

DELIBERATION NO 229 OF THE CONSELHO SUPERIOR DE ESTATÍSTICA (STATISTICAL COUNCIL)

STATE OF THE ART REPORT OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM 1999- 2001

Whereas the *Conselho Superior de Estatística* (Statistical Council) (hereinafter referred to as the Council) at its plenary session of 18 December 2001, in compliance with Article 11 (4) of Law No 6/89 of 15 April, stipulating that «... before the expiry of each term of office, the Council shall prepare a State of the Art Report of the *Sistema Estatístico Nacional* (National Statistical System)», approved Deliberation No 222 laying down the major guidelines for the preparation of a State of the Art Report of the National Statistical System for the 1999 – 2001 period;

Whereas the Report is a new opportunity to make the political deliberation-makers and the Council's institutional network aware of the present situation of the National Statistical System and of the remedial measures required to keep it up-to-date and efficient and to rectify the problems identified;

The Council, at its meeting of 10 July 2002, in compliance with Article 11 of Law No 6/89 of 15 April, decided to approve the State of the Art Report of the National Statistical System 1999 – 2001, considering that the respective recommendations in annex to this Deliberation form an integral part thereof.

The Council also decided:

- to regularly monitor the recommendations of this Report, and prepare annual progress reports;
- to organise a seminar with a view to launching a public debate to reflect on the future of the National Statistical System; this Report shall be the basis for such reflection;
- to issue the Report now approved and widely disseminate it.

Lisbon, 10 July 2002

The Chairman of the Statistical Council, *Nuno Morais Sarmento*

The Executive Secretary of the Statistical Council, *Maria Margarida Lobo da Conceição Madaleno*

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CONSELHO SUPERIOR DE ESTATÍSTICA (STATISTICAL COUNCIL)

1. *The Conselho Superior de Estatística (Statistical Council) (hereinafter referred to as the Council) recommends that the Government:*

- a) Guarantees the required financial resources for the functioning of Statistics Portugal and the entities with powers delegated by it, so that they may scrupulously comply with their national and Community statistical obligations, as well as the financial means necessary for improving the quality of statistical data.
- b) Promotes effective contractual relations between the government and Statistics Portugal for the fulfilment of their public service mission.
- c) Provides for strict compliance with the provisions laid down in Article 24 of Law No 6/89 of 15 April on the requirement to hear the Council beforehand on legislation affecting the structure and functioning of the National Statistical System, to that the Council may commit itself to preparing a reference document intended to clarify its understanding as to possible situations requiring its hearing beforehand.
- d) Makes general government bodies aware of the need for compliance with Law No 6/89 of 15 April and Decree-Law No 294/2001 of 20 November enshrining, within the scope of official statistical activity, regulations on access, collection and treatment by Statistics Portugal of administrative personal data, up to the completion of the recast of the National Statistical System's Law.
- e) Ensures all public services with powers delegated by Statistics Portugal, having the status of simple general government bodies, effective technical autonomy as regards compliance with the delegated statistical tasks.
- f) Instructs the Council to draw up draft legislation to govern the National Statistical System, considering in particular the conclusions and the general contents of this Report.

2. *The Council recommends that Statistics Portugal:*

- a) Prepares the legal instruments leading to the implementation by the government of recommendation 1.b).
- b) Urgently presents to the Council a document clarifying and reassessing the principles defined for the examination of the draft delegation of powers and of a statistical coordination strategy.

- c) Reviews, in the context of sub-paragraph a), the joint-deliberations establishing the delegation of powers and respective protocols, in order to make them more specific and binding, namely as regards the timetables for the release of information.
- d) Increases the ability of Statistics Portugal to effectively monitor delegated statistical operations and to make maximum use and foster the Council's structures in the coordination of these operations.

3. *The Council recommends that Statistics Portugal and the entities with powers delegated by it:*

- a) Commit themselves to compliance with the law, the regulations governing the coordination of the National Statistical System and the legal and regulatory provisions safeguarding statistical confidentiality.
- b) Define a strategy for the dissemination of official statistics.
- c) Evaluate the administrative data under the sphere of influence of each entity with delegated powers, liable to be used for statistical purposes.
- d) Present to the Council an assessment of the increase or decrease in the statistical burden, namely as a result of the delegation of powers.
- e) Define an integrated training plan addressed to the experts of entities contributing to the production of official statistics.
- f) Systematic presentation to the Council of the methodologies inherent in each statistical operation, including initiatives developed within the scope of quality and its release.
- g) Develop initiatives related to the quality of statistical production, through internal and external audits to both Statistics Portugal and the entities with delegated powers and the institutionalisation of a self-evaluation system at Statistics Portugal and at the entities with delegated powers.
- h) Create and foster working groups involving Statistics Portugal itself, one or more entities with delegated powers and, where appropriate, external experts to coordinate initiatives and solve technical problems in converging working areas.

4. *The Council considers that the governments of the Autonomous Regions of Madeira and Açores should be made aware of:*

The need to rectify the non-conformity between the National Statistical System's Law and the legal document that created the Regional Statistical Offices of Açores and Madeira, with a view to strengthening the consistency of the National Statistical System.