

DELIBERATION NO 34 OF THE CONSELHO SUPERIOR DE ESTATÍSTICA (STATISTICAL COUNCIL)

ON THE 2012 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

AND

ASSESSMENT OF THE DEGREE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENERAL GUIDELINES

OF NATIONAL STATISTICAL ACTIVITY

2008-2012

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 2012 reflect the strategic guidelines for the NSS as defined by the Council and the guidelines and commitments approved at European level.

Whereas the General Guidelines of National Statistical Activity 2008-2012 have been approved by the Council and guided the Council's and the statistical authorities' activities in the five-year period in question, and their implementation is set out in the Annual Reports of the Council and the statistical authorities and in the 2008-2011 NSS Situation Assessment Report.

Whereas the document on the degree of implementation of the above General Guidelines for 2008-2012, now completed with data for 2012, has allowed the Council to approve in October 2012 the General Guidelines of Official Statistical Activity for the 2013-2017 period, a document setting out the NSS's strategic objectives for the next five years.

Pursuant to Article 3 (2) and Article 13 (a) and (g) of Law No 22/2008 of 13 May and following a favourable opinion of the Standing Session of Statistical Coordination (*Secção Permanente de Coordenação Estatística* in Portuguese), **at its plenary session on 28 June 2013 the Council decided the following:**

1. **To approve** the Council's 2012 Annual Report
2. **To issue a favourable opinion** on the statistical authorities' annual reports for 2012
3. **To approve** the 2012 Summary of Activities of the National Statistical System, in annex to this deliberation
4. **To make a positive assessment** of the degree of implementation of the General Guidelines of National Statistical Activity 2008-2012
5. **To inform the media on these documents**

The Council stresses that in 2012 the strategic planning cycle established for 2008-2012 was concluded, and the General Guidelines of Official Statistical Activity for the 2013-2017 period were prepared and approved. These Guidelines will steer NSS's activities for the next five years and have been widely disseminated to the public.

As envisaged in the Business Plan for 2012, and in the context of Council guidance on NSS modernisation, development and consolidation, the foundations were laid for a draft revision of the current NSS Law, with the setting-up of a specialised Section mandated for that purpose.

The Council also stresses that the relevant results reached by statistical authorities in the areas listed below, which meet the objectives defined in the General Guidelines of National Statistical Activity 2008-2012, shall remain a priority for the NSS:

- 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 production, dissemination and statistical literacy promotion initiatives.

The Council recommends that priority be given to:

- a. monitoring the quality of official statistics, in compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice and the Public Commitment on European Statistics by the European System of Central Banks;
- b. monitoring European legislation within the framework of "Economic governance in the EU" and its impact within the National Statistical System;
- c. raising awareness of general government bodies to the compulsory nature of cooperation with statistical authorities as regards access to their administrative data to be used for statistical purposes;
- d. intensifying statistical production in relevant areas for decision-making with greater shortages.

Lisbon, 28 June 2013

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

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

2012 ANNUAL REPORT | NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

| SUMMARY |

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

2012, for corresponding to the end of a strategic planning cycle, was marked by the Council's approval and wide public dissemination of the General Guidelines of Official Statistical Activity for the 2013-2017 period, which will steer NSS activities for the next five years.

The Council's activities have also continued to focus on consolidating essential guidance for the System's modernisation, development and consolidation, especially by adjusting its Rules of Procedure and internal operating procedures, aiming at greater efficiency and effectiveness in the functioning of its structures and the setting-up of a specialised Section that will draft the revision of the NSS Law.

In particular, the Council has issued a number of recommendations on methodological developments, statistical quality, use of administrative sources for statistical purposes and use of the technical tools for statistical coordination approved by the Council.

The Council has modernised its external communication, notably in terms of its website content and image.

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 for Natural Resources, Maritime Safety and Services (Ministry of Agriculture, Sea, Environment and Spatial Planning), Directorate-General for Energy and Geology (Ministry of Economy and Employment), Directorate-General for Education and Science Statistics (Ministry of Education and Science) and Directorate-General for Justice Policy (Ministry of Justice).

The Annual Report of Statistics Portugal also includes production and dissemination in the fields of employment and vocational training under a protocol for delegation of powers with the Office for Strategy and Planning of the former Ministry of Employment and Social Security, currently the responsibility of the Office for Strategy and Studies of the Ministry of Economy and Employment, whose protocol for the delegation of powers is under negotiation.

Statistical authorities have achieved the main objectives envisaged in their business plans, particularly as regards the consolidation of quality statistical production, special priority having been given to initiatives to improve access to and use of statistics and promote statistical literacy. Relevant progress has been 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 initiatives.

Costs associated with the production of statistics were reduced due to the systematic adoption of restraint and rationalisation measures at the level of operating expenses and statistical activity costs, a more intensive use 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.

A. National Statistical System's key activities | 2012

Statistical Council

The Council's activities in 2012 focused on the consolidation of guidelines that were previously approved and acknowledged as a priority. Most of the established objectives were achieved, namely:

- Approval of the NSS Summary of Statistical Activities in 2013, within the framework of the lines of action set out in the General Guidelines of Official Statistical Activity for 2013-2017;
- Issue of a favourable opinion regarding the delegation of powers of Statistics Portugal in the Directorate-General for Education and Science Statistics of the Ministry of Education and Science;
- Under Article 14 of the NSS Law, issue of a favourable opinion regarding the draft Decree-Law governing the organisation of Statistics Portugal;
- Approval of recommendations relating to statistics on trade and services, health and territorial mobility;
- Presentation of statistical methodologies and projects by producers of statistics, and studies based on official statistics, by users;
- Approval of the "Methodological Document of Portuguese Statistics";
- Initiatives to raise the awareness of general government entities to the importance of using the coordination instruments approved for the NSS, notably the concepts for statistical purposes;
- Initiatives to promote the use of administrative sources for statistical purposes;
- Initiatives to monitor and promote statistical data quality, notably at the level of "timeliness and punctuality" of statistical dissemination, with the issue of a number of specific recommendations on persisting delays in the dissemination of the so-called vital statistics;
- Fostering of a better institutional cooperation, notably to improve the functioning and development of SICAE, the Information System for the Portuguese Classification of Economic Activities.

Statistics Portugal

The main objectives of the statistical activity carried out by Statistics Portugal and entities with delegated powers have been achieved, notwithstanding human resources constraints. It is worth mentioning an increase in available data and a positive assessment by users.

From the wide array of activities carried out by Statistics Portugal and entities with delegated powers, reference should be made to the following:

- As regards **technical coordination of the National Statistical System:**
 - Implementation of inter-institutional cooperation with entities with delegated powers as well as other institutions with which Statistics Portugal has established partnerships to pursue projects of interest to society, notably involving the use of administrative data for statistical purposes;
- As regards increased efficiency in **data collection processes:**
 - Ongoing expansion of telephone collection (Portuguese acronym: CATI) in interview surveys with 76.3% achieved telephone interviews, of the total possible interviews (68.8% in 2011);
 - Increase in responses collected and supported by SIGINQ, the integrated survey management system that joins the applications supporting Statistics Portugal's statistical production processes. This resulted from a considerable increase in the number of statistical operations covered by said system.
 - Considerable increase in the number of contacts via Contact Centre, a key infra-structure for strengthening the liaison between Statistics Portugal and respondents;
 - Consolidation of electronic data collection processes by entities with delegated powers.
- As regards **statistical production:**
 - Setting-up of the National Dwelling File (Portuguese acronym: FNA) based on household survey samples;
 - Compliance with the restructuring programmes of two statistical operations with a great impact on Statistics Portugal's activities, i.e. the Annual Survey of Industrial Production and the Urban Operations Information System;
 - Implementation of the survey on economic justice and release of its main results. This survey was launched for the first time in Portugal, as part of a partnership between Statistics Portugal and the Francisco Manuel dos Santos Foundation (this activity was not included in the 2012 Business Plan);
 - Preparation of the 2013 Fertility Survey (this activity was not included in the 2012 Business Plan);
 - Study of the impact of the census population age structure on life expectancy;
 - Implementation of the 2012 module of the labour force survey on transition from work to retirement;
 - Implementation of the survey on road transport of passengers and release of the 2011 results.
- As regards **statistical dissemination:**
 - 93.3% implementation rate for the timely availability of statistical data in Statistics Portugal and entities with delegated powers as a whole (1.8 p.p. increase from the previous year);

- Early release of final results for the 2011 Census on the official statistics website;
- Early release of the complete mortality tables for Portugal 2000-2002 to 2009-2011 (revised values vis-à-vis the final results for the 2011 Census);
- Release of results for the 2nd edition of the 2011 Adult Training and Education Survey;
- Release of preliminary results of the satellite account for social economy, a project developed in partnership with the António Sérgio Cooperative Sector Institute;
- Release of three studies resulting from the restructuring of business statistics: "Empresas em Portugal 2010" (Enterprises in Portugal 2010), "Evolução do Setor Empresarial em Portugal 2004-2010" (Business sector developments in Portugal 2004-2010), and "Empresas agrícolas: o futuro da agricultura portuguesa?" (Agricultural enterprises: the future of Portuguese agriculture?);
- Ongoing 14.7% growth in the availability of indicators in the Dissemination Database accessible through the Statistics Portugal's website, covering those under the responsibility of entities with delegated powers;
- Achievement of the target established for time taken to answer requests for clarification on statistical information, although with a slight decline from 2011 due to a high number of requests for information on the 2011 Census, as was already expected;
- Release of Structure of Earnings Statistics - 2010 (four-yearly) and Continuous Vocational Training Survey (CVTS) – 2010 (five-yearly) [Office for Strategy and Studies of the Ministry of Economy and Employment];
- Release of results for the Community Innovation Survey – 2008-2010 (biennial) [Directorate-General for Education and Science Statistics of the Ministry of Education and Science];
- Release of the Summary Energy Balance (provisional) – 2011 and the Geothermal Use – 2011, prepared for the first time in 2012 [Directorate-General for Energy and Geology of the Ministry of Economy and Employment].
- As regards **statistical cooperation with the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP)**:
 - Implementation of training courses through the programme for the empowerment of national statistical systems of Portuguese-speaking African countries and Timor-Leste – Phase 1, which exceeded expectations in terms of demand;
 - Preparation of the "Estatísticas da CPLP-2012" (CPLP-2012 Statistics). This publication was submitted to the 5th CPLP Statistical Conference held in Luanda from 22 to 23 June 2012, and includes a compilation of the main statistics available for CPLP countries (Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, and Timor-Leste).

Banco de Portugal

In 2012 Banco de Portugal reached the objectives set out within the scope of its statistical tasks regarding **quality and strict compliance with cut-off dates for compilation and release**, as envisaged in Banco de Portugal's Statistical Activity Plan for 2012. Within the framework of the Financial Assistance Programme for Portugal, information continued to be provided on a regular basis, covering compilation and current availability of a wide array of relevant statistical data, namely involving treatment of information relating to reviews.

Dissemination of statistical data continued to be a priority for Banco de Portugal, notably through improvement of cooperation with reporting entities, compilation of new data and shortening of deadlines for data release. It is worth mentioning: (i) the launch of a new statistical dissemination system for mobile devices, the so-called *BPstat* mobile and (ii) the publication of information on non-financial sector indebtedness in *BPstat* and in a new chapter of the Statistical Bulletin (Chapter K). The publication of this new chapter also reflects Banco de Portugal's concerns about releasing to the general public data prepared within the framework of the Financial Assistance Programme for Portugal.

At the end of 2012 *BPstat* had 17,441 users (24% annual growth). The Statistical Bulletin was composed of 39 Sections, totalling 7,704 statistical series. The regular publication of statistics was also accompanied by the release of three Supplements to the Statistical Bulletin, 10 statistical press releases and five Central Balance-Sheet Studies.

On 1 October Banco de Portugal implemented the Corporate Area in its institutional website, through which the Bank releases **relevant information for the activities of enterprises**, as well as the means for them to meet their statistical reporting requirements towards the Bank.

With the purpose of ensuring **quality statistical compilation**, Banco de Portugal continued to develop and improve its statistical information systems and maintained an integrated exploitation and consistency analysis of the basic information in microdatabases, namely the Central Balance-Sheet Database, the Central Credit Register, the Securities Statistics Integrated System and the balance of payments and international investment position. Corporations participated actively in the three editions of the 2nd Conference of the Central Balance-Sheet Database hosted by Banco de Portugal.

Lastly, reference should be made to various international **cooperation initiatives**, in particular a technical assistance mission to the Central Bank of Russia and participation in the 7th Statistics Meeting of Central Banks of Portuguese-speaking countries held in Mozambique. Also, there were 115 presentations in seminars and national and international conferences.

Regional Statistical Office of the Azores

In 2012 the Regional Statistical Office of the Azores reached the objectives defined, with the commitment and quality of the Office's staff making a considerable contribution to the implementation of new applications for managing and controlling the Service's operation, notably GERFIP, an increment in information released on the website and an increase in responses obtained via telephone (CATI) and electronic interviews.

Highlights in the activity of the Regional Statistical Office of the Azores:

- Increase in the number of administrative sources used, which stood 16% above the established target;
- High average response rate to surveys in the Region, which stood at 81.4%, with 70.7% of statistical operations recording response rates of 100%;
- Compliance with cut-off dates for all statistical operations and publications;
- The Azores recorded one of the highest response rates of the country in telephone (CATI) and face-to-face interviews (CAPI) – for CATI operations as a whole the response rate for telephone surveys reached 84.7% (around 2 percentage points above the established target);
- 83.9% response rate in electronic data collection (12% above the established target);
- Positive assessment of the Regional Statistical Office of the Azores by 89.7% of statistical data users.

As Delegation of Statistics Portugal this Statistical Office was involved in 74 statistical operations and 15 statistical studies and **as statistical authority** it implemented systematically 19 statistical operations, mostly with a monthly frequency, and nine other statistical activities.

Regional projects in focus:

- Ongoing cooperation with the Canary Islands and Madeira to complete two projects of the EU transnational cooperation programme: Contrimac – regional GDP quarterisation (presented in the Statistical Council's Standing Section of Economic Statistics) and Metamac – inclusion of metadata in statistical data dissemination;
- Development of a coincident indicator on infra-annual developments in regional economic activity;
- Start of preparatory work for an intra-regional cohesion indicator system to assess and monitor social, economic and territorial cohesion across the nine Azorean islands;
- Breakdown of regional GDP into the nine Azorean islands, calculated by Statistics Portugal for 2008 and 2009;
- 4th Iberian-Atlantic Symposium on Regional Statistics, with presentations by the Regional Statistical Office of the Azores, Statistics Portugal, Banco de Portugal, the Canary Island Statistics Bureau (ISTAC) and the IMF representation in Portugal.

Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira

In 2012, among the activities carried out by the Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira in the field of statistical production and dissemination at national and regional level, it is worth mentioning the following:

- As regards improved efficiency in **data collection processes**:
 - The gross response rate of total telephone collection (CATI) reached 89.5%, stress being laid on the Labour Force Survey, which reached 91.5% of total possible telephone collection interviews;
 - Further boost to electronic data collection (WebInq) due to the extension of this system to other statistical operations and the enhancement of initiatives to promote WebInq with enterprises. The volume of electronic forms received rose by 7.5%.
- As regards **statistical production**:
 - Launch in the Autonomous Region of Madeira of the turnover and employment survey, the global value chains survey, the labour cost index (2008 base year) and the survey on commercial units of relevant size;
 - Implementation of the new housing rents survey, the first survey to households to use a sample that originated entirely in the National Dwelling File;
 - Implementation of the first survey on ICT usage in city councils, with a response rate of 100%;
 - Implementation of the local survey on guest stays in hotels and other establishments, with a considerable increase in the number of surveyed establishments (from 280 to 385);
 - Implementation of the 2012 survey on floriculture and ornamental plants in the last quarter of 2012, in compliance with the timelines established by National Coordination, with a response rate of 100%;
 - Within the scope of the excessive deficit procedure, preparation of the deficit-debt adjustment table in cooperation with Banco de Portugal;
 - Preparation of the new CPI basis and launch of the new Fertility Survey.
- As regards **statistical dissemination**:
 - High rate of compliance with dissemination deadlines (95.5% of available forecast events, of which 82.1% on the forecast date);
 - Around 17.5 thousand visits to the Regional Directorate's website, 95% of which from within the country. The most visited areas were price, population, labour market and tourism statistics;
 - Positive assessment of the Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira by 82.5% of statistical data users.
- As regards **cooperation**, work continued within the scope of CONTRIMAC (regional GDP quarterisation) and METAMAC (inclusion of metadata in statistical data dissemination), projects carried out in partnership with ISTAC and the Regional Statistical Office of the Azores.

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 the 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 – €252,876
- Statistics Portugal and entities with delegated powers – €34,755 thousand² (86.4% under the responsibility of Statistics Portugal)
- Regional Statistical Office of the Azores - €1,496 thousand
- Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira – €1,002 thousand

Human resources

The following human resources were allocated to NSS activities:

- The **Council Secretariat**, composed of **7 individuals**, to support 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 2012, **with 974 staff members**, distributed as follows:
 - Statistics Portugal – **666**³
 - Banco de Portugal – **84**
 - Regional Statistical Office of the Azores – **50**
 - Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira – **38**
 - Entities with powers delegated by Statistics Portugal – **136**

² Includes costs allocated to the Council's activities.

³ Includes resources allocated to the Council Secretariat's activities.