

**DELIBERATION NO 38 OF THE CONSELHO SUPERIOR DE ESTATÍSTICA (STATISTICAL COUNCIL)
ON THE 2013 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), which include the annual appraisal of the statistical authorities' statistical activity reports.

Whereas the strategic guidelines established by the Council's Plenary Session for the National Statistical System in the General Guidelines of National Statistical Activity for 2013-2017, as well as the guidelines and commitments approved at European level.

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 2 July 2014 the Council decided the following:**

1. **To approve** the Council's 2013 Annual Report
2. **To issue a favourable opinion** on the statistical authorities' annual reports for 2013
3. **To approve** the 2013 Summary of Activities of the National Statistical System, in annex to this deliberation
4. **To widely disseminate these documents, notably through media information notes**

In the course of 2013, which was the first year of the new five-year strategic planning cycle, the National Statistical System, the Council and the statistical authorities complied with the established Business Plan, stress being laid on the following activities:

- events (i) to promote statistical literacy and remove barriers hindering the use of official statistics, notably as regards their adequate reading, interpretation and use and (ii) to reflect about two relevant areas for statistical intervention – health and the use of the Information System of the Classification of Economic Activities;
- issue of recommendations to statistical authorities on (i) deepening interinstitutional cooperation, (ii) basic information quality control and elimination of redundancies at the various levels of statistical production;
- modernisation, development and consolidation of the System;
- promotion of reflection to identify priority actions in particularly relevant statistical areas – health, territorial mobility, monitoring of public policies and international trade;
- end of the mandate of the Ad-Hoc Section for Monitoring the 2011 Censuses, with specific recommendations, encouraging the use of administrative sources in censuses;
- 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, through improved efficiency in data collection processes, 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 statistical authorities continue to pursue the efforts needed for progress in the above fields, and that priority be given to intensifying statistical production in relevant areas for decision-making where there are still greater shortages.

Lisbon, 2 July 2014

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

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

2013 ANNUAL REPORT | NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

| SUMMARY |

The 2013 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 2013 sought to observe the guidelines enshrined in the Business Plans of the Council and statistical authorities for 2013, in the General Guidelines of Official Statistical Activity for 2013-2017, the Council's Deliberations, the EU Statistical Programme for 2013 and activity programmes prepared at the level of the Statistics Committee of the European System of Central Banks (ESCB), and furthermore in compliance with the commitment to quality set forth in the European Statistics Code of Practice and the Public Commitment on European Statistics by the European System of Central Banks.

In 2013 the Council continued to focus its activity on the consolidation of guidelines deemed essential to modernise, develop and consolidate the System and promote a reflection to identify priority actions to be carried out by its structures.

Hence, within the scope of the International Year of Statistics, the Council, in collaboration with Statistics Portugal, co-hosted a Seminar on 'What is the role of statistics? What is their daily use?', which aimed at: (i) promoting – in connection with the NSS – an increase in statistical literacy and the removal of barriers hindering the use of official statistics; (ii) calling attention to the relevance of official statistics and the need for them to be appropriately read, interpreted and used, and (iii) raising awareness as to the unquestionable fact that the production of quality statistics requires the involvement of society in general and every citizen and public or private organisation in particular. This Seminar was attended by the Director General of Eurostat and Council members.

Two other events in specific fields – the 'Meeting on Health Statistics' and the workshop on 'The Use of SICAE by general government entities' – allowed for a reflection about two areas of statistical intervention: the former due to these statistics' weaknesses and the latter to promote optimisation of SICAE use.

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 and Sea), Directorate-General for Energy and Geology (Ministry of Environment Spatial Planning and Energy), Directorate-General for Education and Science Statistics (Ministry of Education and Science), Directorate-General for Justice Policy (Ministry of Justice) and Office for Strategy and Studies of the Ministry of Economy, whose protocol for the delegation of powers is under negotiation. Pursuant to Article 22 of the NSS Law, the Regional Statistical Office of the Azores and the Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira participate in the production of national official statistics as delegations of Statistics Portugal.

The Council has issued recommendations to statistical authorities on the importance of deepening interinstitutional cooperation, notably through the development of joint statistical operations, the sharing of statistical unit files, basic information quality control and the elimination of redundancies at the various levels of statistical production, by establishing suitable collaboration mechanisms for the performance of their NSS tasks.

Statistical authorities have pursued an effort to modernise and increase the efficiency of statistical systems, which made it possible, as in the past few years, to undertake the main projects set out in their business plans, particularly the consolidation of quality statistical production. Special priority was assigned to the development of initiatives to improve accessibility and the use of statistics and promote statistical literacy. There was marked progress as regards the quality of official statistics in their different dimensions, notably as regards compliance with cut-off dates, and also improved efficiency in data collection processes and statistical dissemination initiatives.

Furthermore, the continuing systematic adoption of restraint and rationalisation measures at the level of operating expenses and statistical activity costs, the increment of the appropriation of administrative data for the production of official statistics and the intensification of the use of more advanced collection methods with less costs, notably by resorting to the Internet and telephone interviews, have led to a reduction of costs associated with the production of statistics as well as of the burden on respondents.

A. National Statistical System's key activities | 2013

Statistical Council

The Council's activities in 2013 focused on the consolidation of guidelines that were previously approved and acknowledged as a priority. Most of the established objectives were achieved, namely:

- Creation of a Restricted Session for the revision of the Typology of Urban Areas and a Technical Group to analyse the feasibility to set up a single unit identification number that allows for the creation of a Units File;
- It considered the activities of the Ad-Hoc Section for Monitoring the 2011 Censuses as completed, with specific recommendations encouraging the use of administrative sources for statistical purposes in various areas, particularly with the purpose of being used to replace censuses;
- As regards the Ad-Hoc Section created specifically for that purpose, it continued to prepare the draft revision of the NSS Law, to submit to the Government on a timely basis;
- It approved the 2014 NSS Activity Summary, prepared on the basis of the business plans of the Council and statistical authorities, already duly integrated into the General Guidelines of Official Statistical Activity for 2013-2017;
- It made a positive assessment of Banco de Portugal's revision policy;
- It monitored the impact on the National Statistical System of European legislation on "European Union economic governance";

- It issued recommendations on particularly relevant statistical areas – health, territorial mobility, monitoring of public policies and international trade;
- It monitored, as regards the Action Plans defined by sectoral Sections, the presentation of statistical methodologies and projects by statistics producers and the presentation of projects and studies shared by official statistics users;
- It monitored statistical data quality, notably at the level of 'timeliness' (compliance with pre-defined release dates), and issued a number of specific recommendations on the matter;
- Initiatives were carried out to raise society's awareness to the relevance of statistics, notably with the release of media information notes. The Council Secretariat continued to use email, the Communication & Information Resource Centre Administrator (CIRCA) and the Council's website as privileged media to communicate relevant information on the Council's activities;
- The Council's website also released reflection texts by Council members, as well as presentations submitted in specialised Sections prepared by official statistics producers and users.

Statistics Portugal

A detailed analysis leads to a very positive assessment of the statistical activity carried out by Statistics Portugal and entities with delegated powers in 2013, notwithstanding human resources constraints, reflected in an increase in data released and a positive appraisal by users of Statistics Portugal's performance.

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 **the reduction of costs and the burden on respondents**:
 - Intensification of initiatives aimed to extend the appropriation of administrative data for statistical purposes, targeted at reducing costs for statistical authorities and the burden on respondents;
 - Definition of a new methodology for sizing and selecting the sample of the Annual Survey of Industrial Production, which substantially reduced the number of enterprises to be surveyed;
 - Consolidation of procedures to improve telephone collection response rates aimed at optimising resources and reducing costs;
 - Use of electronic collection applications in all statistical operations in the field of education and science [Directorate General of Education and Science Statistics of the Ministry of Education and Science];
 - Functional analysis and development of a technical solution for the collection of statistical data from the three areas of public mediation (labour, family and criminal) [Directorate General for Justice Policy of the Ministry of Justice].
- As regards increased efficiency in **data collection processes**:
 - Start of use of the National Accommodation Register (Portuguese acronym: FNA), as well as the new sampling bases in household surveys, thus leading to improved response rates;

- Release of automated transmission solutions for sending data with no need to complete online forms, implemented in three surveys;
- Preparation of a renewed WebInq area on the official statistics website, to modernise its functionalities and usability;
- Electronic responses were extended to household surveys;
- Release of a new Intrastat system electronic form, with an increase in the share of declarations collected electronically, which reached 99.3% in 2013.

- As regards **statistical production**:
 - Completion of the activities forecast as regards the change in the Portuguese National Accounts base (2011 base);
 - Implementation of the short-term indicators' base change process, taking 2010 as reference;
 - Conclusion of the construction of long series of the Consumer Price Index (CPI), with a series available for the 1948/2013 period;
 - Implementation of changes to the nomenclatures related to the harmonised system (UN Product Classification), with an impact on the adjustment of the Combined Nomenclature and the remaining product nomenclatures used in international trade;
 - Conclusion of the 2011 Census work;
 - Start of the treatment of data on accidents at work in the public sector [Office for Strategy and Studies of the Ministry of Economy and Employment];
 - Introduction of new variables in statistical operations in the field of education, namely related to the attendance of students and the exercise of (full time/partial time) teaching tasks [Directorate General of Education and Science Statistics of the Ministry of Education and Science].

- As regards **statistical dissemination**:
 - 93% implementation rate in the timely availability of statistical data of Statistics Portugal and entities with delegated powers as a whole;
 - Reduction of the pattern of release of the Labour Force Survey results to 38 days after the end of the data reference period (seven-day anticipation compared with the previous pattern);
 - Anticipated release of provisional data of the Integrated Business Accounts System;
 - Release, for the first time, of data for 2008 to 2011 on Units in Portugal within the scope of the Integrated Business Accounts System;
 - Release of final intercensal estimates for the resident population (2001-10);
 - Release of early results for the 2013 Fertility Survey held in partnership with the Francisco Manuel dos Santos Foundation;
 - Release of two studies characterising the housing stock;
 - Release of the sustainable development indicators for 2012;
 - Release, for the first time, of indicators on responses to emerging temporary emigration and demographic ageing;
 - Release, for the first time, of the wellbeing index for Portugal for the 2004-12 period (preliminary results for the latter year);

- Anticipated release of the revision of regional mortality tables by NUTS 2 (1999-2001 to 2009-11) and NUTS 3 (2004-06 to 2009-11);
 - Reduction of release schedules for the survey on road transport of passengers, following the optimisation of processes at both the data collection and the result analysis stages;
 - Achievement of the target established for the timeline to respond to statistical data requests and clarifications;
 - Release, for the first time, of official statistical data on students with special educational needs [Directorate General of Education and Science Statistics of the Ministry of Education and Science];
 - Production and release of statistics on executive civil proceedings at judicial courts of first instance [Directorate General for Justice Policy of the Ministry of Justice].
- As regards **statistical cooperation**:
- Leadership of the "Purchasing Power Parities" project in the Group of Southern European Countries;
 - Participation in key European projects sponsored by the European Institute for Gender Equality in the field of gender equality;
 - Development of training courses through the programme for the empowerment of national statistical systems of Portuguese-speaking African countries and Timor-Leste – Phase 2, which again exceeded expectations in terms of demand.

Banco de Portugal

In 2013 Banco de Portugal fully complied with the objectives regarding quality and observance of cut-off dates for the compilation and release of statistics envisaged in Banco de Portugal's statistical activity plan. In its capacity as statistical authority, the Bank developed a proactive communication policy, aimed at contributing to better knowledge, confidence and use of statistics under its responsibility.

As regards the Economic and Financial Assistance Programme, Banco de Portugal continued to release regular information, notably within the scope of review missions.

In 2013 the Corporate Area was the privileged communication channel between Banco de Portugal and enterprises, both as regards the supply of information to the new external positions and operations system and access to relevant information for corporate business. With regard to the latter, it is possible to have access to a series of economic and financial indicators that place enterprises in the respective economic activity sector and size class, and to consult the enterprise's borrowing position to entities that are members of the Central Credit Register.

Banco de Portugal continued to assign high priority to the dissemination of statistical data, in particular with the publication of new statistics on non-financial corporations of the Central Balance-Sheet Database, which seek to reflect developments in the economic and financial situation of non-financial corporations in Portugal, notably financing, yields and average deadlines for receipts and payments.

At the end of 2013 BPstat had around 20,000 users, having recorded 15 per cent annual growth vis-à-vis 2012. Reaching a monthly average of around 130,000 pageviews, in 2013 the use of the BPstat mobile platform – which is mainly targeted at mobile media – increased and was consolidated. Simultaneously, Banco de Portugal developed other statistical dissemination initiatives, with the purpose of promoting statistical and financial literacy. In this context, four new Supplements to the Statistical Bulletin were published in 2013, as well as three new Central Balance-Sheet Studies and a number of statistical press releases.

The Bank continued to pursue an integration exploitation of data in the microdatabases of the Central Balance-Sheet Database, the Central Credit Register and the Securities Statistics Integrated System, thus contributing to increase the quality, detail and consistency of the statistics it compiles and develop new ways to exploit statistical data. In this context, Banco de Portugal organised the 3rd Conference of the Central Balance-Sheet Database in Santarém, and an international conference in Porto on integrated microdatabase management, sponsored by the European Central Bank (ECB) and the Irving Fisher Committee on Central Bank Statistics (IFC). It was attended by around 150 participants, from 44 countries and three international organisations.

Within the framework of institutional representation in a number of international committees and working groups, the Head of the Statistics Department of Banco de Portugal was elected Chairman of the European Committee of Central Balance-Sheet Data Offices (ECCBSO) for a three-year mandate.

At the level of international statistical cooperation, in 2013 a number of cooperation and technical assistance initiatives were held, as well as 301 presentations in seminars and conferences and in national and international conferences.

Regional Statistical Office of the Azores

The activities of the Regional Statistical Office of the Azores in the course of 2013 were carried out in line with the objectives set out. All the objectives set out in the Assessment and Accountability Framework (Portuguese acronym: QUAR) were overachieved.

As regards statistical production

110 statistical operations were conducted, among which 34 (31%) as statistical authority and 76 as delegation of Statistics Portugal. These statistical operations corresponded to 13,827 surveyed units, with an average response rate of 85.3%. Of these responses, 5,190 out of the 5,652 possible through this means were obtained electronically (91.8%), with recourse to 123 administrative sources.

As main projects developed as statistical authority, reference should be made to: the implementation of new environmental projects and the conclusion of the preparatory stage of the SICIR (intra-regional cohesion indicator system) and CI (coincident indicator) projects, 'Statistics on the consumption of pesticides, fertilisers, herbicides and feeds' and 'Statistics on exports of main dairy products', 'Exports of fresh fish by air' and 'Beef exports', carried forward from the previous year.

In its capacity as delegation of Statistics Portugal, reference should be made to: a higher telephone response rate (92.96%), i.e. around 8 percentage point growth in CATI operations as a whole vis-à-vis the established target, implementation of new projects, notably the 'Survey on zoos, botanical gardens and aquariums', the 'Household Finance and Consumption Survey', as well as the 'farm structure survey', which was not held since 2007 due to the 2009 Agricultural Census.

As regards dissemination

In 2013 the Regional Statistical Office of the Azores continued to release 100% of statistical data in due time. The Regional Statistical Office of the Azores received 196 requests for statistical data, having met 179 (91.3%) - 141 of them (72%) fully and 38 (19%) partially. 96.7% of responses were given in one working day or less, which reflected in the high share (93.3%) of users with a positive appraisal.

Information continued to be released on the website, and the Intranet was improved.

As regards cooperation

At international level, the CONTRIMAC and METAMAC projects continued, in partnership with ISTAC (the Statistical Institute of the Canary Islands) and the Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira, as regards PCT MAC 2007-2013.

At national and regional level, cooperation with various entities continued and was reinforced, so as to improve the services provided by the Regional Statistical Office of the Azores to its users.

General information/activities

Relocation of the head office of the Regional Statistical Office of the Azores in Angra do Heroísmo in August.

Entry into force of the new Organic Law of the Regional Statistical Office of the Azores (Regional Regulatory Decree No 7/2013/A of 11 July).

5th Regional Statistical Journeys on 29 November at the new premises' auditorium.

Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira

The Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira performed overall positively in 2013, with a very high level of user satisfaction.

The statistical activity carried out included statistical production and dissemination at both the national and regional level, as well as other cross-cutting activities. Stress should be laid on:

As regards increased efficiency in **data collection processes**:

- In statistical operations with collection through direct interviewing, the total gross response rate reached 81.7% in 2013, with telephone collection standing at 75.1% of total possible such interviews;

- In statistical operations with collection through self-completion and of total questionnaires liable to be collected electronically, in 2013, 91.4% were completed and sent electronically. The total gross response rate for self-completed surveys in WebInq stood at 90.6%.

As regards **statistical production**:

→ *In its capacity as delegation of Statistics Portugal:*

- Fertility Survey and Household Finance and Consumption Survey in the Autonomous Region of Madeira;
- International Tourist Expenditure Survey at the Madeira airport;
- Start of the collection of the farm structure survey in November 2013.

→ *In its capacity as statistical authority:*

- Launch of the golf courses survey, a monthly statistical operation targeted at collecting information on the use of golf courses in the Autonomous Region of Madeira;
- As regards the EU/IMF Economic and Financial Assistance Programme to the Autonomous Region of Madeira, the Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira supported and monitored the programme through the quarterly calculation of the Region's public deficit and debt and the support to the Commission of the Corporate Sector Privatisation and Restructuring Programme of the Autonomous Region of Madeira;
- Production of a number of studies based on the final results for the 2011 Census and new time series in different fields, namely: population, enterprises, energy, tourism and culture.

→ As regards **statistical dissemination**:

In 2013 the Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira pursued a strategy to increase and improve data released on its official statistics website, recording an increase in the volume of data released by around 30.5% from 2012. In this context, there were new releases, in particular:

- Relaunch of the quarterly statistical bulletin;
- Publication of a number of studies following the release of the final results for the 2011 Census, notably the *Portrait of municipalities in the Autonomous Region of Madeira*, presented at the Council's Standing Section of Social Statistics (*Secção Permanente de Estatísticas Sociais* in Portuguese);
- Release of a study with data from the survey on floriculture and ornamental plants/2012 on the occasion of the 'Flower Feast';
- Dissemination of new monthly and quarterly statistical data and new time series on different themes: housing banking assessment, tourism – golf courses, construction, finance, energy, monetary and financial sector, enterprises and culture;
- Release of estimates of the resident population and revised demographic indicators for the Autonomous Region of Madeira, based on the final results for the 2011 Census.
- Reissue of a publication on international trade statistics.

Implementation of the Dissemination Plan of the Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira stood at 95.4%, and release on schedule reached 91.4%.

The release of statistical data on the website of the Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira went on to be accompanied by a press release, i.e. a brief data analysis, which largely reinforced the presence of the Regional Directorate in regional media.

As regards the promotion of statistical literacy with the school population, notably in primary, lower and upper secondary schools, seven dissemination/training sessions were held on the importance, research and use of statistical data: five in schools and two at the premises of the Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira, involving 109 persons (11 teachers and 98 students).

→ As regards **statistical cooperation**:

- Pursuit of the CONTRIMAC project – quarterly accounts of Macaronesia, with two technical meetings;
- Presentation of early results for the CONTRIMAC project in the Region, with the participation of the other Portuguese statistical authorities: Statistics Portugal, Banco de Portugal and Regional Statistical Office of the Azores;
- Signing of a protocol between the Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira and the Regional Secretariat of Education, through the Regional Directorate of Education and the Education System Observatory of the Autonomous Region of Madeira, targeted at promoting the development of statistical literacy with the school population at primary, lower and upper secondary education level;
- Within the scope of the International Year of Statistics, in October 2013, in partnership with the Regional Directorate of Education and the Education System Observatory of the Autonomous Region of Madeira, the Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira hosted a seminar entitled "Statistical literacy at the service of citizenship".

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 – €319,638

- Statistics Portugal and entities with delegated powers – €34,922.87 thousand² (88.54% under the responsibility of Statistics Portugal)
- Regional Statistical Office of the Azores - €1,533 thousand
- Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira – €902 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 2013, **with 961 staff members**, distributed as follows:
 - Statistics Portugal – **656**³
 - Banco de Portugal – **83**
 - Regional Statistical Office of the Azores – **48**
 - Regional Directorate of Statistics of Madeira – **42**⁴
 - Entities with powers delegated by Statistics Portugal – **132**

² Includes costs allocated to the Council's activities.

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

⁴ Includes one expert and three IT specialists from the IT Regional Directorate.