



HELLENIC REPUBLIC



HELLENIC STATISTICAL AUTHORITY

ELSTAT

Quality Policy

PIRAEUS, JUNE 2013

1. MISSION OF THE HELLENIC STATISTICAL AUTHORITY

The mission of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) is to safeguard and continuously improve the quality of the country's statistics.

The Hellenic Statistical Authority pursues its mission by following in all areas the highest European and international standards of statistical practice, as well as by unswervingly observing the rules and responsibilities it is committed to.

Thus, it strives to:

1. Be and remain, beyond any doubt, an independent Statistical Authority, and always function in a way that reflects this very principle
2. Produce statistics that are useful—relevant—for public policy, the economy, and more broadly the life of the people
3. Earn and continuously renew the confidence of users of statistics in their credibility and reliability
4. Obtain and safeguard the confidence of the statistical reporting units—the households, enterprises, and other entities—which provide confidential information for the production of statistical data.

These principles serve as the basis on which the Hellenic Statistical Authority coordinates the functions of the other agencies in the Hellenic Statistical System (ELSS) concerning the development, production and dissemination of the official statistics of Greece.

The Hellenic Statistical Authority also strives for full cooperation with Eurostat and the other Services of the European Commission, as well as with the National Statistical Institutes of the other member states of the European Union, aiming to be a full partner in the workings and evolution of the European Statistical System.

2. ENSURING AND IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF ELSS STATISTICS

The concept of quality is seen within the European Statistical System (ESS) in a broad context and not only in connection with the accuracy of statistical data. In ELSTAT, as in the other ESS members, the quality work in statistics has gradually developed from assessing and reporting on the quality of statistical output to a quality assessment approach in the whole statistical production chain.

The objective of ensuring and further improving the quality of the statistics produced in the ELSS is accomplished by fully implementing the Greek and EU legal and statutory framework on statistics. This consists of the Greek Statistical Law (No 3832/2010, as amended and in force¹), the European Statistical Law [Regulation (EC) No 223/2009], the European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP), EU Regulations on statistics, the

¹ The Greek Statistical Law 3832/2010 was amended in April 2012 in order to be fully aligned with the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice.

Regulation on the Statistical Obligations of the Agencies of the ELSS and the Memoranda of Cooperation between the agencies of the ELSS. A crucial factor for the accomplishment of the above objective is the implementation of the *Commitment on Confidence in Statistics*², which was signed by the Greek Government and the European Commission in February 2012.

3. RULES AND PRINCIPLES OF ELSTAT'S QUALITY POLICY

The quality policy of ELSTAT is based on:

- a) ELSTAT's obligations and responsibilities concerning the quality issues of official statistics, as these obligations and responsibilities are provided for in the national and the European Statistical Law;
- b) the CoP principles and indicators of principles.

It is defined through the following rules and principles:

- **ELSTAT's professional independence assures the credibility of produced statistics. According to the Greek Statistical Law, ELSTAT enjoys operational independence, administrative and financial autonomy, and it is not subject to the control of any governmental body or other administrative authority. ELSTAT strives to remain as such and the implementation of the Greek Commitment on Confidence in Statistics guarantees and supports that independence.**
- **ELSTAT systematically and regularly reviews its statistical processes and output and implements improvements where needed. Quality reports on statistical surveys/works of ELSTAT are uploaded on its website.**
- **Quality of statistical products is assessed through systematically applied procedures, on a daily basis, at the level of production involving competent Divisions of ELSTAT. Statistical production in all domains is under at least quarterly in depth review by the management of ELSTAT with a view to maintaining and improving/addressing quality issues.**
- **ELSTAT aims at continuously improving the quality of its statistics on the basis of best practices followed in the European Statistical System. To this end, it systematically closely cooperates with the other National Statistical Institutes of the European Statistical System and Eurostat. ELSTAT regularly seeks the review of the quality of its statistics in various critical domains by internationally recognized statistical experts.**
- **The use of administrative data sources for the compilation of statistics contributes not only to saving human and financial resources but also to reducing the burden on respondents and to improving the quality of statistical data, mainly in relation with their timeliness. To this end, ELSTAT signs memoranda of cooperation with other producers of statistics.**

² The Greek Commitment on Confidence in Statistics was adopted by the Hellenic Parliament and signed by the Prime Minister and the competent EU Commissioner on 29 February 2012. The Greek commitment is the first one signed by a Member State. The Commitment outlines the commitments of the Greek government with a view to taking all the necessary measures to ensure the independence of ELSTAT and the production of accurate and reliable statistics in the ELSS following European and international quality standards.

- The data provided to ELSTAT from government entities and administrative sources are subjected to controls by ELSTAT with a view to assessing their accuracy and reliability before being used in the production of statistics by ELSTAT.
- Adequate and stable resources are necessary to maintain and further improve the quality and coverage of statistics of Greece. ELSTAT sees to the continuous upgrading of its human resources through training and seminars and to the building and increasing of the staff capacity through the provision of expertise in various statistical domains from external experts.
- ELSTAT recognizes the importance of competent and effective survey workers in ensuring high quality primary data from its surveys. To this end, ELSTAT implements a transparent and merit-based system of survey worker selection.
- ELSTAT strives to take full advantage of the possibilities offered by the new technologies for data collection and processing, with the aim of improving the relevant processes and the reliability and timeliness of the outputs, but also with regard to saving time and resources.
- Individual data of households and private enterprises collected by ELSTAT for statistical compilation are strictly confidential and used exclusively for statistical purposes.
- ELSTAT does not publish data of individual General Government entities and does not communicate them to individual users of statistics. ELSTAT discusses such data with relevant General Government institutions (the supervising ministry of an entity or the General Accounting Office or the Court of Auditors) or the Bank of Greece, only if—and only to the extent that—ELSTAT assesses that this is necessary for the purposes of compiling Government Finance Statistics. To the extent that ELSTAT has to provide the data of General Government entities to courts of law for the purposes of any investigation into the correctness of statistical calculations of Government Finance Statistics—i.e., regarding the conformity of these calculations to the law—and only for such purposes, ELSTAT shall do so.
- Physical and logical security measures are in place in ELSTAT to protect the security and integrity of statistical databases. Clear conditions for granting researchers access to confidential data for scientific purposes are defined.
- One of the main priorities of ELSTAT is to meet the needs of users. ELSTAT strives for the satisfaction of users' needs by increasing the production and dissemination of statistics, taking into account the availability of resources and its national and international obligations.
- ELSTAT strives to continuously improve the various aspects of the layout and content of its portal, as well as enhance the other dissemination modes for its statistics, with a view to fulfilling users' needs both at national and international level, by following the developing international standards.
- In developing, producing and disseminating its statistics, ELSTAT follows uniform standards and harmonized methods in the European

Statistical System and applies the evaluation criteria of quality, such as “relevance”, “accuracy”, “timeliness”, “punctuality”, “accessibility”, “clarity”, “comparability” and “coherence” as these are defined in Article 12 of the Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009, as in force from time to time.

- **ELSTAT collects the comments and observations made by the participants in the Users Conferences, as well as the results from the Users Surveys it conducts, with the aim of improving its statistical product and the services provided, as well as identifying any new needs and requirements for the production of statistics.**

Moreover, ELSTAT as a member of the ELSS:

- **coordinates all the activities of the other ELSS agencies concerning the development, production and dissemination of the official Hellenic statistics;**
- **develops, disseminates and coordinates the implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice within the frame of ELSS;**
- **provides advice and guidance concerning which standards, classifications, and methodologies shall be used for the production of harmonized European statistics;**
- **provides assistance and guidance to agencies on other issues concerning the ELSS;**
- **teaches its staff and that of other ELSS agencies to acknowledge the principles and methods of production of reliable statistics for the European Statistical System;**
- **certifies as “official” statistics which have been produced by other ELSS agencies;**
- **is responsible for the implementation of the national quality assurance framework for statistics.**