

**COMMENTS OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE AGENCIES  
PARTICIPATING TO THE 1<sup>ST</sup> USER CONFERENCE  
20-10-2010**

**Dissemination of Statistical Information**

*Statistical dissemination issues*

- Delays are observed in the production of data on Social Statistics. Significant delays are also noted in the production of data on education and ways must be found to ensure that the relevant data are collected more quickly (possibly via an electronic application).
- There are also problems in the provision of health data. A significant lack is observed, mainly, in financial data, (while delays are observed for non-financial data, data on patients discharged). ELSTAT should possibly use registers or be assisted by other entities collecting relevant data, after having certified them.
- The dissemination of statistical data in the area of National Accounts needs to be improved. Users must submit an application in order to be provided with these data and it is suggested to be posted on the website of ELSTAT.
- Users highlighted the need to use new technologies in the dissemination of information (XML, SDMX) so that it is easier to access and send statistics to the most “demanding” users.

*Cooperation with ELSTAT staff*

- Users highlighted the good cooperation with ELSTAT staff that responds effectively to the growing demands of users in Greece and abroad.

**Gaps in Statistical Information**

*Gaps in the availability of statistical data*

- A common understanding among users was the fact that validity and timeliness is not always possible to co-exist. Users should show more

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understanding so as data quality is ensured.

- There should be flexibility from ELSTAT to respond to the emerging needs of users as regards very specific and particular statistical data (e.g. data on renewable energy sources, etc.).
- Many users have requested data at a lower administrative level.
- There are shortcomings in the time series of education statistics, but also in some variables that are necessary to researchers for policy making in the wider public sector.
- There is a lack of data on homes and care facilities for the elderly, on kindergartens but also on people with disabilities. It has been proposed to redesign and conduct, on a permanent basis, the surveys on the care sector.
- The range of available data on enterprises is by far smaller than that of data on households. More emphasis should be given on the Statistical Business Register in order to be enriched with more variables.
- There is a need to collect data on wealth and capital, depending on those on poverty and social exclusion arising from the Income and Living Conditions Survey.
- Gender should be recorded in all surveys. At the moment, only EU-SILC, LFS, HES and ICT surveys contain the gender variable, which is necessary and critical in studies related to social statistics.

### *Gaps in methodological issues*

- The certification of the statistical data provided by the other agencies of the Hellenic Statistical System is necessary. ELSTAT must proceed with the implementation of the necessary methods and rules for the certification of their data.
- It was proposed to establish a comprehensive programme for cooperation with secondary sources of statistics, alongside the input from administrative sources.
- There are gaps in the representation of ELSTAT in the meetings of International Organisations (other than EUROSTAT), in particular meetings of the OECD and the United Nations.
- Taking into account the relation between health and social policy, a Health

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Accounts System should be set up, as it is the case in most countries (OECD economic data database), which will be useful for policy making in the health sector , as all expenditure from the public and private sector will be recorded.

- There is an underestimation of pharmaceutical expenditure as reported by ELSTAT according to data reported to the OECD for the year 2007.
- There are no comprehensive methodological notes for all the surveys. Metadata and questionnaires for every survey conducted by ELSTAT must be posted on the website of ELSTAT, so as to allow users to interpret and understand the results of the surveys.
- There is no system for monitoring the gaps in the time series and their replacement, something that is important for understanding the trends in different market sectors.
- The classifications used by ELSTAT must be in line with international standards. A typical example is the **ISOCO 88** COM, which is mostly an empirical classification and is not compatible with the ISCO. Users were very interested in knowing whether the new Census will be in line with the international classification for occupations.
- ELSTAT should also assist the other Producers of statistical data in order to achieve uniformity of methodologies and use of common classifications and definitions of variables, in line with international standards, in order to ensure comparability of data.
- It was proposed that ELSTAT Divisions are staffed with specialized personnel per statistical area. For example, the data on nurses and the coding of diseases could be better processed by people with nursing experience.

### **Access to statistical information**

#### ***Evaluation and Completeness of ELSTAT website***

- Metadata and questionnaires for each survey carried out by ELSTAT are necessary to be posted on the portal, so that users do not need to contact by phone many times to find the information of their interest.
- If the data are not collected by ELSTAT, users should be informed via the web portal on the other sources of statistical information in the country.
- It would be useful to have the annual planning of the surveys carried out by ELSTAT, and the stage at which the corresponding survey is.
- The Press Releases Calendar should include, alongside the surveys for which there is a scheduled date of the announcement of their results through a press release, the announcement of the results of the surveys for which the publication of the results is not foreseen;
- The web portal/database should be enriched with all the available data of ELSTAT, so as users are not obliged to submit an application.
- ELSTAT has a wealth of data, which must not be presented only by static tables, but also by the use of images, graphs and digitised maps (spatial distribution of data).
- Review of the functionality of the website to provide greater flexibility and user-friendliness for users of statistics in Greece and abroad.
- The portal of ELSTAT should provide users with the possibility of easy access to the databases, with additional and more detailed information. This will allow users to select more variables, thus reducing the time to meet the request by sending through the portal or by e-mail to the competent Statistical Information Section.
- In order to meet the needs of the 'demanding users', the portal should be enabled to manage all the variables of the surveys, after having applied, of course, all the necessary actions (T-ARGUS) to ensure confidentiality issues.

#### ***Cost of access to the statistical information***

- Review of the cost of data, which is often dissuasive, as regards the provision

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of primary survey material to users of the private and public sector, in line with EUROSTAT standards and specifications.

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## **Future steps as regards cooperation with ELSTAT**

### *Contact with the users of the statistics*

- It is very important that user conferences are organised at regular intervals, so as users can have the opportunity to express their opinion on the official agency of Statistical Information of the Country and also to be informed on new developments in several areas of statistical surveys.
- More intensive user satisfaction surveys should be conducted, through a questionnaire on the portal of ELSTAT, the results of which will be used to improve the services provided and to meet the needs of users in Greece and abroad.
- Pupils and students, who will be the future researchers, should be informed about ELSTAT and the wealth of its data, so that they can be more helpful in the preparation of ELSTAT surveys and statistical works.
- It is proposed to set up joint Working Groups by users and ELSTAT staff. Many users offered to assist in the planning of new surveys to enable Greece to respond to requests from international organisations that cannot be met with currently available statistics.
- There should be cooperation between ELSTAT and users in the design of the questionnaires in order to enrich the questionnaire each time according to the emerging needs of users.