

**DELIBERATION NO 30 OF THE CONSELHO SUPERIOR DE ESTATÍSTICA (STATISTICAL COUNCIL)
ON THE 2011 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM**

Whereas the powers of the Statistical Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council) in overseeing and coordinating the National Statistical System (NSS) include the appraisal of the plan and budget of the statistical authorities' statistical activity, as well as the respective implementation report.

Whereas the Council's Report and the statistical authorities' statistical activity reports for 2011 reflect the strategic guidelines for the NSS as defined by the Council and the guidelines and commitments approved at European level.

Pursuant to Article 3 (2) and Article 13 (g) of Law No 22/2008 of 13 May, **the Council, at its plenary session on 4 July 2012**, following a favourable opinion of the Standing Session of Statistical Coordination (*Secção Permanente de Coordenação Estatística* in Portuguese), **decided:**

1. **To approve** the 2011 Annual Report of the Statistical Council
2. **To issue a favourable opinion** on the statistical authorities' annual reports for 2011
3. **To approve** the 2011 Summary of Activities of the National Statistical System, in annex to this deliberation
4. **That these documents shall be included in media information notes**

As decided by the Council in its Business Plan for 2011, the Council's activities were carried out over the year in a context of consolidation of guidelines meanwhile approved, acknowledged as a priority and identified in approved documents, **stress being laid on** the approval of the NSS Situation Assessment Report for the 2008-2011 period. This Report includes a series of recommendations addressed to the Council itself and to statistical authorities, and will provide a framework for the Council's activities in the next few years as well as approval of the guidelines for the dissemination of official statistics within the NSS.

The Council also stresses the results achieved by statistical authorities in 2011 in the following fields, which meet the objectives defined by the Council in the General Guidelines of National Statistical Activity 2008-2012:

- Quality statistical production in its various dimensions, notably as regards compliance with cut-off dates;
- Continuing adoption of restraint and rationalisation measures at the level of operating expenses and statistical activity costs;
- Improved efficiency in data collection processes, notably through increased utilisation of administrative data and enhanced use of more advanced and less expensive collection methods;

- Development of new dissemination and statistical literacy initiatives.

Despite the progress meanwhile observed, these fields are likely to continue to be considered a priority for the National Statistical System, and it is also **recommended** that:

- Statistics Portugal gives priority to monitoring the commitments assumed in the protocols for the delegation of powers;
- statistical authorities stimulate statistical production in areas where greater weaknesses prevail;
- the Government, notwithstanding the constraints faced by the country, provides statistical authorities with the minimum financial and human resources deemed necessary for release of the official statistics needed for adequate decision-making.

Lisbon, 4 July 2012

The Vice-Chairman of the Statistical Council, *Alda de Caetano Carvalho*

The Executive Secretary of the Statistical Council, *Maria da Graça Fernandes Caeiro Bento*

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM - 2011

| SUMMARY |

The 2011 Annual Report of the National Statistical System (NSS) is formed by this Summary, which highlights the main achievements and outcomes, and the Annual Reports of the Statistical Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council) and the statistical authorities,¹ with greater detail on the activities developed.

NSS activities in 2011 sought to observe the guidelines enshrined in the Business Plans of the Council and statistical authorities for 2011, the General Guidelines of National Statistical Activity for 2008-2012, the Council's Deliberations, the NSS Situation Assessment Report of July 2009, the EU Statistical Programme for 2010 and activity programmes prepared at the level of the Statistics Committee of the European System of Central Banks (ESCB).

Over the year statistical authorities, within the scope of their powers, contributed actively to the carrying out of initiatives envisaged in the Economic and Financial Assistance Programme for Portugal, agreed on in May 2011 with the International Monetary Fund, the European Commission and the European Central Bank. The Council also considered this Programme a priority in the NSS Situation Assessment Report for 2008-2012.

The Council's activities in 2011 also focused on consolidating priority guidelines stemming from the new NSS Law, deemed essential for modernising, developing and consolidating the National Statistical System. Within the scope of NSS statistical coordination, reference should be made to:

- Approval of the NSS Situation Assessment Report for the 2008-2011 period, which includes a series of recommendations addressed to the Council itself and to statistical authorities, which will provide a framework for the Council's activities in the next few years. Among these recommendations, it is worth mentioning the revision of NSS legislation, which is likely to take into consideration the new developments in the national and Community context, particularly as regards the European Statistics Code of Practice and EC Regulations on European Economic Governance, and

¹ Statistics Portugal, Banco de Portugal, Regional Statistical Office of the Azores and Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira (for strictly regional statistics), and entities with powers delegated by Statistics Portugal within the scope of Law No 22/2008 of 13 May: Directorate General of Fisheries and Aquaculture of the Ministry of Agriculture, Sea, Environment and Spatial Planning, Directorate General for Energy and Geology (Ministry of Economy and Employment), Office of Education Statistics and Planning (Ministry of Education and Science), Knowledge Society Agency (Ministry of Education and Science), Planning, Strategy, Assessment and International Relations Office (Ministry of Education and Science), Office for Strategy and Planning (Ministry of Solidarity and Social Security), and Directorate General for Justice Policy (Ministry of Justice).

- Approval of guidelines on the dissemination of official statistics within the NSS.

Many other subjects were accompanied by Council recommendations, notably as regards statistical quality in its various dimensions, the relevance of the use of administrative sources for statistical purposes, methodologies, some statistical areas, and raising the awareness of general government to the use of the technical tools for statistical coordination approved by the Statistical Council.

In their Business Plans for 2011 statistical authorities established and achieved a series of objectives aimed at continuing to ensure quality statistical production guaranteeing the satisfaction of Portuguese statistics users. Special priority was given to the development of actions conducive to improving the use of statistics and promoting statistical literacy. Relevant progress was observed in the quality of official statistics in its various dimensions, notably as regards compliance with cut-off dates, and also improved efficiency in data collection processes and statistical dissemination actions.

The costs associated with the production of statistics were reduced due to the continuing adoption of restraint and rationalisation measures at the level of operating expenses and statistical activity costs, increased utilisation of administrative data for the production of official statistics and enhanced use of more advanced and less expensive collection methods, notably Internet use and telephone interviews.

The following events played a relevant role in the country's national and international projection:

- For the third consecutive time Statistics Portugal was presented with the Merit Award for its performance throughout 2010;
- In January 2011 the Head of the Statistics Department of Banco de Portugal took over the chairmanship of the Committee on Monetary, Financial and Balance of Payments Statistics (CMFB) for a two-year period.

A. National Statistical System key activities | 2011

Statistical Council

The Council decided that **its activities in 2011 should focus on the consolidation of guidelines that were previously approved, acknowledged as a priority and identified** in documents approved by the Council.

In addition to the above-mentioned activities and many other stemming from its powers, the Council:

- went on to release overall annual reports and business plans for the NSS as a whole;
- issued recommendations in two particularly relevant areas: labour market statistics and indicators for the monitoring of public policies;
- monitored the methodology and outcome of a new series of labour statistics and the preliminary and provisional results for the 2011 Censuses;
- implemented Action Plans established by all Council Sections, fostering the presentation of statistical methodologies and projects by statistical data producers and also users;

- encouraged the use of administrative sources for statistical purposes, notably through the intervention of statistical authorities from their inception, update or modernisation, so as to ensure adequate balance between the objective of cutting costs associated with data reporting by reporting agents and the need to produce quality official statistics. In this context and within the scope of its powers, the Council issued recommendations on the draft law creating the State's information and organisation system, which would not be taken on board;
- raised the awareness of general government entities to the use of the coordination instruments approved for the NSS;
- monitored the incident related to the omission of information as regards data reporting in the Autonomous Region of Madeira, at general government level, due to the negative impact it had on the credibility of the National Statistical System and the country;
- monitored issues related to statistical quality in its various dimensions – relevance, accuracy, timeliness, punctuality, accessibility and clarity, comparability, coherence and consistency – particularly as regards compliance with cut-off dates for statistics, and issued several recommendations with very specific aims, on persisting delays in the dissemination of vital statistics;
- contributed to institutional interlinking aimed at raising the quality of data produced at NSS level, the monitoring of the Information System for the Portuguese Classification of Economic Activities and the appropriation of Information in the Simplified Business Information System;
- created a model for monitoring the activities of Working Groups, which went on to define a work chronogram, targeted at correcting possible gaps.

A Workshop was held on "Globalisation statistics: old and new challenges", where a panel of specialists and various stakeholders reflected on this issue and put forward recommendations for the near future, so that the NSS may respond to the new reality.

Statistics Portugal

From the wide array of activities carried out by Statistics Portugal and entities with delegated powers in the course of 2011, the following are worth mentioning:

- As regards **technical coordination of the National Statistical System:**
 - Inter-institutional cooperation with entities with delegated powers as well as other entities collaborating with Statistics Portugal in close partnership in the pursuit of projects of major interest with an impact on society.
- As regards increased efficiency in **data collection processes:**
 - Ongoing expansion of telephone collection (Portuguese acronym: CATI) in interview surveys (68.8% achieved telephone interviews, against 37.4% in 2010) due to a mature integrated contact centre system in Statistics Portugal;
 - 21.6% increase from 2010 of questionnaires collected through the WEBINQ service (85.2% online responses in total possible responses, against 81% in 2010);

- Widening by electronic means of all surveys under the responsibility of the Office for Strategy and Planning of the Ministry of Solidarity and Social Security, to be conducted in 2011, and developed at NSS level, with the implementation in earnings and continuing vocational training surveys.
- As regards **statistical production**:
 - Conduct of the 2011 Censuses, with a focus on (i) high adhesion to online responses; (ii) early release of preliminary and provisional results; and (iii) overall costs considerably below planned;
 - Special area devoted to national accounts on the website of Statistics Portugal;
 - 2nd edition of the adult education and training survey;
 - Adoption of telephone collection in the Labour Force Survey as of the first quarter;
 - Early release of final results for the 2009 Agricultural Census;
 - Release of results for the survey on domestic energy consumption, held in collaboration with the Directorate General for Energy and Geology of the Ministry of Economy and Employment;
 - Release of provisional results for the 2010 household budget survey;
 - Anticipated release of business statistics;
 - Release of results for the ad hoc module of the Labour Force Survey on the reconciliation of work and family life;
 - Preparation of the inventory of sources and methods of national accounts, regarding the new 2006 base, including development of process tables;
 - At the level of the Single Report under the responsibility of the Office for Strategy and Planning of the Ministry of Solidarity and Social Security, collection of Annex C and availability of a functionality to prepare each social report;
 - Improvements to statistical information on "Bankruptcy, insolvency and recovery proceedings at first instance courts" produced by the Directorate General for Justice Policy of the Ministry of Justice, at the level of frequency and coverage.
- As regards **statistical dissemination**:
 - 91.5% implementation rate for a timely availability of statistical data in Statistics Portugal and entities with delegated powers (1 p.p. increase from the previous year);
 - 14.7% increase in the availability of indicators in the Dissemination Database accessible through the website of Statistics Portugal, covering those under the responsibility of entities with delegated powers;
 - Reduction of the average time of response to requests for clarification and information free of charge to 0.655 business days, against 0.79 business days in 2010;
 - Online issue and release of all publications of the Office of Statistics and Education Planning of the Ministry of Education and Science in digital form.
- As regards **cooperation**:
 - Leadership of major important projects in the EU, inter alia: "Purchasing Power Parities" in the group of Southern European countries; "SDMX – Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange and "European pilot project for the construction of own house price indices";

- Participation in various ESSnets of strategic importance to the development of the European Statistical System;
- Monitoring of the discussion of six pieces of legislation at the level of the "Statistics" Group of the Council of the European Union;
- Cooperation with the National Statistical Institute of Mozambique at the level of the Common Fund for Mozambique;
- Approval of a project regarding the Empowering Programme for the National Statistical Systems of Portuguese-speaking African countries and Timor-Leste, within the scope of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries.

Notwithstanding particular constraints at the level of human resources and the instability caused by changes in the government structure, the appraisal of achievements in 2011 leads to quite a positive assessment of the statistical activity developed by Statistics Portugal and entities with delegated powers, which made it possible to continue strengthening the National Statistical System and its internal and external affirmation.

Banco de Portugal

Banco de Portugal contributed to the carrying out of actions envisaged in the Economic and Financial Assistance Programme for Portugal agreed on in May 2011 with the International Monetary Fund, the European Commission and the European Central Bank. In this context, a wide array of statistics relevant to the design of the programme and the review of its implementation was made available.

In 2011 Banco de Portugal again complied with the objectives set for the statistical function as regards quality and strict compliance with cut-off dates for statistics under its responsibility.

In 2011 Banco de Portugal continued to give high priority to the expansion of the **statistical dissemination** system, publishing new statistics on a regular basis, releasing them on its website, on *BPstat | Statistics online*, and in the Statistical Bulletin. At the end of 2011 *BPstat* had 14,024 users (i.e. 35% annual growth). The Statistical Bulletin was composed of 37 Sections, totalling 7,078 statistical series. A Chapter entitled "Main Indicators", encompassing 863 statistical series, broken down into 55 tables and 68 charts started to be regularly published in the Statistical Bulletin and *BPstat*. The regular publication of statistics was also accompanied by the release of Supplements to the Statistical Bulletin, statistical press releases and Central Balance-Sheet Studies.

2011 saw the ongoing **modernisation of information systems** supporting the collection and treatment of statistical data under the responsibility of Banco de Portugal, especially the use of micro databases, notably the Central Balance-Sheet Database, the Central Credit Register and the Securities Statistics Integrated System. Participation of enterprises in the First Conference of the Central Balance-Sheet Database hosted by Banco de Portugal was high.

At the level of the Committee on Monetary, Financial and Balance of Payments Statistics (CMFB) Banco de Portugal sponsored a book celebrating the Committee's 20th anniversary, entitled "CMFB: 20 Years Promoting Excellence in European Statistics" and organised a workshop in Lisbon, entitled

“Fostering cooperation between the European Statistical System (ESS) and the European System of Central Banks (ESCB)”.

It is also worth mentioning **international cooperation** and 56 presentations in national and international seminars and conferences. Banco de Portugal participated actively in the 58th World Statistics Congress of the International Statistical Institute (ISI 2011).

Regional Statistical Office of the Azores

In its capacity as statistical authority, the activities of the Regional Statistical Office of the Azores in 2011 were targeted at meeting the following objectives: reinforcing the coordination role of the Regional Statistical Office of the Azores as statistical authority in the Autonomous Region of the Azores, training staff members of the Regional Statistical Office, modernising data collection processes, increasing the use of administrative sources, and improving the relevance/usefulness of statistical data.

It is worth highlighting the following activities of the Regional Statistical Office of the Azores:

- implementation of new applications to manage and control the functioning of the service (GESTOR, SIAG and GERFIP in Portuguese);
- undertaking of projects, of which those in cooperation with ISTAC (Canary Island Statistics Bureau) and the Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira (CONTRIMAC, regional GDP quarterisation project and the METAMAC project for the inclusion of metadata in statistical data dissemination);
- development of a study to construct a coincident indicator of infra-annual developments in the economic activity of the Azores;
- increase of data released through the website;
- increase in responses obtained through telephone (CATI) and online surveys.

With regard to telephone surveys (CATI), the Azores saw the country's highest response rates: 86.8% in the Labour Force Survey (83.7% country average), 90.2% in the travel survey of residents (81.4% national average) and 93.5% in the Survey on ICT Usage in Households (83.5% in the country). For CATI operations as a whole, the telephone response rate reached 88.24%, i.e. increasing by 0.3 percentage points from the previous year (87.94%).

Face-to-face interviews (Portuguese acronym: CAPI) in the Azores also recorded, as a rule, higher response rates than in the rest of the country: Survey on ICT Usage in Households – 81.7% (81.3% in the country), Labour Force Survey – 64.7% (53.0% in the country) and travel survey of residents – 72% (74% in the country).

With regard to electronic data collection, in 2011 the achieved response rate reached 76.2%, accounting for a 1.6 percentage point increase from 2010 (74.6%).

In its capacity as delegation of Statistics Portugal for national statistics, the Regional Statistical Office of the Azores fully complied with all tasks related to the coordination and conduct in the Region of all tasks regarding operations and activities planned for 2011.

Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira

The goals set by the Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira for 2011 yielded the following results:

- release on the website of the Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira of new long time series, as well as a regional publication with the most relevant data from the 2009 Agricultural Census and release of provisional results for the 2011 Censuses regarding the Autonomous Region of Madeira – goal achieved by 80%;
- ongoing development of cooperation projects with the statistical authorities of the Azores and the Canary Islands – METAMAC (project for the inclusion of metadata in statistical data dissemination) and CONTRIMAC (regional GDP quarterisation project) – 60% implementation rate;
- ongoing document management project, advances in the collection sheet systematisation process and ongoing sending of selected documents to be incorporated into the Regional Archive of Madeira for final conservation – partially achieved goal (90%);
- broad participation in training courses;
- improvement of the quality of information collected was overall achieved, with a degree of implementation set at 100%. Assessment of the 2011 Censuses was quite positive, with strict observance of timelines and a very high online response rate, well above the national average - 76% of the population was enumerated over the Internet (50% in the country). In current operations, where collection was carried out by interviewers, improvements were made at the level of collection and validation of data collected and the successful implementation of the telephone collection (Home CATI) in the Labour Force Survey and the Survey on ICT Usage in Households (IUTIC F). Where collection was carried out through self-completion, electronic collection was enhanced, which translated into an 11.4% increase in the number of questionnaires collected through WebInq. In both cases the response rates reached in the respective surveys were high and above the national average.

The following 2011 activities are also worth mentioning:

- Telephone collection started to be used in the Labour Force Survey and the Survey on ICT Usage in Households in Home CATI;
- The 2011 Censuses were held and their provisional results released;
- The 2011 Census Quality Survey was held;
- The 2009 Agricultural Census was completed;
- The 2010 household budget survey was completed;
- New long time series in the fields of environment and transport were released on the website of the Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira;
- A regional publication with the most relevant data from the 2009 Agricultural Census was prepared and released;
- The main indicators obtained in the survey on domestic energy consumption were released;
- Cooperation projects with the Azores and the Canary Islands – METAMAC and CONTRIMAC continued to be implemented;
- The 2nd edition of the adult education and training survey was held;

- Improvements to the processes of collection and validation of data at the level of household surveys continued to be implemented;
- Online collection (Webinq) was promoted for self-completion surveys addressed to enterprises.

B. Resources

Pursuant to the NSS Law the financial costs of maintaining the Statistical Council were borne by the budget of Statistics Portugal.

For the development of actions included in their Business Plans, statistical authorities have relied on the financial means envisaged in their annual budgets and on the human and material resources available for that purpose.

Financial resources

The following financial resources were allocated to the National Statistical System – functioning of the Council and statistical activity of statistical authorities:

- Statistical Council – €282.955
- Statistics Portugal and entities with delegated powers – €70.1 million, 88% under the responsibility of Statistics Portugal
- Regional Statistical Office of the Azores - €1.5 million
- Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira – €1.3 million

Human resources

The following human resources were allocated to NSS activities:

- **Council Secretariat**, composed of **7 individuals**, for the support of Council activities, which involve a total of around 300 participants (Council members and other Working Group participants);
- **Statistical authorities**, to develop the statistical activities carried out in 2011, **have relied on 995 staff members**, distributed as follows:
 - Statistics Portugal – **673**
 - Banco de Portugal – **85**
 - Regional Statistical Office of the Azores – **49**
 - Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira – **53**
 - Entities with powers delegated by Statistics Portugal – **135**