

## COMMITMENT ON CONFIDENCE IN STATISTICS

### **The Hellenic Government:**

CONSIDERING that reliable statistics are one of the main elements necessary for the Greek administration, citizens and businesses, as well as for international and European institutions and the markets to take adequate decisions;

EMPHASISING that reliability of official statistics is essential for specifying the magnitudes both of the economic adjustment programmes of Greece and of the assistance packages provided by EU partners and the private sector;

CONSCIOUS that the credibility of official statistics is a key pre-requisite for trust in the economic policy measures declared and pursued by the Hellenic Government, as well as for attaining the ambitious goals of the new economic programmes;

BEARING IN MIND that public confidence in Greek statistics is inherently conditional on the overall credibility of the Hellenic Statistical System, and in particular on the professional independence of the Hellenic Statistical Authority, and that it has a direct impact on the general acceptance of the economic measures;

DESIRING to achieve and maintain a high level of confidence in Greek statistics based on a full implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice;

RECALLING that important steps have already been taken towards designing the Hellenic Statistical System in accordance with the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice;

ACKNOWLEDGING the technical assistance received from the European Commission within the Joint Overall Statistical Greek Action Plan (JOSGAP);

RECONFIRMING its full confidence in the professionalism of the staff producing statistical information in all authorities that are part of the Hellenic Statistical System and expressing appreciation for the improvements in quality achieved so far;

TAKING NOTE of yet persisting significant improvement needs with regard to the institutional framework within the Hellenic Statistical System and to the quality characteristics of Greek statistics;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the overall quality of statistics also relies on the quality of data sources, which needs to be continuously improved;

FOLLOWING the objective to establish a 'Commitment on confidence in statistics' in all European Union Member States which, in the case of Greece, has been agreed and referred to in the 'Memorandum of Understanding on Specific Economic Policy Conditionality' that will be signed with the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund,

### **makes the following solemn commitments:**

to fully RESPECT international and European standards for statistical data quality, in particular the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice;

to GUARANTEE and DEFEND the professional independence of the Hellenic Statistical System, in particular of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), and to PROMOTE it to the public through appropriate communication actions;

to SUPPORT the Hellenic Statistical Authority in upholding public confidence in Greek statistics and to DEFEND them against any efforts to undermine their credibility;

to SECURE adequate and stable resources necessary to maintain and further improve the quality and coverage of Greek statistics;

to TAKE all ACTIONS necessary to effectively and rapidly achieve compliance of the Hellenic Statistical System with the European Statistics Code of Practice, in particular those actions listed in the Annex to this document, within the shortest possible time, if not specifically indicated;

to further REFORM the statistical governance system in Greece by proposing and supporting changes to the Statistical Law in order to replace the collective body of the Hellenic Statistical Authority with a new body reporting on the implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice and, in full conformity with the European Statistics Code of Practice, to entrust the President of ELSTAT with sole responsibility for deciding on processes, statistical methods, standards and procedures, and on the content and timing of statistical releases as well as with the necessary autonomy and flexibility in the use of the resources allocated, combined with full accountability;

to REPORT annually to the Hellenic Parliament and to the European Commission on the implementation of the above commitments;

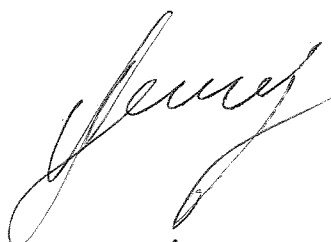
to REESTABLISH the 'Commitment on Confidence in Statistics', if any relevant needs for improvement are identified by the Hellenic Government, the Hellenic Parliament or the European Commission.

*For the Hellenic Government:*



*Lucas Papademos, Prime Minister*

By counter-signing this document, the European Commission welcomes the commitments taken by the Hellenic Government, acknowledges the objectives and improvement actions it has declared, and will continue to deliver technical assistance, as well as to support their implementation and monitor the progress achieved.



*Algirdas Šemeta  
Commissioner for Taxation and Customs Union,  
Audit and Anti-Fraud*

29. 02. 2012

## Annex

### Improvement actions

- (1) The Statistical Law (Law 3832/2010) will be amended by 31 March 2012, in particular with a view to:
  - (a) Ensuring that the Statistical Law makes a clear reference to the need to follow the European Statistics Code of Practice in its entirety;
  - (b) Defining the legal status of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) as a separate legal entity with a view to ensuring its professional independence;
  - (c) Replacing the collective body of ELSTAT with a new statistical advisory body providing independent reporting on the implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice in the Hellenic Statistical System with regard to the institutional environment; this body shall have no influence on the management of ELSTAT or on the collection, production and dissemination of statistics by ELSTAT;
  - (d) Specifying that the new statistical advisory body shall have a duration of 2 years and that its role and effectiveness shall be reviewed two years after its establishment;
  - (e) Introducing an obligation for the statistical advisory body to report annually to the Hellenic Parliament after informing the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board; the said report shall be published;
  - (f) Defining the appointment and dismissal rules concerning members of the statistical advisory body, representing national and international expertise and stakeholders of the Hellenic Statistical System; the President of ELSTAT shall have an observer status in this body;
  - (g) Specifying the rules for the appointment and dismissal of the President of ELSTAT, based on professional criteria only;
  - (h) Entrusting the President of ELSTAT with sole responsibility for deciding on processes, statistical methods, standards and procedures, and on the content and timing of statistical releases as well as with the necessary autonomy and flexibility in the use of allocated human and financial resources;
  - (i) Committing the President of ELSTAT as the coordinator of the Hellenic Statistical System and in that respect in charge of the implementation of the national quality assurance framework;
  - (j) Making the President of ELSTAT accountable to the Hellenic Parliament;
  - (k) Decoupling the budget of ELSTAT from the budget of the Ministry of Finance, and introducing budget planning, execution and monitoring in line with the existing procedures involving the Hellenic Parliament and the Court of Audit;

- (l) Removing the need to consult the Parliament on the Regulation on the Operation and Management of ELSTAT;
  - (m) Making the President of ELSTAT explicitly responsible for appointing the Legal Advisor of ELSTAT, and for proposing the organisational structure (organigramme) of ELSTAT.
- (2) Subsequently, by 31 May 2012, the statistical advisory body will be filled according to the rules specified in the amended Statistical Law.
  - (3) Agencies of the Hellenic Statistical System will be provided with the financial and human resources sufficient to deliver high quality statistics to users in accordance with all obligations at both national and European level.
  - (4) Full and timely access to administrative data sources and to the delivery of administrative data will be ensured in accordance with the Statistical Law.
  - (5) ELSTAT will be entitled to full and timely access for statistical purposes to the economic and financial accounts of all entities belonging to or controlled by general government.
  - (6) Actions laid down in the Joint Overall Statistical Greek Action Plan (JOSGAP) will continue to be implemented effectively in accordance with the deadlines specified.