

News from statistical offices

Austria

Management changes

On 1 December 1997, Mr. Karl Messmann was appointed Director of the new ÖSTAT Division on Science and Technology Statistics which replaces the former division on finance statistics. This new division will elaborate statistics on R&D, innovation, human resources, knowledge-based economy and information society.

Since May 1997 ÖSTAT has gone on-line with a comprehensive Web site comprising its organizational structure, most current press releases, its publications programme, information on important fields in text, table and graph forms, information on its databases and service units. The home page address is <http://www.oestat.gv.at>.

New statistical tasks

ÖSTAT is now producing migration statistics for the year 1996 based on information obtained from local administrations on a quarterly or semi-annual basis on internal and international migration. The data collected include sex, date of birth, citizenship of the migrant, date of migration, origin and destination, tabulations by duration of residence can also be made for international comparisons.

Within the field of demographic

projections, ÖSTAT has taken an innovative step in the projection of families based on the population of private households with two or more persons. A probabilistic approach was also implemented in ÖSTAT's national population projects in collaboration with the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) in Laxenburg, Austria. Cooperation with the Austrian Institute for Economic Research (WIFO) also provides projections on future labour supply.

A concept is now being tested for the presentation of newly founded enterprises as well as of those which were closed down in ÖSTAT's business register in accordance with the terms of the EU regulation on registers. ÖSTAT is also conducting a structural performance census on the 225,000 enterprises which exist in the non-agricultural sector. This will provide a basis for the future Austrian economic system adapted to EU standards.

Publications

"Progress in adapting CEEC agricultural statistics to the needs of the European Union", ÖSTAT, September 1997 is an outcome of a Seminar held in Vienna in 1997.

Meetings

The Vienna Consultation will be held from 3 to 5 June 1998 and will deal

with the results of the European Comparison Programme (ECP) '96 and future organization of ECP.

Azerbaijan

Statistical Law

In February 1997 the National Assembly of Azerbaijan passed a law on statistics to promote the establishment of a sound system of statistical information at regional and national levels.

Publications

The following publications of interest to an international audience were produced in 1997 in English: "Azerbaijan in Figures", "Short Statistical Yearbook of Azerbaijan", "Finances of Azerbaijan", "National Accounts of Azerbaijan", "Foreign Trade of Azerbaijan", "Industry of Azerbaijan", "Prices in Azerbaijan", "Transport in Azerbaijan", "Trade in Azerbaijan", "Demography and Social Development in Azerbaijan".

Denmark

International meetings

In September 1997, Statistics Denmark hosted the 12th meeting of the Voorburg Group on Service Statistics. Representatives from 20 international and national statistical offices were present. The main outcome of the meeting was the recommendation of an employment module as part of the model questionnaire for surveys of enterprises in the services sector. The proposed employment module was sent to the

UN Statistical Committee for final approval. The papers and minutes of the meeting will be available through the home pages of Statistics Denmark or Statistics Canada. The next meeting will be hosted by ISTAT in September in Rome, Italy. Further information can be obtained from Mr. Peter Boegh Nielsen, Statistics Denmark. Tel.: (+45) 39 17 31 11; Fax: (+45) 31 18 48 01; E-mail: pbn@dst.dk.

The Fourth International Forum on Tourism Statistics will take place in Copenhagen from 17 to 19 June 1998. It will discuss selected case studies dealing with the implementation of statistical methodologies, definitions and classifications, the identification of alternative sources of information and promotion of new information technologies and the development of integrated systems of tourism statistics and socio-economic indicators to present a global picture of the tourism industry. Further information can be obtained from Mr. Erik E. Grib, Statistics Denmark. Tel.: (+45) 39 17 30 25; Fax: (+45) 31 18 48 01; E-mail: eeg@dst.dk.

New tasks/projects

The Central Business Register which is currently being developed, should be ready for use in the summer of 1999 and will replace the existing register on Danish firms at Statistics Denmark. The register will be based on the existing administrative public registers and will be updated on-line to ensure that the data is the most recent and of the highest quality. For further information, please contact Mr. Hilmar Bojesen, Statistics Denmark. Tel.: (+45) 39 17 31 21; Fax: (45) 31 18 48 01; E-mail: hib@dst.dk.

Nordic statistical institutes have set

up a common task force with the partial funding of the Nordic Council of Ministers with the objective of discussing and approving a common definition of IT branches. The task force is to elaborate a proposal for a definition of the IT sector and an identification of relevant statistical indicators and to produce basic statistics in accordance with the common definition for all 5 Nordic countries. The report is expected to be finalized by September 1998. Further information can be obtained from Mr. Peter Boegh Nielsen, Statistics Denmark. Tel.: (+45) 39 17 31 11; Fax: (+45) 31 18 48 01; E-mail: pbn@dst.dk

Estonia

Management changes

On 1 July 1997, Ms. Aili Lobjakas was appointed head of the newly created Methodology of Statistics Division within the Statistical Office of Estonia.

Legislation

The official Statistics Act of Estonia was passed on 11 June 1997.

Germany

Management changes

As of 29 August 1997, Mr. Heinrich Lützel assumed the post of Vice President of the Federal Statistical Office. He formerly held the position of Head of Department III "National Accounts" in the Office.

Legal bases for statistics

The Third Law on Adjusting the Legal Provisions for Statistics was passed in October 1997. It stipulates reduction and rationalization with respect to federal statistics in order to provide for greater economy at the statistical offices and a decreased burden on enterprises and local units, thereby restricting government activity to the required level.

Major new tasks

Although statistics are subject to cuts in public budgets, the demand for information and statistical tasks continues to increase. Environmental and tax statistics have been expanded and statistics of business notifications introduced. The European Union has issued new requirements in the area of economic statistics such as the creation of a comprehensive business register and the introduction of structural business statistics relating to various sectors.

To meet the increasing demand for information in the areas of the environment and health, the Federal Statistical Office has focused on the further development of the system of environmental-economic accounting and the construction of a system of health reporting.

Hungary

Publications

The Hungarian Central Statistical Office issued for the first time for international use its publication "Hungary, 1996" in English.

Hungarian statistical data are also

made available regularly through Internet in parallel with the continuous development of the STADAT system.

Lithuania

Meetings

From 12 to 18 August 1998, the seventh Vilnius Conference on Probability Theory and Mathematical Statistics will take place.

Malta

Management changes

Mr. Alfred Camilleri, formerly Acting Director of the Central Office of Statistics Malta (COS), has been appointed Director of the Institution.

Meetings

The 2nd Management Committee Conference – Medstat will take place in June 1998 and a Medstat Seminar is also being held on “New Trends in the Use of EDP in Statistical Offices”.

New tasks

One of the foremost projects for COS Malta in 1998 is the creation of a business register.

Romania

Meetings

A Seminar on Research and Development in Official Statistics, Official and Academic Cooperation took place in

Sinaia from 16 to 18 April 1998. The Seminar discussed the two facets of statisticians – the civil servant and the scientist.

Slovenia

Slovenian Standard Classification of Occupations

The Decree on the Introduction and Use of the Standard Classification of Occupations (SKP) was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia in March 1997. The SKP is based on the international ISCO-88 and ISCO-88(COM) standards and was prepared by the Statistical Office in cooperation with the National Employment Office. It will be used as an obligatory national standard for recording, collecting, processing and disseminating data which are important for monitoring the situation and trends on the domestic labour market and for international comparisons on 1 January 1999. It will also be used in administrative records and statistical surveys. Responsibility for maintenance and harmonization of SKP rests with the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia.

Publications

The Statistical Office of Slovenia published in September 1997 “Life Tables for the Population of Slovenia 1980–1982 to 1993–1995” in the Slovene and English languages. The publication provides a historical overview of life tables done in Slovenia, their method of elaboration and mortality developments from 1930 to the present, although attention focuses mainly on the period from 1990. The publication

presents for the first time abridged life tables for small territorial units for 1979–1983 and 1989–1993 which were done within the framework of the elaboration of regional population projections. It also discusses differences among values of life-table functions caused by the different data sources used.

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

New Act on State Statistics

A new Act on State Statistics was adopted by Parliament in October 1997 which provides that official statistics be based on impartiality, objectivity, neutrality, confidentiality and rationality. The authorized body is the Statistical Office of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia which is an independent, public administration organ. Other governmental organs are authorized to conduct statistical surveys within its competence.

According to this law, the Programme of Statistical Research specifies the statistical surveys to be conducted within a 5-year period. Amendments to this can be made annually. The programme also specifies the bodies responsible for the collection, processing and publication of statistical data obtained from these specific surveys. Confidentiality and data protection are also provided for in this Act. The Statistical Office guarantees that individual data for legal entities and personal data for natural entities have the status of confidential and can only be used for purposes defined in the Law. Relevant Provisions to support the Act are being prepared.

Turkey

Meetings

The second meeting of the “Delhi Group” took place in Ankara, Turkey on 24–27 March 1998. The Meeting was co-organized by the State Institute of Statistics of Turkey and the Indian Central Statistical Organization. The Delhi Group works on “informal sector statistics” and aims to document and develop methodologies for data collection and to promote the use of informal sector statistics.

The 51st session of the International Statistical Institute (ISI) was held in Istanbul from 18 to 26 August 1997 under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Turkey and the State Institute of Statistics. Over 1800 participants including statisticians, scientists and academicians from 121 countries took part and presented over 1000 papers.

International Labour Office

Managerial changes

Mr. Kebebew Ashagrie was appointed Director of the ILO Bureau of Statistics with effect from 1 December 1997, following the resignation of Mr. F. Mehran. A Canadian national of Ethiopian origin, and a statistician-economist by training, Mr. Ashagrie has been working with the ILO Bureau of Statistics for about 18 years part of which as a Labour Statistics Adviser for the African region. He came to the Bureau from Statistics Canada where he served for several years and, prior to that, in Labour Canada. He intends to maintain the close collaboration which

exists between the UN Economic Commission for Europe and the ILO Bureau of Statistics in the development and dissemination of labour statistics at the regional and international levels.

International Statistical Institute

Competition for young statisticians

The International Statistical Institute has announced the Ninth Competition for Young Statisticians in Developing Countries. Young statisticians are invited to submit a paper on any topic within the field of statistics for possible presentation at the 52nd Session of the ISI to be held in Helsinki, Finland, in 1999. Participation in the competition is open to nationals of developing countries who are living in a developing country, born in 1967 or later. Previous winners of the award are prohibited from competing again.

Papers submitted must be unpublished, original works which may in-

clude material from participants' university theses. The papers submitted will be examined by an International Jury of distinguished statisticians who will select the three best papers presented in the competition. Their decision will be final.

Each author of a winning paper will receive the Jan Tinbergen Award in the amount of 5,000 Dutch Guilders and be invited to present their paper at the Helsinki Session of ISI, with all expenses paid (i.e. round trip airline ticket from his/her place of residence to Helsinki plus a lump sum to cover living expenses).

Manuscripts for the Competition should be submitted in time to reach the ISI not later than 1 January 1999.

The rules governing the preparation of papers, application forms and full details are available on request from the ISI Permanent Office at the following address: The Director, Permanent Office, International Statistical Institute, 428 Prinses Beatrixlaan, 2270 AZ Voorburg, The Netherlands.