

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATISTICAL COUNCIL 2009

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Business Plan of the Statistical Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council) for 2009 was the first Plan put forward in the context of the current Law governing the National Statistical System (NSS) – Law No 22/2008 of 13 May. It was decided that its activities would be carried out “in a context of transition to the implementation of the Law”.

This Activity Report for 2009 thus reflects this transition context.

Structuring documents continued to be prepared and approved allowing for the creation of mechanisms and conditions to comply with the guidance and coordination powers of the National Statistical System, in the light of the new NSS Law:

- Definition of the methodology for preparing Statistical Activity Plans and Reports of statistical authorities
- Definition of official statistical operations of national scope and those in the exclusive interest of the Autonomous Regions.
- Approval of procedures for appraisal by the Council of requests for confidential statistical data.
- Interim situation assessment report on the National Statistical System.
- Action plans for each Section of the Council.
- Start of a reflection on the operating model of working groups.
- Setting-up of three Working Groups.

The Council's plenary meeting scheduled for December was postponed, for reasons not attributable to the Council. Hence, decision-making on some issues was transferred to 2010. These included, inter alia, protocols for the delegation of powers presented by Statistics Portugal. However, the specialised section issued a recommendation for a favourable assessment of these protocols by the plenary session, which materialised in February.

All these initiatives have culminated in the achievement of the objectives that the Council, in the context of its mission, had defined for 2009:

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| - To create appropriate mechanisms to carry out its powers in the context of the new NSS Law. |
| - To enhance its ability to coordinate the NSS, by implementing and optimising earlier Council deliberations and recommendations. |
| - To continue modernising processes associated with its internal organisation. |

The exercise of the Statistical System's overall coordination powers has translated into:

- The approval of the following classifications and nomenclatures:
 - National Classification of Goods and Services,
 - Nomenclature of Branches and Products of National Accounts to take effect in base 2006,
 - Table of Crimes recorded by the police forces
 - Typology of Urban Areas – revision
- The updating of the ISO Alpha 2 standard
- The pursuit of works for the approval / updating of concepts for statistical purposes in the fields of housing, construction and public works, and tourism;
- Monitoring the implementation of the NACE classification of companies (Portuguese acronym: SICAE) and the appropriation of information included in the Simplified Business Information System.

Within the scope of the powers in the fields of statistical planning and quality, concerns have remained as to compliance with the timelines incorporated in the Statistical Activity Plans of statistical authorities, and recommendations have been issued on a quarterly basis; a new methodology has been approved for the quarterly monitoring of Statistical Activity Plans, as well as a model for monitoring the General Guidelines of National Statistical Activity 2008-2010.

Statistical Activity Plans have been appraised for the first time according to a methodology approved by the Council, and an overall summary has been prepared based on those Plans.

In other scopes of intervention of the Council stress should be laid on:

- The presentation of methodologies at the level of specialised Sections and, in the cases of cross-cutting issues, at the level of joint section meetings: quarterly national accounts, excessive deficit procedure notification, state of play of the 2009 Agricultural Census, "The new method of statistical data collection in courts" – a sub-project within the Hermes project, Employment Survey – modernisation of the collection process, "Modernisation of the employment and labour conditions information system of the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity – single report" (including the "Lists of personnel: methodology and derived statistics"), "Territorial portrait of Portugal" and "Regional Statistical Summaries".
- The monitoring of the ESA 95 revision

- The presentation by Statistics Portugal of its “revision policy”
- The monitoring of the Statistics Portugal 2011 Census and conclusion of the specific analysis of the “Action Programme” and the “Dissemination Programme”. The Communication Programme has also been presented.

With a view to continuously improving its functioning, implementation and internal coordination by simultaneously reducing its costs, the preference continued to lie on communication via email and the release of information through CIRCA – Communication & Information Resource Centre Administrator. In addition, IT network operation mechanisms have been introduced as well as mechanisms to control the quality of administrative tasks.

Communication with society in general, in the sense of making the Council works known, is deemed to be a key objective. Hence, the structure and the historical component of the Council's website have continued to undergo improvements.

Media information notes have gone on to be released following Council plenary meetings.

55 meetings were held, of which 1 plenary meeting, 23 Section meetings and 31 Working Group meetings.