primary data as input to Armstat's system of environmental accounts. The Center conducts quality checks on the primary data it collects from monitoring points, as well as on the quality of data received from laboratories. Data are published monthly in various bulletins and reports, following a calendar of publications. These publications are also included in Armstat's release calendar. Furthermore, the Center is aware of the needs of its stakeholders and users.

Ministry of Internal Affairs

The Ministry of Internal Affairs is not an official producer of statistics. It was invited to participate in the peer review as a producer of data on migration, asylum seekers, foreigners who gain resident status, and naturalisations (or termination thereof). In 2022, the Government transferred the Migration and Citizenship Service from the Police Department to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and a Statistics Division was created within it. Staff for the Division were hired, but they need further training. Armstat has been and will continue to be consulted for the further development of the methodology and quality framework. The Migration and Citizenship Service also closely cooperates with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, academic institutions, and international organisations (such as IOM, UNHCR, and UNFPA). The Ministry maintains the population register, which is planned to be strengthened in the new Law on the Population Register that was being prepared at the time of the peer review. Plans are underway to establish digitised databases on foreigners' residency status, asylum seekers and citizenship in the Republic of Armenia. Collaboration and data exchange with Armstat are based on a signed joint order with the police department, where the service was located at the time. It is included in the annual statistical work programme and dissemination calendar. Currently, the Service only publishes Armstat data and statistics and has no plans to produce and publish more statistics. In the future, the Migration and Citizenship Service plans to publish comprehensive data on migration on its official website.

Data Access

Producers of official statistics, including Armstat, have the mandate to collect data from various sources with the goal of improving the quality of statistical products and minimising respondent burden. Data collection is compulsory for most statistical units, although it is voluntary for individuals and households unless specified otherwise in the Annual Statistical Programme. State and local bodies must provide administrative data free of charge, at the level of detail necessary for the production of official statistics. Censuses (population, agricultural, and economic) are conducted at least every decade, with mandatory participation. If the provider of administrative data plans to carry out a major revision in their data collection or develop a new data collection that may affect

the data provided for official statistics, they shall consult Armstat and, where appropriate, the other producers of official statistics in advance of the decision.

Relations with Users/Dissemination of Statistical Products and Services:

Armstat regularly consults its users on the content of the statistical programmes. The Public Council of Users, comprising eleven members representing users from various sectors, is the primary advisory body to the State Council on Statistics and Armstat on strategic issues and programme prioritisation.

Official statistics are disseminated punctually via an advance release calendar, accompanied by metadata and explanatory comments, and published on the official website. Armstat and other producers follow a coordinated dissemination policy with transparent procedures established by the State Council on Statistics. Errors are corrected promptly, and users can use statistics with proper source attribution. Policies are detailed in Armstat's "Information Dissemination and Communication Policy" and "Information Dissemination Strategy".

4. PROGRESS/ADVANCEMENT IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS

The most significant change in the last five years is the introduction of the new Law on Official Statistics, adopted in 2018, which aligns with the Generic Law on Official Statistics (GLOS). The new Law on Official Statistics builds upon the strong legal provisions of the previous law, which defined Armstat (then known as the National Statistical Service of Armenia) as a state body independent of other state and local government bodies, implementing functions aimed at serving the public interest. The new Law on Official Statistics strengthened the coordination role of Armstat and further defined the roles and responsibilities within the NSS. Specific articles outline the structure of the NSS, the role of other producers, and adherence to international standards. The Law also strengthened the mandate for data collection and entitled producers of official statistics to select data sources based on professional considerations and to collect information directly from respondents if administrative registers cannot provide the needed information, while also obliging state and local self-government bodies to provide data to producers of official statistics.

The European Union-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) entered into force on 1 March 2021. In implementing CEPA, Armstat introduced several measures. In the first phase, 10 measures were implemented, including migration statistics, job vacancies statistics, structural business statistics, R&D statistics/public sector, National Accounts—institutional sectoral accounts, finance statistics/economy's non-financial organisations, statistics on International Trade in Services, environment statistics/Air Accounts, and the introduction of the Single Integrated Metadata Structure (SIMS) version 2.0. This phase also involved the introduction and training on the use of the ISCED-F 2013, ISCO-08, and ICSE-2020 classifications. In the second phase of CEPA, five measures were proposed, including demographic statistics, agricultural statistics, R&D statistics/private sector, financial accounts, dissemination and the use of modern information technologies.

A peer review was conducted in 2018, with the conclusion that, apart from the resource situation, Armstat is largely compliant with the ES CoP. The peer review presented Armstat with 29 recommendations or suggestions for action. As a response to these recommendations, Armstat has implemented several activities, which represent good progress:

- The Metadata Development Plan for 2021-2023 was introduced.
- A system of reference metadata has been implemented, introducing the EU metadata reporting standard SIMS.
- User-oriented and producer-oriented quality reports have been developed and published on the website.
- Armstat introduced the SDMX standard in the context of the establishment of the system of reference metadata.
- In 2022, Armstat introduced the Generic Activity Model for Statistical Organisations (GAMSO) and developed an Excel sheet “Armstat-mapping” that describes the implementation of activities and combines the GAMSO and GSBPM models.
- In 2024, Armstat launched the Trend Assessment Dashboard for SDG indicators to support the analytical work of public institutions that do not have statistics production as their core task. The dashboard is a visualisation tool for assessing the progress of the SDGs in Armenia.

It provides necessary evidence for stakeholder engagement and prioritisation of sustainable development. It also supports the preparation of the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). The dashboard was instrumental in providing data for the preparation of the third VNR of Armenia, for the High-level Political Forum in July 2024.

- Armstat has worked on modernising dissemination by adding infographics on its website for key demographic, social, economic and environmental indicators.
- In 2019, Armstat began using open-source data platforms for disseminating and reporting on its SDGs. The SDGs National Reporting Platform has been used as a tool to increase Armstat's coordinating and leading role.
- Armstat organises training courses and regular consultations for focal points from line ministries to support them and discuss issues related to the content and metadata of the indicators, and the operation of the Platform. Armstat has provided administrative register owners with online access and the possibility to import and update the SDG indicators.
- The last Population Census (13-22 October 2022) was conducted using a combined method based on the State Population Register, with additional data collection conducted using tablets from a sample of 25% of addresses.
- The use of administrative data sources for producing migration statistics has also improved.
- Armstat has introduced a CAPI tool in all statistical surveys and censuses.
- The Agricultural Census was conducted from 11 to 31 October 2024. The census results will be published in the fourth quarter of 2026.
- In 2020, a project on the Time Use Survey (TUS) was launched. The EU regional statistical cooperation programme 2019-2022 and UN Women supported the strengthening of Armstat's capacity to improve SDG data and gender statistics, and to harmonise methodologies with the EU. In 2021, the Armenian Pilot TUS (APTUS-2021) was conducted, and a general report and two technical reports were developed. In 2023/24, Armstat conducted a nationwide, large-scale Armenia Time Use Survey (ATUS) within the framework of the UN Women's "Women's Economic Empowerment in the South Caucasus" (WEESC) programme. Within the framework of the ATUS 2023-2024 project, Armstat conducted a series of extensive workshops designed to enhance the skills and capabilities of its staff. These workshops focused on standard statistical business processes related to time-use surveys and extended beyond, ensuring that Armstat staff are well equipped to manage survey data effectively.
- Within the framework of the "Economic Governance, Business Environment, & Justice Reform" project, supported by the World Bank and funded by the EU, Armstat conducted the pilot survey on "Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) usage and e-commerce in enterprises", from 17 February to 31 March 2023 and the large-scale survey from 1 June to 31 July 2023. The survey was conducted using the Eurostat methodology and a model questionnaire with the CAPI method. The survey results are published on Armstat's website.

On 1 February 2024, an e-reporting system for data collection was launched within the World Bank-supported project.

The implementation of several of these measures has been made possible through intense cooperation with several international organisations, including the EU, UNECE, UNESCAP Statistics

Division, UN Women, the World Bank, and experts from Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Denmark, Finland and Sweden.

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

Professional and trusted statistical authority

Professional independence of Armstat, based on a strong legislative framework, is a major strength of the Armenian statistical system. A modern statistical law, based on the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice and the Generic Law on Official Statistics, was introduced in 2018, further strengthening an already strong legal framework. The State Council on Statistics ensures professional independence. This seven-member expert body serves as the primary body for statistical governance in Armenia as well as the management board of Armstat. The State Council on Statistics adopts the annual and five-year statistical programmes and has the legal authority to adopt normative decisions on official statistics. The President of Armstat chairs the State Council on Statistics, reinforcing the autonomy of the Armenian statistical system in methodological decisions.

The interviews conducted by the peer review team with various stakeholders offered broad confirmation that Armstat is perceived as an independent, professional organisation that is trusted and respected in society.

During the peer review visit, it became evident that a strong team spirit, encouraging collaboration, and the exchange of knowledge and expertise are present at Armstat. This is one of the essential strengths, as the staff are very cooperative and customer-oriented. Armstat has a collective agreement with a very active trade union of Armstat employees.

Rich data environment

Stakeholders consider Armenia a data-rich country, with many interviewed stakeholders noting gradual improvements in data availability and timeliness. Armstat has improved data availability through surveys like the Integrated Living Conditions Surveys (ILCS), Labour Force Surveys (LFS), Health and Demographic Surveys (DHS), and Time Use Surveys, often supported by international organisations and donors.

Armstat has a clear legal mandate to collect data for official statistical purposes, including compelling businesses to respond to surveys and accessing administrative records and registers. Public institutions are obligated to grant Armstat access to their administrative data at no charge. This is becoming particularly important as the quality of the administrative data environment is improving. Armstat successfully conducted the Population Census using a combined method based on the State Population Register, supplemented by additional data collection from a sample of 25% of addresses using tablets. It should also be noted that both the 2022 Population Census and the 2024 Agricultural Census were conducted without external assistance and were fully funded by the government.

Armstat systematically measures the total response burden of all its activities and has achieved a significant reduction in this burden. In 2024, the response burden was reduced by 0.68% compared to the previous year and by 57.4% compared to 2010. The reduction in response burden is attributed to the incorporation of information from administrative sources, as well as a decrease in the frequency of data collection and the number of data points.

Strong user orientation

The peer review team was left with the impression that Armstat has an excellent reputation among users. Official statistics are regarded as a public good, and therefore, Armstat is obliged to provide official statistics to users free of charge. The strong user focus of Armstat is also evident in the process of developing the statistical programmes. Armstat transparently informs users about all activities and invites them to give feedback and suggest new ideas, which it incorporates into future programmes when appropriate. The Public Council of Users is the main advisory body to the State Council on Statistics and Armstat on strategic issues and programme prioritisation. The composition of the Public Council of Users is a good representation of Armstat users, and it appears to be quite active in discussing issues relevant to official statistics.

Armstat developed the National Data Archive (NADA) tool for the Microdata Library. NADA is an open-source microdata-cataloguing system, compliant with the Data Documentation Initiative (DDI), that serves as a portal for researchers to browse, search, compare, apply for access, and download relevant census or survey information.

Excellent coordination and cooperation

The peer review team has witnessed a high degree of professionalism in all interviewed producers of official statistics and data providers. Armstat has Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with key institutions of the Armenian statistical system, such as the Central Bank and the Ministry of Finance, facilitating coordination and data sharing. Armstat actively participates in international statistical cooperation, including with Eurostat, UNECE, EFTA, IMF, the World Bank and the UN Statistical Commission.

The Ministry of Health's National Institute of Health

The peer review team noted the professionalism of the National Health Statistics Centre in the Ministry of Health's National Institute of Health. The Centre has a clearly identifiable head of statistics production and a team of 15 people working on producing statistics. The Centre is committed to continuous improvement and maintains a quality perspective. The Health Statistics Centre has strong cooperation with Armstat and has demonstrated the potential to become a valuable member of the Armenian statistical system.

Government Finance Statistics Division of the Ministry of Finance

The Ministry of Finance's Government Finance Statistics Division is an authorised producer of official statistics. The Division was recently established as a separate unit, further emphasising the importance of producing official statistics. The Division is highly professional and has a clearly

identifiable head of official statistics. The Division has conducted an inventory of data flows and drafted an internal agreement to formalise internal data flows and clarify the unit's role.

Innovative practices

The peer review team identified innovative practices that are noteworthy and potentially applicable in other national settings. The peer review team would like to highlight the following important initiatives:

- The self-assessment questionnaire for the implementation of the ES Code of Practice indicators.
- Feedback tool on the quality of administrative data.
- The quality of administrative registers is continually assessed, and a questionnaire is used for this purpose.
- A well-functioning system of working on the classifications, including training for ministries.
- New web platform for collecting, storing, and processing electronic reports.
- A system of consultation on all draft laws is in place, enabling the statistical office to provide input on all legal proposals.
- Training needs for employees are continually assessed, and training programmes are organised through a centralised system.
- Ministry of Finance's internal agreement to formalise internal data flows.

5.2 ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.2.1 REINFORCING THE INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND ENSURING ADEQUATE RESOURCES

The importance of professional independence is clearly understood and embedded throughout the Armenian statistical system, and no concerns were raised with the peer review team regarding the implementation of this principle. A strong legal underpinning for the principle is set out in Article 6 of the Law on Official Statistics, which requires that official statistics be designed, produced, and disseminated with 'complete professional independence'. Armstat is mandated to ensure compliance with the principle of professional independence.

The President of Armstat, as well as the other members of the State Council on Statistics, are appointed by the Government of Armenia for a six-year term upon the Prime Minister's recommendation. Eligibility criteria are clearly defined in the Law on Official Statistics, as well as the grounds for dismissal. The same person cannot be appointed President of Armstat for more than two consecutive terms. The President cannot hold party affiliations, other state posts, or paid work outside scientific, educational, or creative fields. The President of Armstat holds a non-political ministerial rank, is on the same level as the heads of Armenian government departments, participates in the meetings of governmental bodies, and has senior-level access to policy authorities and administrative public bodies.

However, the peer review team considers that a lack of transparency in the appointment procedures, particularly at the commencement of the recruitment process and the lack of

advertisement of the vacancy for the President of Armstat, is a weakness in the Armenian statistical system that has the potential to impact negatively on the perception of the professional independence of Armstat in the future. Armstat and the relevant government authorities are encouraged to resolve the issue, such as by amending the Law on Official Statistics or another applicable legal act, or by establishing a formal procedure.

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

1. Armstat and the relevant government authorities are encouraged to increase transparency in the processes related to the selection of the President of Armstat, with a particular focus on the commencement of the process. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 1.8)

Privately held data have the potential to enhance the production of and complement official statistics. Scanner data from supermarkets, bank transaction data from banks, or information available from telecommunication providers are already being successfully used by various NSIs. There are, however, several obstacles to accessing and using such data. Having a sound legal framework is an essential requirement to help unlock privately held data (the revised Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European statistics states that it should facilitate access while also providing technical and procedural safeguards and guarantees, including a high level of security, confidentiality, and respect for privacy). The Law on Official Statistics currently does not facilitate access to privately held data sources for Armstat or other producers of official statistics in Armenia. The revised Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European statistics, as well as (upcoming) changes to the Generic Law on Official Statistics and its Guidance on Modernising Statistical Legislation, can guide the changes needed in the national legislation in Armenia.

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

2. Armstat and the relevant government authorities should amend the Law on Official Statistics to facilitate access to privately held data. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 2.4)

Even though the government has recognised the importance of ensuring resources for the production of official statistics, as evidenced by the steady increase in the budget allocations to Armstat, as well as sufficient resources that were made available to conduct the Population Census in 2022 and the Agricultural Census in 2024, additional resources still need to be allocated to ensure the production of new statistics and fulfilment of Armstat's mandate in a rapidly changing environment. Providing reliable data to decision-makers and information to a wide range of stakeholders requires appropriate technologies, increased professional capacity, innovative practices and effective communication and dissemination tools. Armstat should be better equipped to respond to these challenges. If Armstat is to continue modernising and fulfil its potential as an innovative statistics producer, a systematic increase in budgetary funding is needed to realise the necessary investments in statistical infrastructure.

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

3. The relevant government authorities should ensure that adequate resources are available for Armstat to meet the emerging needs for new statistics, support innovation projects and enable technological developments. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 3.1)

For a relatively small country, a relatively large proportion of the Armstat staff are employed in its decentralised units. In addition to the central office in Yerevan, there are 11 regional (Marz) offices,

which are further divided into divisions for specific territories. Out of the total 342 permanent employees of Armstat, 160 (46.7%) are employed in the regional offices. Armstat also hires additional temporary staff to support the collection of household survey data in the regions.

This organisational structure is the result of legacy practices, where regional offices were mainly responsible for data collection activities (business entity surveys, household surveys and price collection) and local data dissemination. However, these structures are gradually becoming obsolete, and due to the introduction of advanced data dissemination technologies, the increased use of administrative data, a wider application of computer-assisted telephone interviewing and the introduction of web-based surveys, statistical offices no longer require a strong presence in all regions.

Although the regional offices remain engaged in data collection, the ongoing modernisation of statistical processes is likely to reduce the extent of their workload in the future. The integration of part of the staff of regional offices and divisions into the central office could therefore provide an opportunity to increase the absolute number of qualified staff at Armstat headquarters and enable better achievement of strategic priorities without impacting the budget. Specialisation of the regional offices could also be considered as a potential solution. In the broader context of developing effective working methods, there is also an opportunity to establish a network of teleworkers involved in interviews or other tasks that can be conducted from home. Armstat should reflect internally on the optimal solution and develop a medium-term plan for a better division of work between headquarters and regional offices.

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

4. Armstat should reflect on reorganising the work between the headquarters and regional offices to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 10.2)

Armstat utilises a comprehensive system for planning and approval of statistical programmes, connected to budgetary planning. However, information on the use of resources associated with individual statistical products is not available, as tools for estimating the cost of statistical products and processes have not been developed. Estimates of funds required for new statistical activities and other developments are relatively broad, with no reference to existing facts or the actual cost of similar activities.

The introduction of a cost estimate (or cost accounting) system would enable Armstat management to justify the resource needs by process and product, and to utilise available funds as effectively as possible. Such a system should also enhance managerial decision-making, as it will be integrated into the quality management system and has the potential to drive quality improvements and identify opportunities for efficiency savings. Armstat has already documented most of its statistical products in accordance with the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM), which provides a potential basis for implementing a cost accounting system, as resources could be classified according to the main phases of the model. This would demonstrate a systematic approach to financial management that will help Armstat to make the case for additional resources.

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

5. To improve internal planning, Armstat is encouraged to start developing a cost accounting system that will enable an assessment of resource allocation for each statistical product and data processing service. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 10.1)

Armstat primarily employs civil servants and is obliged to utilise the central system administered by the Civil Service Office, which is used by all government entities. For the recruitment of junior service positions, candidates are shortlisted for interviews based on their ranking on the official list. To generate ranking lists, the Civil Service Office administers standardised testing at least twice a year. Recruitment for non-civil service positions, which includes personnel engaged in statistical data collection programmes, censuses, technical maintenance, and administrative support roles, is conducted in accordance with the Labour Code of the Republic of Armenia. The selection process is conducted through structured interviews, with the participation of a sector-specific expert, under the supervision of the Secretary-General.

Although Armstat disseminates vacancy announcements for civil service positions on its official website and encourages graduates in relevant academic disciplines to apply for traineeships and posts through cooperation with Armenian academic establishments, a strategic approach to hiring new talent appears to be necessary.

The peer review team believes that an active recruitment policy, combined with a focus on training employees, defining career paths, proactive internal communication, gradual improvement of working conditions and fine-tuning of work arrangements, could make Armstat a more attractive place to work. Such measures and policies could be integrated into a comprehensive Human Resources Strategy, which should be supported by adequate communication, including through social media (particularly LinkedIn).

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

6. Armstat should develop a comprehensive Human Resources Strategy to become more attractive to employees and promote itself as a desirable workplace through relevant communication channels. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 3.1)

5.2.2 ENHANCING THE COORDINATION OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM AND COOPERATION WITH DATA PROVIDERS

Armstat has conducted intensive work on fostering cooperation with data providers and enhancing the coordination of other producers of official statistics over the years. Nineteen agreements, in the form of Memoranda of Understanding, agreements, joint orders, government decrees, memoranda of cooperation, and cooperation agreements, are in place to describe the activities to be carried out. The peer review team views the extensive list of different types of existing agreements as good practice. Some of these measures are in place to secure the provision of data to Armstat for the production of official statistics, while others aim to ensure cooperation. Armstat identified 12 additional areas where agreements could be made.

The national coordination includes national statistical programmes, advisory bodies, cooperation partnerships, dissemination platforms, concepts and classifications. The aim is to form an integrated and coherent Armenian statistical system, as well as to extend the utilisation of administrative data for statistical purposes. During the peer review visit, however, the peer review team became aware that the distinction between data providers and data producers is not completely clear. Armstat is encouraged to reflect on the distinction and create a document that will be used in future negotiations with potential producers of official statistics.

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

7. Armstat should create a comprehensive document clearly outlining the differences between data providers and producers of official statistics. The document should establish specific criteria for producers of official statistics and describe the benefits and obligations associated with the status of producer of official statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1bis.1)

Armstat has a broad and good working relationship with other producers of official statistics. There is a joint statistical programme for the entire Armenian statistical system, which Armstat, in accordance with the Law on Official Statistics, coordinates every year. Armstat arranges meetings and training and manages statistical classifications for the Armenian statistical system. Most of the agreements Armstat has made are for data provision, but Armstat also coordinates data for the IMF on the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS). According to the Law on Official Statistics, only the Central Bank is defined as a producer of official statistics. Still, other national authorities can be designated as producers of official statistics by applying to the State Council on Statistics. Currently, only the Ministry of Finance has successfully passed this procedure. Armstat has developed quality guidelines, but these are only distributed internally within Armstat, and there is no common platform to promote and monitor the application of standards in the Armenian statistical system. The Armenian statistical system could benefit from a more formalised coordination of the producers. The introduction of a producer committee could be used to discuss and promote the common quality guidelines for the entire Armenian statistical system, which would make coordination more systematic and sustainable.

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

8. Armstat is encouraged to create a producer committee and clearly define its role in promoting data quality throughout the Armenian statistical system. National quality guidelines for producers of official statistics, developed by Armstat, should be adopted and monitored by this committee, and a common training programme for the entire Armenian statistical system should be adopted. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1bis.2)

Cooperation between the Ministry of Finance, the Central Bank, and Armstat at the technical level is excellent. The processes related to the production of Government Finance Statistics are continuously being improved, and this opinion is shared by all parties involved. To facilitate further improvements, a formal framework for tripartite collaboration should be established. A high-level agreement, signed by the Minister of Finance, the Governor of the Central Bank and the President of Armstat, should determine the detailed data flows and transmission deadlines between the institutions. Such an agreement should include protocols for secure data sharing, prevention of delays, and minimisation of inconsistencies. Such an agreement will help to transform the production of Government Finance Statistics into a unified process and should improve trust between the involved institutions and in official statistics in general.

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

9. The Ministry of Finance, the Central Bank, and Armstat should conclude a tripartite agreement to determine the detailed data flows and transmission deadlines between the institutions participating in the production of Government Finance Statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 8.6)

The Government Finance Statistics Division of the Ministry of Finance is a recognised producer of official statistics. Following a recommendation from the IMF mission, the Division was recently

formed as a separate unit. It compiles and disseminates the monthly and quarterly Government Finance Statistics, including data on General Government operations, Central Government operations, and General Government debt. The Division is also responsible for the sectoral classification of institutional units according to SNA 2008/ESA 2010. It closely cooperates with Armstat and provides input for various statistical products, including national accounts. Although the Division publishes its statistics on the Ministry's official website, these statistics are not clearly distinguished from other data and are not clearly highlighted as official statistics. The Division states that it strictly adheres to international standards and guidelines. Government Finance Statistics (GFS) are currently compiled primarily on a cash basis according to the IMF's GFS 2001 manual. The Division plans to prioritise the switch to accrual-based accounting and align the production of GFS with the 2014 version of the Manual.

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

10. The Ministry of Finance is encouraged to enhance the visibility of official statistics releases on its webpage, publish a release calendar, and further improve its efforts in implementing the Government Finance Statistics Manual of 2014, while cultivating strong cooperation with Armstat. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.1 and 6.5)

The Hydrometeorology and Monitoring Center is located under the Ministry of Environment and is responsible for producing information on Hydrometeorological conditions, Forestry (volume of timber, forest fires and illegal logging, annual indicators of deforestation and afforestation), Protected Areas (Forest cover and conservation efforts), Artificial reproduction of aquatic bioresources, Emissions of hazardous substances into the atmosphere from stationary and mobile sources, Water Resource Statistics (Water abstraction, use and pollution), Waste Management Data (Industrial and municipal waste generation and treatment), Environmental pollution monitoring, Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Inventory and Land cover. Overall, it monitors the quality of soil, air, water, pollution and forests. The Center conducts quality checks on the data it collects from monitoring points, as well as on the quality of data received from laboratories. These are quality checks of primary data, while no comprehensive quality framework is applied. Data are published monthly in various bulletins and reports, following a calendar of publications. These publications are also included in Armstat's release calendar. Furthermore, the Center is aware of the needs of its stakeholders and users and plans to make its data available in more modern ways and channels. Finally, the Center contributes some primary data to Armstat's system of environment accounts.

However, the Center does not produce official statistics itself but rather contributes as a provider of administrative data and information to the production of official statistics; hence, it should not be considered part of the Armenian statistical system as a statistical authority. Even as a provider of administrative data, it can further improve some of its operations, such as offering a more modern and targeted service to users and enhancing the quality monitoring of some of the data it produces. Maintaining a good level of cooperation with Armstat would enable the Center to benefit from Armstat's experience in establishing a quality management system and engaging more actively with its users.

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

11. The Hydrometeorology and Monitoring Center of the Ministry of Environment should continue to be classified as a data provider and is encouraged to maintain good cooperation with Armstat on the provision of high-quality input data. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 8.7)

The Migration and Citizenship Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs shares, quarterly, aggregate data on migration, asylum seekers, foreigners who gain resident status, and naturalisations (or termination thereof) from their administrative registers with Armstat. Currently, the Service only publishes Armstat data and has no plans to produce and publish additional statistics; therefore, it should not be considered part of the Armenian statistical system as a statistical authority. The Statistical Division of the Service was newly established, and staff needs have been addressed. Further training has been planned, including sessions led by experts from Armstat and specialised international agencies.

The new law being developed on the State Population Register will be crucial in establishing a robust population register and envisions a central role for the Ministry of Internal Affairs. It will be important that Armstat is involved in this to ensure compliance with international standards, classifications and methodologies. The efforts needed to provide an accurate population register should not be underestimated. Especially for emigration, there are limited incentives to report leaving Armenia and for deregistering from the population register. Public awareness of the importance of compliance with international standards and integration with multiple administrative sources, along with built-in consistency checking and enforcement of information accuracy in administrative and population registers, is essential to ensure sufficient quality and accuracy of the population register.

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

12. The Migration and Citizenship Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs should continue to be classified as a data provider. Efforts to develop the administrative population register should continue, involving Armstat to ensure alignment with statistical concepts and definitions. The Ministry of Internal Affairs is encouraged to raise public awareness of the importance of the administrative population register. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 8.7)

The Ministry of Health's National Institute of Health (NIH) is officially not an ONA. However, it was invited to participate in the peer review as a producer of statistics regarding health issues. NIH produces and disseminates statistics on incidents of death, hospitalisation, visits to primary health care, childbirths, etc. The information is sourced from 800 health facilities, encompassing 25 different forms, and primarily from Excel files. Some data is also retrieved from the electronic eHealth system that is a private system developed for government use. NIH does not have access to individual data.

The NIH closely cooperates with medical facilities and the Ministry of Health, but does not collect systematic information about user needs from others. Quality controls are performed in Excel sheets by checking for errors and discrepancies, and by comparing them to the previous year. The NIH website is available in Armenian only, and statistics are not easily accessible from its website. The NIH does not use a standard to provide quality reports or other metadata to describe the statistics for the users.

The NIH demonstrates a high degree of professionalism as a producer of data highly relevant to society and reports excellent cooperation with Armstat. The NIH, alongside its users, should benefit

from becoming a recognised producer of official statistics, thereby transforming highly relevant data on health issues into official statistics.

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

13. The National Institute of Health, under the Ministry of Health, shows significant potential to be labelled as a producer of official statistics. Should they become a producer of official statistics, it is encouraged to improve compliance with the ES CoP, for example, by prioritising user needs and enhancing user-friendliness in data dissemination. In collaboration with Armstat, the National Institute of Health should develop a tool for quality and metadata reporting and establish a quality management system. The relevant government authorities are encouraged to back these enhancements with adequate resources to ensure success. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1bis.1)

Armstat has concluded written agreements with data providers and producers of official statistics in the form of MoUs, Agreements, Decrees and Joint Orders. The peer review team considers this to be excellent practice and encourages Armstat to conclude agreements with data providers with whom agreements have not yet been concluded. The agreements concluded appear to have different forms and content, and standardising them could be beneficial for both Armstat and data providers. A standardised approach could include one or more standardised templates, depending on the form of cooperation and the data to be provided. The standardised template(s) should consist of a standard set of information on what should be provided, when it should be provided, to whom it should be provided, in what form it should be provided, and what quality measures should be included prior to the provision of data.

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

14. Armstat should revise, update and conclude the standardised agreements (Memoranda of Understanding, Agreements, Decrees and Joint Orders) with data providers based on a newly developed standardised template that clearly outlines the required content for these documents. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 8.6)

5.2.3 PREPARING THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM FOR THE FUTURE

Armstat has taken steps to enhance the accessibility and clarity of its statistics, including the use of infographics to improve data comprehension and the provision of a user-friendly SDG platform. Nonetheless, the peer review team found that the current website (www.armstat.am) does not adequately meet the needs of its users. The website's structure and design are outdated, making navigation non-intuitive and limiting the overall user experience. Many users find it challenging to locate datasets, publications, and relevant indicators, as the current setup lacks a clear thematic or domain-based organisation and offers no advanced filtering or sorting options. The search function on the website is limited in scope and relevance, as are filtering or sorting capabilities by topic, publication date, or statistical domain.

Armstat acknowledges that the absence of interactive data visualisation tools and the lack of GIS capabilities are significant limitations. Users cannot dynamically explore or customise data, which restricts access to insights and trends. Data are often fragmented across pages or available only in static formats, further complicating access and reuse.

In terms of visual presentation and technological functionality, the current website does not comply with modern accessibility standards. It is not well-optimised for indexing by search engines or AI applications. It also lacks tools for data visualisation, storytelling, or user interaction with datasets, which would enhance the dissemination and understanding of statistics.

The peer review team considers that replacing the current website with a fully redesigned and purpose-built statistical dissemination platform should be treated as a top priority. Such a platform should serve not only as the digital face of Armstat but potentially as a national statistics portal, offering access to official statistics in a user-centred, interactive, and open format. Decisions should also be taken on whether the portal will include statistics produced by other public institutions or non-official sources (with clearly noted distinctions between various types).

It is apparent that Armstat's IT team lacks the technical capabilities to build a new website, and such an effort cannot be completed without additional funds or donor assistance. Armstat should enhance its efforts to secure the necessary funds and begin preparing a detailed technical and functional specification for its development. A new website should be easily searchable and sortable by various criteria, and it should be optimised for improved user-friendliness and accessibility by search engines and AI. During the development process, profiling and user testing should be employed, with particular attention given to streamlining the dissemination process.

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

15. Armstat should urgently develop a new website to increase its user-friendliness and consider transforming it into a national portal for all official statistics produced by the Armenian statistical system. (Improvement-related: European Statistics Code of Practice Indicator 15.2)

Armstat currently uses multiple release calendars in PDF format to announce publication dates for its statistical products. Information on the release dates of statistical products is available in the "pre-release" calendar; information on the release dates of statistical publications is available in the Calendar of Statistical Publications; SDDS data are available in the Advance Release Calendar by SDDS; and there is also a separate revision timetable for the Gross Domestic Product. Armstat has a defined procedure for notifying the public in case of delays; however, Armstat states that no deviations from defined deadlines have been recorded.

The integration of all the aforementioned release calendars into a single, multidimensional release calendar, which will include all relevant information, including an explanation of the reasons for any deviations from the initial schedule, may improve user-friendliness. Even though an interactive calendar should be the backbone of a modern statistical website, the integration can be performed before the new website is completed. Furthermore, Armstat should analyse whether there is a trade-off between taking a slightly greater risk to achieve faster publication and potentially increasing the chance of missing the initially planned publication dates.

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

16. Armstat should integrate all information on the dissemination dates of its statistical products into a single interactive dissemination calendar, which should also include details on any delays in the publication of statistical releases. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 6.5 and 13.4)

The use of open-source solutions for software applications can reduce costs and dependency on proprietary software. As official statistics is a niche area for commercial software producers, open-

source solutions can often fill these specific needs with tailored solutions. Open source is not without costs, as training and adaptations are, in general, needed. However, several open-source solutions are supported by other NSIs (such as geospatial dissemination system STAGE – offered by Statistics Slovenia, the data processing software IST – provided by Statistics Serbia, the dissemination database PC-Axis – provided by Statistics Sweden and the statistical disclosure control software TArgus – offered by Statistics Netherlands) and/or have active user and developer groups that ensure that regular updates are made and published and that experiences can be shared. User groups also share code and algorithms that can be used in open-source software (see, for example, [the Awesome list of statistics software](#)). Armstat already has a positive experience using the open-source SDG dissemination platform, which was praised by interviewed users, and is strongly encouraged to continue exploring this path forward.

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

17. Armstat is encouraged to increase the use of open-source statistical solutions offered by various statistical offices (e.g. STAGE, IST, PC-Axis and various R packages). (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 10.2, 7.1 and 10.4)

Armstat recognises the potential and importance of using new data sources for the production of official statistics. It therefore, emphasises working with diverse data communities, enhancing access to administrative data, and utilising new non-traditional data sources, such as big data, geospatial information, and citizen data, for better data integration to fill data gaps and ensure that data are governed effectively, contributing to the production of official statistics.

Armstat has limited experience in using these new sources but has taken first steps by working together with the Armenian Center for Socio-Economic Studies (ACSES), with the financial support of the Asian Development Bank. Plans include introducing web scraping to collect price information for the CPI, such as on apartment rents, hotels, and aeroplane tickets. The peer review team encourages Armstat to increase engagement with data holders and experts, such as the ACSES, and intensify investment in skills that will help utilise new data sources for statistical purposes.

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

18. Armstat is encouraged to accelerate the use of new data sources for statistical purposes. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 8.6 and 9.4)

Administrative registers have great potential to produce official statistics, especially when they are linked through unique identifiers. The use of administrative registers for statistical purposes can lead to significant cost reduction while also improving efficiency. To establish a high-quality administrative register system, it is crucial to determine which register serves as the source of unique identifiers for each data type. This enables the interoperability of administrative registers and facilitates the introduction of the “once-only principle”, which implies that data are entered into an administrative register only once. With this one-time entry, the data are propagated and made available to all interconnected registers, further increasing efficiency and reducing the response burden by preventing the duplication of information. For official statistics, this enables analyses across multiple variables, which were previously only possible with survey data. Equally important, linking multiple administrative sources enhances the quality of the individual registers by providing more options for validation and consistency checking.

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

19. To enhance the usability of administrative registers for statistical purposes, the government should ensure the uniform use of unique identifiers across all state administrative registers. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 10.3 and 2.2)

5.2.4 IMPROVING STATISTICAL PROCESSES AND ENSURING APPLICATION OF STANDARDS

Armstat produces a wide range of statistical products and information, which it publishes on its website. It also consults users regularly on their needs and discusses those with the Public Council of Users. However, in meetings with users of different categories, feedback was received that more data on certain societal phenomena are needed by users (such as digitalisation, migration, and living conditions) and that Armstat could increase the amount of data it publishes in an easy-to-access and reusable format. Users also mentioned that data are becoming available with some delay and that discussions on the trade-off between accuracy and timeliness could be helpful, reflecting the concept of flash estimates for key indicators. Furthermore, users mentioned that there was a need for more microdata for scientific purposes, as well as more disaggregated data, such as by region and gender, for a more detailed analysis. While Armstat produces some of the requested data, they are only available upon specific request, while other data still need to be produced.

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

20. Armstat is encouraged to continue and enhance its efforts in improving the availability, timeliness and disaggregation of statistics. (Improvement-related ES CoP, Indicators 11.1 and 13.3)

Armstat has already undertaken significant efforts to comply with relevant European standards. In connection with the European Union-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA), several measures have been implemented. These measures have been agreed with Eurostat and include Migration statistics, Job Vacancies statistics, Structural business statistics, R & D statistics/public sector, National Accounts/institutional sectoral accounts, Finance statistics/economy's non-financial organisations, Statistics on International Trade in Services, Environment statistics/Air Accounts, SIMS V2.0, Introduction and Training on the use of ISCED-F 2013, ISCO-08, ICSE-2020 classifications. Armstat included the following measures for the second phase of CEPA: Demographic statistics, Agricultural statistics, R&D statistics/private sector, Financial Accounts, and Dissemination and the use of modern information technologies. The peer review team recognises the efforts already made to comply with European standards and encourages Armstat to carry out an internal gap analysis that can be used for priority setting and planning purposes.

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

21. Armstat should determine the steps necessary to comply with European standards in all relevant statistical domains. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 7.1)

Armstat does not have a centralised methodology function that ensures the uniform application of methodological requirements throughout the organisation. Instead, this responsibility is managed in a decentralised manner. This requires that decentralised units maintain a high level of competence concerning methodological requirements. The peer review team considers this a challenge, as a decentralised structure requires additional specialised human resources, which are already scarce in the organisation, and centralising functions may bring extra benefits through economies of scale. This centralisation can be implemented in various forms, for example, through the creation of a

central methods unit or a working group to serve as a central forum for methodological discussions. The peer review team encourages Armstat to discuss the issue internally and determine the best course of action.

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

22. To ensure the uniform application of methodological requirements, Armstat should investigate the best structure for the management of methodology and apply it during future reorganisation. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 7.2 and 10.4)

Armstat provides users with comprehensive documentation of its statistical products. At present, three quality reporting structures exist. When entering “*metadata*” on Armstat’s website, the Metadata Development Plan 2021-2023 is shown. Under the heading “*Reference metadata*”, the Euro SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS), which represents the user-oriented concepts of the Single Integrated Metadata Structure (SIMS), is displayed. Under the heading “*Quality Reports*”, the ESS Standard for Quality Reports Structure (ESQRS), which represents the producer-oriented concepts of SIMS, is presented. Under the heading “*Quality Declarations*”, an earlier version of the quality reports/reference metadata can also be found. Armstat has implemented the ESS standard SIMS. As SIMS encompasses all necessary concepts for reporting on quality to users, the peer review team believes it would be beneficial for Armstat to concentrate on this standard and focus on publishing user-oriented concepts on the website.

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

23. Armstat is encouraged to consolidate the three existing quality reporting structures into a single, product-specific structure that addresses diverse user needs and includes quality indicators in quality reports. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.7)

Armstat has a quality management system in place, with a quality policy being a key component of it. The quality policy was developed in 2016 and is published on Armstat's website, containing descriptions of Armstat’s mission, functions, and its quality principles, as well as the principles of the ES CoP. The quality policy, however, does not contain information on practices and commitments related to quality in statistics and could therefore benefit from an update using the recommendations and guidance contained in the recently developed ESS guidelines for quality policies in the ESS.

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

24. Armstat is encouraged to update its quality policy to reflect the latest developments and best practices. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 4.1)

Based on Armstat's existing quality management system, elements of the quality review system, including quality declarations for the 139 Armstat products, process descriptions in accordance with the GSBPM, and SIMS-compliant metadata, have been developed and published. A process of internal quality reviews of statistical products has also begun, based on self-assessments, available quality reports, and process descriptions. Internal quality reviews constitute an essential element of quality assurance. Armstat is therefore encouraged to adopt a more systematic approach to quality reviewing by developing a unified methodology for quality reviews. Armstat should also develop a plan for internal quality reviews of all statistical products over the next 4-5 years and define the approach for these reviews (e.g., specifying which products undergo which type of review, such as

self-assessment, self-assessment combined with an assessment by external experts, etc.). A system of follow-up plans and improvement actions should also be defined.

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

25. Armstat should adopt a more systematic approach to internal quality reviews and ensure follow-ups. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 4.2)

It is good practice to provide researchers with access to survey microdata. [Complete microdata sets of Armstat's surveys](#) are published online (Integrated Living Conditions Surveys, Labour Force Surveys, Demographic and Health Surveys). Although personal identifiers are removed, individuals and households can be identified easily through secondary identification. Any user can download these integral data sets. Armstat should continue to make these data sets available for legitimate research purposes, but should provide access only after researchers have filled out an online request form justifying the planned use and providing details of the users, along with an acceptance statement of non-disclosure and a commitment to use the data only for the indicated research purposes. Should Armstat decide to keep the microdata publicly available, the possibility of secondary identification should be significantly reduced, which will unfortunately also considerably reduce the usability of the data.

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

26. Armstat should ensure that anonymised microdata (individual records) are only made available upon request, in accordance with the procedure for accessing microdata for scientific purposes, as required by European regulations. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicators 5.6 and 15.4)

5.2.5 ENHANCING THE USER ORIENTATION OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

Armstat's current Information, Dissemination and Communication Policy is a mixture of internal dissemination guidelines and an external policy. It is better to keep internal and user documents separate. Internal dissemination guidelines should be revised to include content creation for social networks and updated once the new website is developed and goes live. Another option is to include an overall strategy for creating an organisational culture and employee engagement, as well as defining the specific roles of staff and departments, along with the required skill sets.

Although the current policy already contains many elements that an external communication policy should have, it can be further strengthened by becoming more proactive in nature, for example, by identifying various user groups and target audiences, as well as the specific channels to reach them, or by incorporating strategies for branding Armstat and communicating the value of official statistics. This should consist of a Social Media strategy and a crisis and issues management strategy, including when, how, and by whom to react to misuse or misinterpretation of data or errors in published statistics. For external communication, it is vital to have a comprehensive and interactive stakeholder engagement plan.

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

27. Armstat should separate its current dissemination policy into internal (Armstat) dissemination guidelines and an external dissemination and communication policy. The policy should include components related to social media, employer branding, an emergency

communication plan for reacting to the misuse of statistics, etc. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.2)

Following the recommendation of the previous peer review, the Public Council of Users was based on the new Law on Official Statistics of 2018. The composition of the Public Council of Users is a good representation of Armstat users, and it appears to be quite active in its discussions. Although its influence on official statistics in Armenia is undoubtedly positive, as it brings an additional layer of user involvement in the planning process, it appears that there is room to improve the Public Council's visibility.

An active and visible Public Council of Users could become a strong external voice advocating for the value and importance of official statistics, thereby influencing policymakers to allocate necessary resources. Its formal role in advising on strategic development and statistical programmes naturally extends to ensuring these programmes are publicly visible and adequately funded for successful implementation.

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

28. The Public Council of Users should devise measures to establish itself as the voice of official statistics, enhance its visibility, and be more proactive in promoting the allocation of resources to official statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 11.1)

The various users interviewed demonstrated a high degree of interest in statistical activities. While Armstat's Annual Statistical Programme is already developed in cooperation with users, structured dialogue with representatives of users and the general public should be fostered, and specific inputs should be systematically and regularly collected from various user groups. Continuous dialogue with selected representatives of users of specific statistical domains would allow Armstat to stay aligned with users' changing needs, ensuring that the data collected and disseminated remains relevant. Meeting of user groups can be used to clarify concepts, processes and methodologies, thus reducing misinterpretation and increasing user trust in official statistics.

Although Armstat has the legally defined ability to establish advisory bodies, continuous dialogue with users should be intensified through regular meetings on specific statistical domains. Armstat should determine the optimal governance structure for such user groups/sub-committees. Following the best practices, they can be introduced either as advisory bodies to Armstat or as advisory bodies to the Public Council of Users.

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

29. Armstat should implement measures to gather input from various user groups on a regular and systematic basis. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 11.1)

In discussions with multiple user groups, the peer review team noted issues raised regarding the public visibility of official statistics. The peer review team noted that many users trace their first encounters with official statistics back to university studies. At the same time, none of the interviewed recalled being exposed to official statistics during their primary or secondary education. This is a missed opportunity to familiarise future generations with the role and value of official statistics, which would also increase the visibility of Armstat, both as a source of trusted public information and as a potential career destination for young professionals.

The review team also noted, through broader stakeholder discussions, that general trust in government institutions could be improved. Strengthening the connection between official statistics and young people, educators, and the general public could help counteract this by demonstrating how statistics can serve as a neutral, factual basis for understanding economic and social realities. Increasing public awareness of Armstat and its role in transparent, data-driven decision-making is crucial for establishing long-term trust.

Given these insights, the peer review team recognises a clear need for Armstat to develop modern statistical literacy initiatives targeting students, teachers, and the general public. These efforts could take the form of educational materials, interactive web content, partnerships with schools and universities, and outreach campaigns. Such initiatives would enhance the visibility and perceived relevance of official statistics, contributing to improved statistical literacy and trust in Armstat.

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

30. Armstat is encouraged to enhance its public communication profile by developing modern statistical literacy materials for students, teachers, and general users in primary and secondary schools, universities, and beyond. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.2)

ANNEX 1 – AGENDA OF THE VISIT

Timing	Topic	Participants
Day 1 – Monday 2 June 2025		
09:00-09:40	Preparatory meeting with the national coordination desk and, possibly, other national participants in the visit to discuss practical aspects of the visit.	The peer review expert team <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Secretary General, Coordination Team
09:45-10:00	Welcome and introduction of the programme, adopting the agenda and organisational matters.	The peer review expert team <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Secretary General, Coordination Team
10:05-11:00	Presentation of the National Statistical System General information session with a description of: • how the national statistical system is organised, the position of the NSI within public administration • bodies, distribution of responsibilities, • legislative advocacy, drafting, and amendments of legislation, relations with the State Council • relations between authorities • collaboration with the NCB, • Appointment procedure for the DG • the role and tasks of the State Statistical Council • composition of the NSS and the role of ONAs	The peer review expert team <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Secretary General, Coordination Team
11:00-11:15	Coffee break	
11:15-13:00	Professional independence and the Law on Official Statistics and related legislation (ES CoP principles 1, 2, 5 and 6) CoP principles 1 – Professional Independence CoP principles 2 – Mandate for Data Collection CoP principles 5 – Statistical Confidentiality CoP principles 6 – Impartiality and Objectivity • Observing the use/misuse of statistics	The peer review expert team <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Secretary General,

Timing	Topic	Participants
	The legal situation regarding administrative data	Head of Statistical Information Dissemination Division, Head of Legal Division, Head of Business-register, Sampling and Classifications Division, Coordination Team
13:00-14:00	Lunch	
14:00-15:15	Coordination and cooperation (ES CoP principle 1bis) - Relations with ONAs, coordination procedures, - International and national cooperation - university cooperation - influence of budget on cooperation activities	The peer review expert team <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Secretary General, Head of Business-register, Sampling and Classifications Division, Head of International Statistical Cooperation Division, Head of Statistical Information Dissemination Division, Coordination Team
15:15-15:30	Coffee break	
15:30-16:45	Meeting with the Ministry of Health (ONA) This session aims at discussing strengths and weaknesses regarding ES CoP compliance, and at identifying areas for improvement for the specific ONA. The session also aims at discussing the coordination role of the NSI in the NSS as experienced by the ONA (principle 1bis – perspective of the ONA). A short presentation of the ONA on the abovementioned issues of maximum 10 minutes would be useful.	The peer review expert team <u>The ONA:</u> Deputy Director, National Institute of Health under the Ministry of Health <u>Armstat:</u> National Coordinator, Member of the State Council on Statistics, Head of Social Statistics Division, Advisor to the President
16:45-18:00	Peer review expert team discussion	The peer review expert team
Day 2 – Tuesday 3 June 2025		
09:00-10:30	Programming, planning and resources (ES CoP principles 1, 3, 9 and 10) principle 1 – Professional Independence principle 3 – Adequacy of Resources principle 9 – Non-excessive Burden on Respondents principle 10 – Cost-Effectiveness	The peer review expert team <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Secretary General,

Timing	Topic	Participants
	- Statistical work programme and reporting - Human, financial, and IT resources assessment and allocation, priority settings - Discussions with the ministry on increasing the wages - New needs of users: examples and process (criteria) of selection - Financial compensation of the costs incurred - Statistics terminated, discontinued or reduced in frequency due to financial constraints - Measurement of response burden - Procedures for hiring staff	Head of Internal Audit Department, Head of Business-register, Head of Human Resources Management Division, Sampling and Classifications Division, Coordination Team
10:30-10:45	Coffee break	
10:45-12:15	Quality (organisational structure, tools, monitoring) (ES CoP principles 4 and 11 to 15) principle 4 – Quality Commitment principle 11 – Relevance principle 12 – Accuracy and Reliability principle 13 – Timeliness and Punctuality principle 14 – Coherence and Comparability principle 15 – Accessibility and Clarity - Implementation of GSBPM - Quality guidelines and other documentation - Quality assurance (monitoring, reporting, benchmarking, and feedback from users) - From guidelines to practice - How is accuracy as a quality criterion dealt with - Policy on preliminary results	The peer review expert team <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Secretary General, Head of Quality Management Division, Head of Statistical Information Dissemination Division, Head of Environment Statistics Division, Senior Specialist of Environment Statistics Division, Head of Finance Statistics Division, Coordination Team
12:15-13:15	Lunch	
13:15-14:45	Methodology, data collection, data processing and administrative data (ES CoP principles 2, 7 and 8) principle 2 – Mandate for Data Collection principle 7 – Sound Methodology principle 8 – Appropriate Statistical Procedures principle 9 – Non-excessive Burden on Respondents - principles of data governance - division of labour and of responsibilities	The peer review expert team <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Head of Business-register, Sampling and Classifications Division, Head of Industry and Energy Statistics Division, Coordination Team

Timing	Topic	Participants
	- new data sources and integration principles - management of classifications - auditing of methodology - access to and control of administrative data	
14:45-15:00	Coffee break	
15:00-16:15	Dissemination and confidentiality (ES CoP principles 5, 6 and 15) Short presentation of the National Data Archive (NADA) tool for Microdata Library (max: 10 min) Sub-session: CoP principle 5+6 - Impartiality and Objectivity Sub-session: CoP principle 15 - Accessibility and Clarity - Data privacy policies and their influence on response rates - Procedures on possible confidentiality breaches - Changes in the release calendar - Pre-release access and its justifications - Best practices on social media	The peer review expert team <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Head of IT Department, Head of Information Technologies Development Division, Head of Trade and Other Services Statistics Division, Head of Statistical Information Dissemination Division, Head of Legal Division, Coordination Team
16:15-17:15	Progress and plans for the future The aim of this session is to discuss progress since the last 5 years and the NSI's plans for the future.	The peer review expert team <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Coordination Team
17:15-18:00	peer review expert team discussion	The peer review expert team
Day 3 - Wednesday 4 June 2025		
09:00-10:00	Meeting with the Ministry of Finance (ONA) This session aims at discussing strengths and weaknesses regarding ES CoP compliance, and at identifying areas for improvement for the specific ONA. The session also aims at discussing the coordination role of the NSI in the NSS as experienced by the ONA (principle 1bis – perspective of the ONA).	The peer review expert team <u>The ONA:</u> Head of the Department of Accounting and Audit Activities Regulation and Reports Monitoring, Head of Government Finance Statistics Division, <u>Armstat:</u> National Coordinator,

Timing	Topic	Participants
		Member of the State Council on Statistics, Head of Finance Statistics Division, Head of Balance of Payments and Foreign Trade Statistics Division, Senior Specialist of Macroeconomic Indicators and National Accounts Division
10:00-10:15	Coffee break	
10:15-11:15	Meeting with Ministry of Environment (ONA) This session aims at discussing strengths and weaknesses regarding ES CoP compliance, and at identifying areas for improvement for the specific ONA. The session also aims at discussing the coordination role of the NSI in the NSS as experienced by the ONA (principle 1bis – perspective of the ONA).	The peer review expert team <u>The ONA:</u> Deputy Director, Hydrometeorology and Monitoring Center under the Ministry of Environment <u>Armstat:</u> National Coordinator, Member of the State Council on Statistics, Head of Environment Statistics Division, Senior Specialist of Environment Statistics Division
11:15-12:15	Meeting with Ministry of Internal Affairs (ONA) This session aims at discussing strengths and weaknesses regarding ES CoP compliance, and at identifying areas for improvement for the specific ONA. The session also aims at discussing the coordination role of the NSI in the NSS as experienced by the ONA (principle 1bis – perspective of the ONA).	The peer review expert team <u>The ONA:</u> Head of Programme Implementation and Statistics Division, Migration and Citizenship Service under the Ministry of Internal Affairs <u>Armstat:</u> National Coordinator, Member of the State Council on Statistics, Head of Population Census and Demography Division, Advisor to the President
12:15-13:15	Lunch	

Timing	Topic	Participants
13:15-14:30	Meeting with Public Council of Users of Official Statistics. The role of the Public Council and its influence on the work process. The aim of this session is to discuss the mandate and functioning of the Public Council.	The peer review expert team <u>Public Council of Users of Official Statistics:</u> Chairman of the Public Council of Users, Head of the Macroeconomic Policy Department, Ministry of Finance of RA, Member of the Board, Central Bank of RA, Vice-Rector of Armenian National Agrarian University, Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Affairs of RA, Director of PHP Partners CJSC <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Head of Statistical Information Dissemination Division, Specialist of Statistical Information Dissemination Division, Coordination Team
14:30-15:45	Meeting with junior staff only	The peer review expert team <u>Junior staff:</u> Senior Specialist of the Accounting Division, Senior Specialist of the Macroeconomic Indicators and National Accounts Division, Senior Specialist of the Social Sphere Statistics Division, Statistician of the Social Sphere Statistics Division, Specialist of the Balance of Payments and Foreign Trade Statistics Division,

Timing	Topic	Participants
		Specialist of the Macroeconomic Indicators and National Accounts Division, Specialist of the Quality Management Division, Specialist of the Statistical Information Dissemination Division, Specialist of the International Statistical Co-operation Division, Senior Specialist of the Procurement and Logistics Division, Specialist of the Environment Statistics Division
15:45-16:00	Coffee break	
16:00-17:00	Meeting with international organisations and international donors • Availability of data • Trust in the NSI • Responsiveness to requests • Confidentiality of data • Independence of the NSI • Resources for statistics	The peer review expert team <u>Representatives of international organisations /donors:</u> GIZ, UNDP, EU4Green Recovery East, International Monetary Fund, UNICEF, UNFAO, IOM <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Coordination Team
17:00-18:00	Peer review expert team discussion (the national peer review coordinator/national coordination desk should be available at this time in case any questions arise).	The peer review expert team
Day 4 - Thursday 5 June 2025		
09:00-10:00	Meeting with main administrative data providers This session aims at discussing with main administrative data providers, including	The peer review expert team <u>Administrative data providers:</u>

Timing	Topic	Participants
	relevant public bodies, business organisations, etc. (agreements, burden, data confidentiality, ...) • the perception of the NSI • relations with the NSI • procedures for making changes to the structure of data (adding or removing new variables/questions) • treatment of errors • value that the NSI adds to data (if any)	Head of the Department of Economic Research, Ministry of Economy of RA, Chief Specialist of the Innovation Promotion Division of the High-Tech Department, Ministry of High-Tech Industry of RA, Head of the Education Information and Analytical Division of the National Center for Educational Technologies SNCO, Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of RA, Head of the Monitoring Division of the Strategic Planning and Monitoring Department, Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of RA, Representative of the National Center for Educational Technologies, Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of RA, Head of the Financial Analysis Division of the Financial and Technical and Application Review Department, Public Services Regulatory Commission of RA, Head of the Accounting and Social Programs Implementation Department, Public Services Regulatory Commission of RA, Adviser of the Coordinator of individual functions of structural units, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of RA, UNICEF Expert of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of RA, Head of the Division of Cooperation with Employers and Labor Migration, Department of Employment Security and Labor Potential Development, Integrated

Timing	Topic	Participants
		Social Service, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of RA, Head of the Division of Information Flow Management, Department of the State Pension System Data Assurance and Information Systems Operation, Integrated Social Service, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of RA, Head of the Research and Risk Department, Nork Technology Center, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of RA, Research and Risk Expert of the Nork Technology Center, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of RA. <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Head of Industry and Energy Statistics Division, Head of Agriculture and Food Security Statistics Division, Head of Trade and Other Services Statistics Division, Coordination Team
10:00-10:15	Coffee break	
10:15-11:10	Meeting with providers of new data sources This session aims at discussing innovation and new developments with the NSI and providers of new data sources, such as shopping centres for scanner data, mobile telephone operators, others. This session is an opportunity to bring the new data sources providers towards the NSI enabling a discussion aimed at an increased use of their data and possible partnerships (partnership agreements, personal data, data transmission/retrieval,	The peer review expert team <u>Providers of new data sources:</u> Co-Founder/CEO, GEOVIBE. <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy President, Member of the State Council on Statistics, Head of IT Department,

Timing	Topic	Participants
	innovations perceived as relevant by the NSI, ...). If there are no providers to participate in this session, this session could be used to discuss with the NSI modernisation developments related to “other sources”.	Senior Specialist of Price Statistics and International Comparisons Division
11:15-12:30	Meeting with main users – Ministries and other public institutions (including Central Bank as a user) This session aims at discussing with the Ministries and other public institutions of official statistics on their experience (data availability in relation to data needs, contacts with NSI, trust, ...).	The peer review expert team <u>Ministries and other public institutions:</u> Head of the Risk Assessment and Analysis Department, Environmental Protection and Mining Inspection Body, Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of RA, Chief Specialist of the Water Supply and Sanitation Systems Department, Water Committee of RA, Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of RA, Head of the Statistics Department of the Macroeconomic Directorate, Central Bank of Armenia, Head of the Real Sector Statistics Division of the Statistics Department of the Macroeconomic Directorate, Central Bank of Armenia, Head of the Reports Acceptance and Summary Division of the Statistics Department of the Macroeconomic Directorate, Central Bank of Armenia, Head of the Monetary and Financial Statistics Division of the Statistics Department of the Macroeconomic Directorate, Central Bank of Armenia, Economist-Statistician of the External Sector Statistics Division of

Timing	Topic	Participants
		the Statistics Department of the Macroeconomic Directorate, Central Bank of Armenia, Economist-Statistician of the Statistics Department of the Macroeconomic Directorate, Central Bank of Armenia, Advisor to the Department of Architecture and Urban Development, Urban Development Committee of RA <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Head of Social Statistics Division, Statistician of Labour Statistics Division, Head of Population Census and Demography Division, Head of Business-register, Sampling and Classifications Division, Head of Environment Statistics Division, Senior Specialist of Environment Statistics Division, Head of Trade and Other Services Statistics Division, Head of Agriculture and Food Security Statistics Division, Head of Construction Statistics Division, Head of Finance Statistics Division, Head of Balance of Payments and Foreign Trade Statistics Division, Senior Specialist of Macroeconomic Indicators and National Accounts Division, Advisor to President, Coordination Team

Timing	Topic	Participants
12:30-13:30	Lunch	
13:30-14:30	Meeting with main users – business associations, federations and trade unions, and other private sector users This session aims at discussing with the business associations and federations and trade unions, as well as other private sector users – if any (data availability in relation to data needs, contacts with NSI, trust, ...).	The peer review expert team: <u>Main users:</u> "GRAND TOBACCO", President of "Environment and Health" NGO, Chief Specialist of the Planning and Economic Department, Gazprom Armenia CJSC, President of the Trade Union of State Bodies and Local Self-government Employees of Armenia, Organisational and External Relations Specialist of the Trade Union of State Bodies and Local Self-government Employees of Armenia, VEOLIA DJUR CJSC, President of the Global Water Partnership-Armenia, INCORE CJSC, President of the Armenian Tourism Federation <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Secretary General, Head of Balance of Payments and Foreign Trade Statistics Division, Head of Industry and Energy Statistics Division, Senior Specialist of Price Statistics and International Comparisons Division, Senior Specialist of Macroeconomic Indicators and National Accounts Division,

Timing	Topic	Participants
		Head of Armstat's trade union, Coordination Team
14:30-14:45	Coffee break	
14:45-15:45	Meeting with main users – media This session aims at discussing with the media on their experience as users of official statistics (easy to obtain, needs, contacts with NSI, trust, ...).	The peer review expert team <u>Media:</u> Correspondents of the "ARMENPRESS" state news agency, Public Radio of Armenia CJSC, ARMINFO, Public TV Company of Armenia, HETQ electronic newspaper. <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Head of Statistical Information Dissemination Division, Coordination Team
15:50-17:00	Meeting with main users – Scientific community This session aims at discussing with the scientific community on their experience as users of official statistics (access to microdata in a secure environment, data availability in relation to data needs, contacts with NSI, trust).	The peer review expert team <u>Scientists:</u> Leading specialist of the "National Research Center for Health Programs", Yerevan State Medical University after Mkhitar Heratsi, Science Department of the Yerevan State Medical University after Mkhitar Heratsi, Armenian Sociological Association, Research Director of the CRRC-Armenia, Head of the Department of Mathematics/Head of the Scientific and Research Division, French University in Armenia (FUA), National Library of Armenia SNCO, Director of the Institute of Economics named after M. Kotanyan,

Timing	Topic	Participants
		Head of the Service Sector Development and Socio-Demographic Issues Division, Institute of Economics named after M. Kotanyan, Scientific Secretary of the Institute of Economics named after M. Kotanyan, Acting Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Agribusiness, Armenian National Agrarian University, Director of the Agrarian Policy and Economics Research Center, Armenian National Agrarian University, Head of the Department of Data Science, Faculty of Economics and Agribusiness, Armenian National Agrarian University, Acting Head of the Department of Agrarian Economics, Faculty of Agribusiness and Economics, Armenian National Agrarian University, Leading Specialist of the Scientific Work Coordination Department, Armenian National Agrarian University, Protected Area and Biodiversity Expert, AUA Acopian Center for the Environment, Environmental Management Expert, AUA Acopian Center for the Environment, Senior Consultant, Management Advisory Service, Assistant of the Faculty of Sociology, Yerevan State University, Scientific Research Institute of Energy, European University of Armenia

Timing	Topic	Participants
		<u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Head of IT Department, Head of Statistical Information Dissemination Division, Statistician of Labour Statistics Division, Head of Household Statistics Division, Coordination Team
17:00-18:30	Peer review expert team discussion on the recommendations	The peer review expert team
Day 5 – Friday 6 June 2025		
09:00-11:00	Clarifications, remaining or additional issues and focus areas	The peer review expert team National Coordinator
11:00-11:30	Coffee break	
11:30-13:00	Meeting with the senior management of the NSI: conclusions and recommendations In this meeting, the chair of the peer review expert team presents the peer review conclusions, highlighting strengths and recommendations for improvements. He/she will explain the background for the peer review findings and explain for each recommendation whether it is compliance relevant or improvement related. This session provides the senior management of the NSI with an opportunity to discuss the findings with the peer review expert team, as well as next steps.	The peer review expert team <u>Armstat:</u> President, Deputy Presidents, Members of the State Council on Statistics, Secretary General, Coordination Team <u>ONAs:</u> Ministry of Environment Ministry of Internal Affairs
13:00- 14:00	Lunch	

ANNEX 2 – LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Armstat Staff

1. Mr. Stepan Mnatsakanyan - President
2. Ms. Anahit Safyan - Member, State Council on Statistics of RA, Deputy President
3. Mr. Gagik Ananyan - Member, State Council on Statistics of RA, Deputy President
4. Mr. Vardan Arevshatyan - Member, State Council on Statistics of RA
5. Ms. Lilit Petrosyan - Member, State Council on Statistics of RA
6. Ms. Nelli Baghdasaryan - Member, State Council on Statistics of RA
7. Ms. Aida Martirosyan - Member, State Council on Statistics of RA
8. Ms. Karine Kuyumjyan - Adviser to the President
9. Mr. Araik Hayrapetyan - General Secretary
10. Ms. Armenuhi Arushanyan - Head, Information Resources Management and Technologies Department
11. Ms. Anahit Manandyan - Head, Internal Audit Department
12. Ms. Hasmik Yeghiazaryan - Head, International Statistical Co-operation Division
13. Ms. Mariam Dallakyan - Head, Business-register, Sampling and Classifications Division
14. Ms. Ruzanna Shaboyan - Head, Quality Management Division
15. Ms. Narine Musheghyan - Head, Statistical Information Dissemination Division
16. Ms. Lusine Markosyan - Head, Household Statistics Division
17. Ms. Alina Grigoryan - Head, Social Sphere Statistics Division
18. Ms. Anna Hakobyan - Head, Environment Statistics Division
19. Ms. Armine Avetisyan - Head, Population Census and Demography Division
20. Ms. Kristine Poghosyan - Head, Balance of Payments and Foreign Trade Statistics Division
21. Ms. Haykush Titizyan - Head, Finance Statistics Division
22. Ms. Anahit Avetisyan - Head, Industry and Energy Statistics Division
23. Ms. Inga Gevorgyan - Head, Construction Statistics Division
24. Mr. Arsen Avagyan - Head, Agriculture and Food Security Statistics Division
25. Ms. Anahit Harutyunyan - Head, Trade and Other Services Statistics Division
26. Ms. Nare Davtyan - Head, Information Technologies Development Division
27. Mr. Sargis Lalayan - Head, Legal Division
28. Ms. Gayane Harutyunyan - Head, Human Resources Management Division
29. Ms. Nelli Margaryan - Senior Specialist, Statistical Information Dissemination Division
30. Ms. Naira Mandalyan - Senior Specialist, Environment Statistics Division
31. Ms. Seda Movsisyan - Senior Specialist, Macroeconomic Indicators and National Accounts Division
32. Ms. Arus Tonapetyan - Senior Specialist, Macroeconomic Indicators and National Accounts Division
33. Ms. Gayane Ghaytmazyan - Specialist, Statistical Information Dissemination Division
34. Ms. Gohar Virabyan - Specialist, Legal Division
35. Ms. Anna Nalbandyan - Specialist, International Statistical Co-operation Division
36. Ms. Jemma Avoyan - Statistician, Labour Statistics Division
37. Mr. Edik Ohanjanyan - ILCS coder of the Statistical Data Collection program

Junior Staff

1. Ms. Arpine Babikyan - Senior Specialist, Accounting Division
2. Ms. Kristina Israyelyan - Senior Specialist, Macroeconomic Indicators and National Accounts Division
3. Ms. Haykuhi Avetisyan - Senior Specialist, Social Sphere Statistics Division
4. Ms. Milena Yesayan - Statistician, Social Sphere Statistics Division
5. Ms. Diana Balayan - Statistician, Social Sphere Statistics Division
6. Mr. Hayk Martirosyan - Specialist, Balance of Payments and Foreign Trade Statistics Division
7. Ms. Nane Dnuyan - Specialist, Macroeconomic Indicators and National Accounts Division
8. Ms. Hasmik Hayrapetyan - Specialist, Quality Management Division
9. Ms. Gayane Ghaytmazyan - Specialist, Statistical Information Dissemination Division
10. Ms. Laura Azoyan - Specialist, International Statistical Co-operation Division
11. Ms. Margarita Yesayan - Senior Specialist, Procurement and Logistics Division
12. Ms. Armine Andreyan - Specialist, Environment Statistics Division

ONAs and potential ONAs

1. Ms. Hasmik Stepanyan - Head, Government Finance Statistics Division, Ministry of Finance of RA
2. Mr. Karen Alaverdyan - Head, Department of Accounting and Audit Activities Regulation and Reports Monitoring, Ministry of Finance of RA
3. Ms. Gayane Shahnazaryan - Deputy Director, "Hydrometeorology and Monitoring Center" SNCO, Ministry of Environment of RA
4. Ms. Diana Andreyan - Deputy Director, National Institute of Health named after academician S. Aphdalbekyan, Ministry of Health of RA
5. Ms. Hermine Khachatryan - Head, Program Implementation and Statistics Division, Migration and Citizenship Service, Ministry of Internal Affairs of RA
6. Mr. Leonid Soghomonyan - Advisor, Program Implementation and Statistics Division, Migration and Citizenship Service, Ministry of Internal Affairs of RA

International organisations

1. Mr. Edgar Pirumyan - GIZ
2. Ms. Zhanna Harutyunyan - UNDP Armenia - Gender Equality Portfolio Lead
3. Mr. Davit Shindyan - UNDP Armenia
4. Mr. Artak Baghdasaryan - UNDP Armenia
5. Mr. Paul Enner - French International Water Office for the "EU4Green Recovery East" project
6. Ms. Marta Boyko - French International Water Office for the "EU4Green Recovery East" project
7. Mr. Vahram Janvelyan - International Monetary Fund
8. Ms. Astghik Martirosyan - UNICEF
9. Ms. Ada Babloyan - UNICEF
10. Ms. Anna Tadevosyan - UNICEF
11. Mr. Vahan Amirkhanyan - UNFAO
12. Mr. Vardan Barseghyan - UNFAO
13. Ms. Ilona Ter-Minasyan - IOM

Public Council of Users of Official Statistics

1. Mr. Aram Ananyan - Chairman of the Public Council of Users, FLYONE Armenia airline
2. Mr. Arshaluys Harutyunyan - Head, Macroeconomic Policy Department, Ministry of Finance of RA
3. Mr. Artak Manukyan - Member of the Board, Central Bank of RA
4. Mr. Hrachya Tspnetsyanyan - Vice-Rector, Armenian National Agrarian University
5. Ms. Anna Zhamakochyan - Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Affairs of RA
6. Mr. Hovhannes Petrosyan - Director of PHP Partners CJSC

Administrative data providers

1. Mr. Albert Hayrapetyan - Head, Department of Economic Research, Ministry of Economy of RA
2. Ms. Mane Mkrtchyan - Chief Specialist, Innovation Promotion Division of the High-Tech Department, Ministry of High-Tech Industry of RA
3. Ms. Suzy Mashuryan – Head, Education Information and Analytical Division of the National Center for Educational Technologies SNCO, Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of RA
4. Ms. Tamar Aleksanyan – Head, Monitoring Division of the Strategic Planning and Monitoring Department, Acting Head of the Department, Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of RA
5. Mr. Robert Stepanyan - Representative of the National Center for Educational Technologies, Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of RA
6. Mr. Sevak Babayan – Head, Financial Analysis Division of the Financial and Technical and Application Review Department, Public Services Regulatory Commission of RA
7. Ms. Haykanush Safaryan - Head, Accounting and Social Programs Implementation Department, Public Services Regulatory Commission of RA
8. Ms. Yevghine Vardanyan – Adviser, Coordinator of individual functions of structural units, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of RA
9. Ms. Nairuhi Jrbashyan - UNICEF Expert, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of RA
10. Mr. Hrayr Hakobyan – Head, Division of Cooperation with Employers and Labor Migration, Department of Employment Security and Labor Potential Development, Integrated Social Service, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of RA
11. Ms. Nelly Melikyan – Head, Division of Information Flow Management, Department of the State Pension System Data Assurance and Information Systems Operation, Integrated Social Service, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of RA
12. Ms. Seda Israelyan - Head, Research and Risk Department, Nork Technology Center, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of RA
13. Ms. Gohar Movsisyan - Research and Risk Expert, Nork Technology Center, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of RA

Providers of new data sources

1. Mr. Eric Gyulazyan - Co-Founder/CEO, GEOVIBE

Ministries and other public institutions

1. Mr. Armen Movsisyan - Head, Risk Assessment and Analysis Department, Environmental Protection and Mining Inspection Body
2. Mr. Yeghiazar Davtyan - Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of RA
3. Ms. Svetlana Movsisyan - Chief Specialist, Water Supply and Sanitation Systems Department, Water Committee of RA, Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of RA
4. Mr. Gagik Aghajanyan - Head, Statistics Department of the Macroeconomic Directorate, Central Bank of Armenia
5. Mr. Tigran Baghdasaryan - Head, Real Sector Statistics Division of the Statistics Department of the Macroeconomic Directorate, Central Bank of Armenia
6. Ms. Lusine Harutyunyan - Head, Reports Acceptance and Summary Division of the Statistics Department of the Macroeconomic Directorate, Central Bank of Armenia
7. Mr. Gor Lazyan – Head, Monetary and Financial Statistics Division of the Statistics Department of the Macroeconomic Directorate, Central Bank of Armenia
8. Ms. Anush Igithkanyan - Economist-Statistician of the External Sector Statistics Division of the Statistics Department of the Macroeconomic Directorate, Central Bank of Armenia
9. Ms. Peprone Margaryants - Economist-Statistician of the Statistics Department of the Macroeconomic Directorate, Central Bank of Armenia
10. Mr. Harutyun Ghasabyan - Advisor to the Department of Architecture and Urban Development, Urban Development Committee of RA

Business associations and federations and trade unions, and other private sector users

1. Ms. Ani Baghdasaryan - "GRAND TOBACCO"
2. Ms. Liana Margaryan - President, "Environment and Health" NGO
3. Mr. Armenak Chatinyan - Chief Specialist, Planning and Economic Department, Gazprom Armenia CJSC
4. Ms. Kristine Meloyan - Chief Specialist, Planning and Economic Department, Gazprom Armenia CJSC
5. Ms. Anahit Asatryan - President, Trade Union of State Bodies and Local Self-government Employees of Armenia
6. Mr. Arsen Igityan - Organisational and External Relations Specialist, Trade Union of State Bodies and Local Self-government Employees of Armenia
7. Mr. Galust Zakaryan - VEOLIA DJUR CJSC
8. Ms. Naira Minasyan - VEOLIA DJUR CJSC
9. Ms. Arevik Hovsepyan -President, Global Water Partnership-Armenia
10. Ms. Alisa Savadyan - Global Water Partnership-Armenia
11. Mr. Hayk Ohanyan – INCORE CJSC
12. Mr. Mekhak Apresyan -President, Armenian Tourism Federation

Media

1. Ms. Anna Grigoryan - Correspondent, "ARMENPRESS" state news agency
2. Mr. Hrayr Nazaryan - Correspondent, "ARMENPRESS" state news agency

3. Ms. Armine Gevorgyan - Public Radio of Armenia CJSC
4. Ms. Alina Hovhannisyan- ARMINFO
5. Ms. Irina Mkrtchyan - Public TV Company of Armenia
6. Mr. Artak Gevorgyan - Public TV Company of Armenia
7. Mr. Aren Nazaryan - HETQ electronic newspaper

Scientific community

1. Ms. Naira Melkonyan - Leading specialist, "National Research Center for Health Programs", Yerevan State Medical University after Mkhitar Heratsi
2. Mr. Artashes Tadevosyan - Science Department, Yerevan State Medical University after Mkhitar Heratsi
3. Ms. Marina Galstyan - Armenian Sociological Association
4. Ms. Gayane Hovakimyan - Armenian Sociological Association
5. Ms. Anna Malkhasyan - Armenian Sociological Association
6. Ms. Hasmik Tamamyán - Armenian Sociological Association
7. Ms. Lilit Yezekyan - Research Director, CRRC-Armenia
8. Mr. Aram Yesayan – Head, Department of Mathematics/Head, Scientific and Research Division, French University in Armenia (FUA)
9. Ms. Anna Sahakyan - National Library of Armenia SNCO
10. Ms. Maya Hayrapetyan - National Library of Armenia SNCO
11. Ms. Mary Manucharyan - Director, Institute of Economics named after M. Kotanyan
12. Mr. Hovhannes Asatryan - Scientific Topic Leader, Institute of Economics named after M. Kotanyan
13. Ms. Shogher Poghosyan - PhD, Head, Service Sector Development and Socio-Demographic Issues Division, Institute of Economics named after M. Kotanyan
14. Ms. Evgenia Hakobyan - PhD, Scientific Secretary, Institute of Economics named after M. Kotanyan
15. Ms. Hasmik Hovhannisyan - Acting Dean, Faculty of Economics and Agribusiness, Armenian National Agrarian University
16. Mr. Ashot Voskanyan - Director, Agrarian Policy and Economics Research Center, Armenian National Agrarian University
17. Mr. Hakob Khachatryan – Head, Department of Data Science, Faculty of Economics and Agribusiness, Armenian National Agrarian University
18. Mr. Hrachya Grigoryan - Acting Head, Department of Agrarian Economics, Faculty of Agribusiness and Economics, Armenian National Agrarian University
19. Mr. Artur Petrosyan - Leading Specialist, Scientific Work Coordination Department, Armenian National Agrarian University
20. Mr. Gevorg Keshishyan - Armenian National Agrarian University
21. Ms. Karine Mnatsakanyan - Armenian National Agrarian University
22. Ms. Karine Malkhasyan - Armenian National Agrarian University
23. Mr. Arsen Gasparyan - Protected Area and Biodiversity Expert, AUA Acopian Center for the Environment
24. Mr. Alen Gasparian-Amirkhanian - Environmental Management Expert, AUA Acopian Center for the Environment
25. Mr. Artashes Shaboyan - Senior Consultant, Management Advisory Service, AMERIA

26. Mr. Aram Vartikyan - Assistant, Faculty of Sociology, Yerevan State University
27. Mr. Armen Petrosyan - Scientific Research Institute of Energy
28. Mr. Vahan Sargsyan- Scientific Research Institute of Energy
29. Ms. Nina Stepanyan - European University of Armenia

