HCS proposals and recommendations prior to the draft of the National Statistics Plan 2017–2020

The High Council on Statistics proposes the reinforcement of the role of the INE as coordinator of the State's statistical services

It recommends the improvement of the channels to know the users' needs and analyse the viability of meeting them

The High Council on Statistics (HCS) prepared a document with its proposals and recommendations prior to the drawing of the National Statistics Plan (NSP) 2017-2020 draft. Said document referred to the national needs regarding statistics and to the adjustment and improvement of the existing means.

This document constituted the beginning of the NSP 2017-2020 tasks that the National Statistics Institute (INE) had to draw up in collaboration with the remaining statistical services of the Government Administration.

The main purpose of the HCS recommendations was the development and consolidation of an infrastructure that allowed the Government Administration Statistical System to adapt to new, duly assessed needs, to use the existing information to the maximum , to maintain the burden to informants within reasonable levels, and to optimise the use of statistics by society.

Guidelines

The HCS proposals and recommendations focused on the institutional reinforcement of the system, on the assessment of the statistics, their objectives and actions, and on the improvement of the statistical process. With these purposes, seven guidelines were established, and specified in 26 recommendations.

The considered guidelines were quality, institutional coordination, users, communication and dissemination, information collection, response burden to informants and production processes.

These guidelines were coherent with the key areas set forth by the European Statistical System Vision for the year 2020. They took into account the needs of the statistical system on a national basis.

Institutional reinforcement

Regarding the **institutional** side, the HCS highlighted the need for enlarging the coordination of the State Statistical Services and reinforcing the role of the INE. In order to do that, they pointed out that it was necessary to establish a clear framework for the statistical system, as well as to promote properly all the services that are part of it.

This could be made, on the one hand, by determining the services that carry out essentially statistical functions and that have been regulated as such, given the proper infrastructure for their technical competences and the preservation of statistical secrecy, which allows to guarantee their operating neutrality.

And, on the other hand, by extending the coordination of the State statistical services, led by the INE. This would avoid duplication and would promote the quality of the system.

Users and needs

As for the remaining guidelines, regarding **quality** the HCS proposed the application of the European Statistics Code of Practice, which is considered as own by the State Administration Statistical Service for all official statistics.

Regarding **users**, the Council recommended improving the channels to know their needs and analyse the viability of meeting them. In order to put these actions in objective terms, the HCS proposed the establishment of a system allowing to measure the use and assessment of statistical operations by users. This system would make it easier to prioritize detected information needs. Moreover, it would assess the changes in the needs of current production, which could lead to modification and even to consider the continuity of an operation.

Concern about **response burden** is another priority for the HCS. With this purpose, the concept of statistical trace per informant was included as a starting point for the introduction of measures that would keep that trace under determined thresholds.

The document also said that the new **information collection** sources for adding data from administrative registers, social networks and massive information bases (big data) could not be unnoticed when designing an efficient and competitive statistical system for the year 2020.

The efficiency of statistical **processes** using technology improvements and intended to reduce survey preparation costs and find synergy constituted another challenge highlighted by the HCS.

Lastly, and although great improvements had been made in statistical information returning to society, the HCS believed that there was and there would be further progress in several aspects of the **communication and dissemination** of statistics. In particular, the use of technological opportunities, new dissemination means and the combined, coherent offer of data provided by several producers.

The complete document can be seen at the following INE website link:
http://www.ine.es/ss/Satellite?L=en_GB&c=INEPlanEst_C&p=1254735995577&pagename=INE%2FINELayout&_charset_=utf-8&cid=1259945808649&submit=Ir

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