

Communicating the third round of ESS Peer Reviews – a member state experience

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Abstract

Third round of the ESS peer reviews, aimed at reviewing compliance and alignment with the European Statistics Code of Practice by the national statistical systems, was a key activity in the field of quality management in the Czech Statistical Office in 2022 and 2023. The actual visit of the peer reviewers took place in March 2023 and was preceded by intensive preparatory activities such as filling in the self-evaluation questionnaire, organizing the visit, securing participants, etc. Likewise, after the visit, the work continued with cooperation to create a final report and to propose improvement actions. All these phases were in the Czech Statistical Office accompanied by intensive communication, both external - intended for users, partners and respondents of the CZSO, and internal - employees of the office. In the period before the visit, the CZSO explained to the public the purpose of the Peer review, the meaning of the European Statistics Code of Practice, benefits for the public, etc., and the intensity of communication increased as the date of the visit approached. After the end of the visit, when we already had a draft recommendation, communication took place mainly with the Czech Statistical Council, and of course also with the office's employees.

For communication, all channels that the CZSO normally uses were used – CZSO websites, intranet, the magazine Statistika&My (Statistics&We), the internal newsletter My&Statistika (We&Statistics), twitter, presentations, exhibitions etc. During the campaign, all documents prepared by Eurostat were used to a great extent. Practical examples will be shown during the presentation.

Keywords: peer review, communication, Czech, statistical, office

1. Introduction

Third round of the ESS peer reviews, aimed at reviewing compliance and alignment with the European Statistics Code of Practice by the national statistical systems, was a key activity in the field of quality management in the Czech Statistical Office in 2022 and 2023. The actual visit of the peer reviewers took place in March 2023 and was preceded by intensive preparatory activities such as filling in the self-evaluation questionnaire, organizing the visit, securing participants, etc. Likewise, after the visit, the work continued with cooperation to create a final report and to propose improvement actions. All these phases were in the Czech Statistical Office accompanied by intensive communication, both external - intended for users, partners and respondents of the CZSO, and internal - employees of the office.

2. Communication of the Peer review in the Czech Statistical Office

For communication, all communication channels that the CZSO normally uses were used. The topics of communication differed according to the individual phases of Peer review implementation - preparatory phase, phase of the actual visit, after the visit.

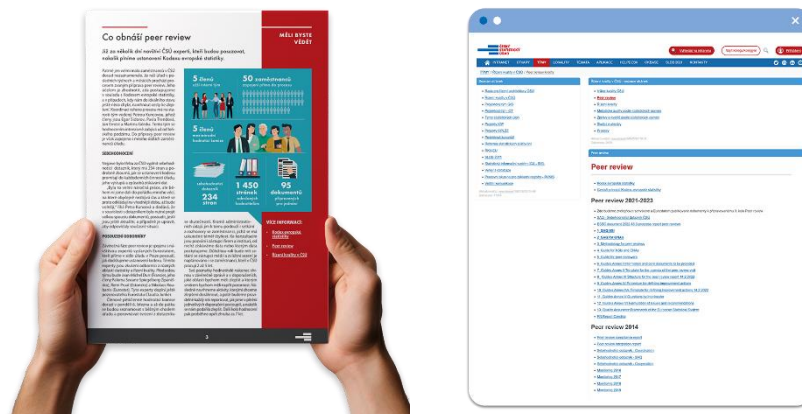
2.1. Communication in preparation phase

In the period before the visit, the CZSO explained to the public the purpose of the Peer review, the meaning of the European Statistics Code of Practice, benefits for the public, etc., and the intensity of communication increased as the date of the visit approached.

- **Internal communication**

To facilitate communication in the preparatory phase, a special page was set up on the CZSO intranet, where basic documents related to Peer review were published. The internal newsletter My&Statistika (We&Statistics), which is prepared quarterly, was also used to inform employees about the purpose of this event and the progress of preparatory work.

Figure 1 – Examples of internal communication (newsletter and intranet)



- **External communication**

During the preparatory phase, 12 posts were published on X (Twitter), 6 on LinkedIn, 6 on Instagram.

Special site (<https://www.czso.cz/csu/czso/peer-review-of-the-national-statistical-system>) accessible from homepage www.czso.cz dedicated to the Peer review was established and regularly updated (both in Czech and English). Our quarterly magazines “Statistika: Statistics and Economy Journal”, “Demografie, Review for Population Research” and the monthly

magazine Statistika&My (Statistics&We) were also used to inform the public through several articles.

Figure 2: Examples of information about Peer review



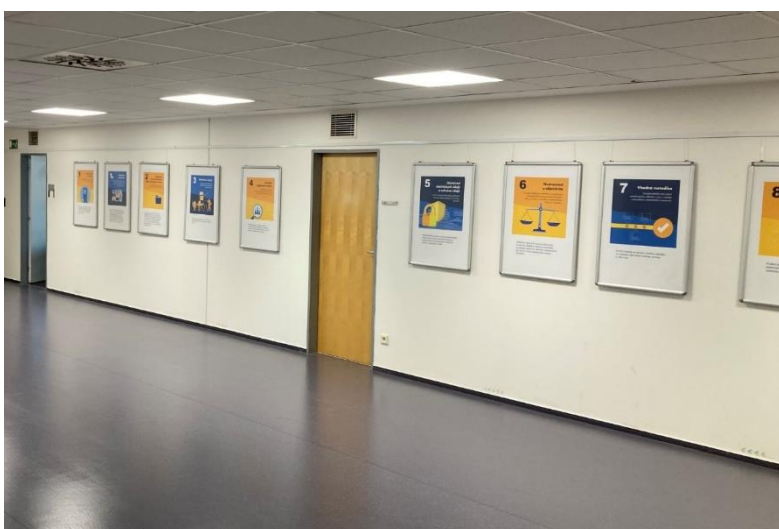
2.2. Communication during the visit

During the week when the experts visited the Czech Statistical Office, the communication focused mainly on the course of the visit itself, such as photos from the meetings, information on the participation of external participants such as users from the ranks of journalists, etc.

- **Internal communication**

Information about Peer review was continuously updated on the intranet - photos from meetings, from a tour of the office building, etc. were placed to it. In the premises of the CZSO, where various exhibitions are organized throughout the year, an exhibition on Peer review - 16 posters on individual principles of the European Statistics Code - was launched.

Figure 3: The exhibition: 16 principles of the Code of Practice



- **External communication**

During this phase, 2 posts were published on X (Twitter), 2 on LinkedIn, 1 on Instagram. The information about the fact that the CZSO is conducting a peer review was also published in the form of a press release entitled "Czech Statistical System Under the Scrutiny of Experts".

Figure 4 – Examples of external communication (post on X and the press release)



2.3. Communication after the visit

After the end of the visit, when we already had a draft recommendation, communication took place mainly with the Czech Statistical Council, and of course also with the office's employees.

- **Internal communication**

The goal of internal communication was to inform employees about the proposed recommendations and about the next steps that will follow, when after the approval of the recommendations we will propose improvement actions for each of them. We will implement these in the following years and every year we will give a deduction for their fulfilment. The key channel for this communication was the internal newsletter, the intranet was also updated.

The very important internal group are the representatives of the Czech Statistical Council, who were informed about the results of the review and the next steps at their regular meeting a week after the end of the visit.

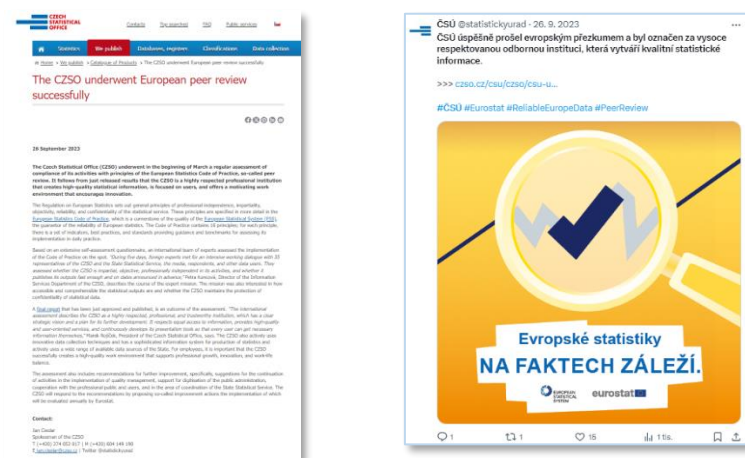
Figure 5 – Examples of internal communication (internal newsletter)



- **External communication**

During the closing phase, 2 posts were published on X (Twitter) and 1 on Instagram. The special microsite was updated, press release published and we also answered various questions from journalists.

Figure 6 – Examples of external communication (press release and post on X)



3. General summary

All communication channels, that the CZSO normally uses, were used – CZSO websites, intranet, the magazine Statistika&My and other CZSO magazines, social media (X, Instagram, LinkedIn), presentations, exhibition etc. During the peer review communication campaign in the CZSO, a total of 6 articles were published on the CZSO website, 5 articles in the office's magazines, 16 posts on X, 7 on Instagram and 9 on LinkedIn.

During the communication campaign, all documents prepared by Eurostat were used to a great extent. Since our peer review only took place in the second part of the round, all the materials (which were very useful) were already available.

The peer review itself was very interesting from the communication point of view, because we received immediate reactions from partners, respondents and users to our activities related not only to Peer review communication, but to the overall communication of the Czech Statistical Office. This was evaluated very positively, while the infographics, website content, openness and friendliness of the entire office were explicitly appreciated.