

Work Program of the STATISTICAL COUNCIL - 2008

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The Business Plan of the *Conselho Superior de Estatística* (Statistical Council) (hereinafter referred to as the Council) for 2008 is presented in a context of transition and deep changes in the functioning of the National Statistical System and obviously of the Council, and in the Community context, with the preparation of a Law for the European Statistical System and the presentation of a monitoring report on the implementation in European Union countries of the "European Statistics Code of Practice".

Hence,

Taking into account the current context both as regards changes to the legal framework and commitments made internally and externally by the entities comprising the National Statistical System, and also the *Linhas Gerais da Actividade Estatística para o período 2008-2012* (General Guidelines of National Statistical Activity for the 2008-2012 period), **the following goals of the Council are established for 2008:**

- *To change the functioning structure of the Council, following approval of the new National Statistical System's Law by the Portuguese Parliament;*
- *To enhance its capacity to coordinate the National Statistical System, by implementing and optimising the Council's deliberations and recommendations and developing studies aimed at a better integration of the National Statistical System.*
- *To carry on with the modernisation of the processes associated with its functioning.*

The document details new initiatives and other action to be developed by the Council.

Hence, in accordance with these purposes and based on the powers entrusted to it, the business activities of the Council in 2008 will be specifically marked by **interventions in the following areas:**

- Preparation of new Rules of Procedure of the Council and of a new functioning model for the Council, following approval of the new National Statistical System's Law by the Portuguese Parliament;
- Review of the statute of the delegation of powers and related aspects, following approval of the new National Statistical System's Law by the Portuguese Parliament;

- Assessment of the degree of implementation of the “General Guidelines of National Statistical Activity for the 2003-2007 period” and setting-up of a monitoring model for the “General Guidelines of National Statistical Activity” for the 2008-2012 period;
- Preparation of the “Situation Assessment Report of the National Statistical System” at the end of the mandate of the Council members for the 2006-2008 period;
- Monitoring of issues relating to statistical confidentiality at the national and Community level;
- Preparation of a new Regulation on Statistical Confidentiality and adjustment of the current deliberations of the Council to the latest changes at the national and Community level.

At the operational level the activities of the Council shall be carried on through the following initiatives:

- Definition of Action Plans in the fields of National Statistical System's human resources training, the quality of Portuguese statistics, with a view to complying with the deadlines for availability of Portuguese statistics, so as to implement and optimise the Council's deliberations and recommendations.
- Appraisal of the dissemination policy for the National Statistical System.
- Pondering on the “review policy” of national accounts.
- Approval of the National Classification of Occupations 2008 and monitoring of the review of the “Typology of Urban Areas”.
- Monitoring of institutional links within the scope of the CEA, with a view to ensuring the implementation in the near future, by all general government entities, of a single CEA code for each enterprise carrying out its business activities in Portugal.
- Setting-up of a working group in the field of business statistics to monitor, inter alia, the process of appropriation of data of the *Informação Empresarial Simplificada* (“Simplified Business Information”) for the production of statistics.

Given their important role, the Council shall pay particular attention to the **development of specific statistical areas** – labour market (in particular statistics on wages), education and training, information society, environment, trade and services and national and international migrations – and also to territorial base statistics.

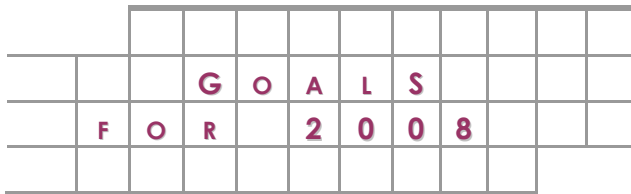
The monitoring of the preparation of the 15th General Population Census and the 5th General Housing Census (**2011 Censuses**) and of the **2009 General Agricultural Census** will be instrumental to the successful completion of these censuses.

The monitoring of the practical implementation of the **European Statistics Code of Practice** will be a particular concern across all structures of the National Statistical System.

At the level of the **internal functioning of the Council** and in a context of modernisation and enhanced functionality, the following initiatives shall be pursued:

- Holding of meetings of Section Chairpersons and of these with the Chairpersons of the respective Working Groups.
- Conclusion of the historical component of the Council's website and introduction of a few changes in order to render the presentation of the whole documents produced by the Council more buoyant.

In 2008 there will be 116 meetings, plenary sessions, standing and ad-hoc sections and working groups. Furthermore, three events are also scheduled.



2008 will surely be a milestone year for the National Statistical System. On the one hand, it will be a year of transition, with the Portuguese Parliament's approval¹ of a new legal system, following a proposal submitted by the Council to the Government in July 2006, under approval in the Parliament. On the other hand, it will be the first cycle year of the General Guidelines of National Statistical Activity for the 2008-2012 period.

Hence, the way is paved for the modernisation of the National Statistical System, which can eventually become a statistical system of reference at the European level, in the wake of the innovative proposals that the Council included in the draft Law.

In parallel and in a context of budgetary rigour, the Council, as a guarantor of the coordination of the National Statistical System, shall continue to streamline its powers towards key issues and relevant areas for decision-making.

Therefore, 2008 will be marked by intense activity for the Council and by the need for a great involvement and commitment of all its members, with the following goals of the Statistical Council being set out for 2008:

- ***To change the functioning structure of the Council.***
- ***To enhance its capacity to coordinate the National Statistical System, by implementing and optimising the Council's deliberations and recommendations and developing studies aimed at a better integration of the National Statistical System.***
- ***To carry on with the modernisation of the processes associated with its internal functioning.***

In order to achieve these goals, the **new Actions** for 2008 are the following:

- From the viewpoint of transition between legislations:

¹ The analysis of the draft Law started with the general assessment in a plenary session of the Parliament on 18 October 2007.

- To prepare new Rules of Procedure and a new functioning model for the Council
- To review the statute of the delegation of powers and related aspects
- To monitor issues relating to statistical confidentiality at the national and Community level and elaborate a new Regulation on Statistical Confidentiality
- Still at the level of statistical confidentiality, to adjust the current deliberations of the Council to the latest changes at the national and Community level
- To define Action Plans in the fields of National Statistical System's human resources training, the quality of Portuguese statistics, with a view to complying with the deadlines for availability of Portuguese statistics, so as to implement and optimise the Council's deliberations and recommendations.
- To appraise the statistical dissemination policy for the National Statistical System, based on a document to be presented by Statistics Portugal.
- To approve the "Situation Assessment Report of the National Statistical System" corresponding to the mandate of the Council members for the 2006-2008 period; an editorial team was set up for that purpose.
- To assess the degree of implementation of the "General Guidelines of National Statistical Activity for the 2003-2007 period".
- To set up a monitoring model for the "General Guidelines of National Statistical Activity" for the 2008-2012 period.
- To monitor the practical implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice across all Council structures.
- To ponder on the "review policy" of national accounts.
- To appraise the Statistical Production Procedures Manual, to be presented by Statistics Portugal, and launch its implementation at the National Statistical System level.
- To approve the National Classification of Occupations 2008.
- To monitor works involving institutional links within the scope of the CEA, with a view to ensuring the implementation in the near future, by all general government entities, of a single CEA code for each enterprise carrying out its business activities in Portugal.
- To monitor the review of the "Typology of Urban Areas".
- To promote the presentation, at the level of Section or Sections, of methodologies and subjects related to the quality of statistical operations, namely the consumer price index.
- To hold a number of events (in restricted or public sessions), namely on "Foreign direct investment"; to promote the conduct of a "Sociological reflection on surveys to households" and host a conference on "*The National Statistical Councils in Europe: Present and Future*".

- To organise internal debates or debates targeted at specific audiences on issues of relevance to the Statistical System, with the purpose of pondering on the major current economic and social problems, in order for the statistical system to meet new demands and, also, within the scope of statistical confidentiality, by fostering adjustments to new developments in the national and Community legislation.
- To set up a working group in the field of business statistics to monitor, inter alia, the process of appropriation of data of the *Informação Empresarial Simplificada* ("Simplified Business Information") for the production of statistics.
- To pursue the improvement of some procedures relating to the functioning and operation of Council works, namely through meetings to be promoted by Section Chairpersons with the Chairpersons of the respective Working Groups.
- To conclude in 2008 the historical component of the Council's website and to render the presentation of information more lively, thereby allowing for a widespread public dissemination of Council works.

Reference should also be made to **Other actions to be undertaken** within the scope of the Council's powers and as a follow-up to its works:

- To adopt measures allowing for full compliance with its powers to guide and coordinate the National Statistical System, namely:
 - by monitoring the implementation of the Business Plan of Statistics Portugal and of the entities intervening in national statistical production, namely the commitments integrating the «Action Plan» on statistics deemed necessary to decision-making within the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU);
 - by monitoring the implementation of the Business Plan of the Council;
 - by monitoring, pursuant to Article 24 of the System's Law, legislation that directly or indirectly affects the functioning of the National Statistical System;
 - by prioritising the monitoring of the preparation of the Portuguese (annual and quarterly) national accounts, satellite accounts, the employment survey, the consumer price index and intra-Community trade statistics (namely on the "Single Flow"), both at the level of Sections and expert working groups.
- To improve procedures to monitor deliberations, decisions and recommendations, in cooperation with working groups and other entities, in particular Statistics Portugal, to which most recommendations are addressed.
- To monitor the exercise of the powers of Statistics Portugal in the field of the certification of public accounts.

- To make maximum use of administrative data for statistical purposes, key to resource saving and to the reduction of the statistical burden on respondents.
- To foster the analysis and monitoring of statistical areas relevant to decision-making, in which a few weaknesses prevail in the production of statistical data, namely in the scope of the labour market, in particular statistics on wages.
- To foster and monitor works relating to other statistical areas relevant to decision-making, such as education and training, information society, territorial base statistics, environment, trade and services and national and international migrations.
- To monitor the preparation of the 15th General Population Census and the 5th General Housing Census (2011 Censuses) and of the 2009 General Agricultural Census.
- To pursue works aimed at creating a Single Statistical Units File within the scope of the National Statistical System, following works launched in 2005.
- To monitor issues related to the assessment of the burden on respondents.
- To pursue works involving the analysis, approval and monitoring of concepts for statistical purposes in the different fields of statistical information and to monitor and approve nomenclatures and other technical coordination instruments approved by the Council.
- At the operational level, to continue the process of modernising the dissemination of information within the scope of the Council, which started in 2007 with the creation of a Council's website and the release of documents in the CIRCA platform.