

**DECISION NO 1 OF THE AD-HOC SECTION FOR MONITORING THE 2011 CENSUSES
ON THE OBSERVATION OF THE "CIVIL STATUS" VARIABLE OF THE 2011 CENSUSES**

Whereas the nature of the *Conselho Superior de Estatística* (Statistical Council) (hereinafter referred to as the Council) as "...State entity that monitors and coordinates the National Statistical System" (Article 8 of Law No 6/89 of 15 April);

Whereas, pursuant to the law, in the exercise of their activities, the entities of Statistics Portugal enjoy technical autonomy, i.e. "(...) the power (...) to define, at their own discretion, the means that are technically more adjusted to the performance of their tasks, acting within the scope of their technical skills, with full independence" (Article 4 (2) of the mentioned Law);

Whereas within the scope of the tasks entrusted to it, the Ad-hoc Section for Monitoring the 2011 Censuses, upon request of Statistics Portugal, examined in detail the manner of observation of the "civil status" variable in the forthcoming Population Census;

Taking into account that, in the context of this examination, the Section considered that the following aspects were key to decision-making:

- the importance for the users of maintaining the census series started in 1981 for the mentioned variable;
- the need for statistical production to privilege the actual situation of people and to monitor the development of household organisation models from a de facto perspective, as well as other forms of conjugal life;
- the non-existence of alternative sources to obtain this information, contrary to data on the "married" situation, which may be obtained via the civil registry;

The **Ad-hoc Section for Monitoring the 2011 Censuses decided**, at its meeting of 25 September 2007, and within the scope of its powers, **to recommend that Statistics Portugal** use the observation of the "Civil status" variable in the forthcoming census so as to ensure comparability with the 1981, 1991 and 2001 censuses, maintaining the "de facto" situation criteria as prevailing vis-à-vis the "married" situation of the respondents.

Lisbon, 11 October 2007

The Chairperson of the Section, *Sílvia Calado Frazão*

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