Support for managing the crisis

COVID-19 and official statistics

In June 2019, the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) adopted the CES Recommendations on the Role of Official Statistics in Measuring Hazardous Events and Disasters, which:

- Clarify the role of national statistical offices (NSOs) and other members of national statistical systems (NSSs) in providing information related to hazardous events and disasters, and identify practical steps to better support disaster risk management efforts in coordination with national agencies responsible for disaster risk management.

Chapter 5 of the CES Recommendations provides a list of potential contributions of NSS to each phase of disaster risk management, including the phases of disaster response and recovery. This provides NSOs with guidance to address the current emergency situation (disaster response phase) with official statistics (e.g., on the geographical distribution of population at risk) and to plan specific activities that will be needed at the end of the crisis (for example specific surveys to measure disaster impacts). This chapter also recommends a set of basic statistics ("emergency data kit") which should be kept up-to-date and easily accessible in case of a disaster. The emergency data kit requires clarified procedures regarding the handling of data confidentiality, small scale-analysis, integration with other information etc. to be used in emergency situations without delay.

In the CES Recommendations, you will also find practical examples for:

- Using official statistics available in disaster-risk management while maintaining statistical confidentiality
- How NSOs could contribute to data analysis and communication with policymakers, media and public, etc.
Activities

Ongoing:

- UNECE Task Force on Measuring Hazardous Events and Disasters, which developed the Recommendations, is working under a renewed mandate to support NSOs in contributing to managing the current emergency situation
- The Task Force is collecting the practical experience of NSOs in addressing the current and anticipated information demand, and how they deal with major challenges.

Upcoming:

During the 68th plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) (22–24 June 2020), the chief statisticians of all CES member countries, will discuss:

  - Data stewardship – new roles of NSOs in the changing world (organized by UNECE)
  - Impact of Covid-19 crises on business continuity of official statistics (organized by OECD)
- Sharing experience in implementing the CES Recommendations and Using geospatial data and tools for measuring COVID-19 impact - jointly with UN-GGIM:Europe

The Task Force will publish case studies on how NSOs respond to COVID-19 and develop core indicators on hazardous events and disasters.

Country practices

In addition to continuing their normal operations under very difficult circumstances, NSOs carry out new or unusual activities that help the government and the public to deal with the crisis. This collection of practices aims to help NSOs learn from each other, prepare for the recovery phase and improve the use of official statistics in disaster risk management in the future.

The following table includes examples of NSOs of Australia, Canada, Colombia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Romania, State of Palestine, Sweden, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

Challenges related to the regular production of official statistics, e.g. because staff working from home, difficulties to carry out interview-type surveys etc., can be found in other sections of this platform.

Please use the filter tool to select countries or categories that are of interest for you. The information can be downloaded in various formats.

The main sources of information are: (1) a special survey carried out by the UNECE Task Force on Measuring Hazardous Events and Disasters (and follow-up communication with NSOs), (2) the UNSD COVID-19 response website, (3) NSOs’ websites and (4) information provided directly by NSO.

For updates and adding of information please contact Michael Nagy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Title and link</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Date added</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Dissemination</td>
<td>COVID-19 portal</td>
<td>Latest information products that helps to shed light on the key economic trends and social challenges related to the COVID-19 crisis.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17-Apr-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Dissemination</td>
<td>Interactive tool: Canadian Economic Dashboard and COVID-19</td>
<td>The dashboard includes 16 indicators from a range of monthly data programs—real gross domestic product, consumer prices, the employment rate, merchandise exports and imports, retail sales, hours worked, manufacturing sales, air and railway transportation, and travel. The dashboard will be updated as new data and analysis become available.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17-Apr-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Dissemination</td>
<td>Canada COVID-19 Situational Awareness Dashboard</td>
<td>Dashboard of Covid-19 cases in Canada. Statistics Canada is providing its considerable geo-spatial expertise to respond to pressing information requests for geo-enabled data coming from various federal partners and first responders monitoring and intervening directly in the field during the COVID-19 crisis. This work will facilitate access to geo coding and mapping of relevant socioeconomic information. This work involves working with Natural Resources Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and Public Safety Canada, to build dashboards and portals for PHAC to help them disseminate socio-economic and health data, and information from their epidemiologists to other federal departments, and health agencies at the provincial, territorial, and local levels. See also Daily press release: <a href="http://s/www150.statcan.gc.ca/t/daily-quotidien/200330/dq200330b-eng.htm">http://s/www150.statcan.gc.ca/t/daily-quotidien/200330/dq200330b-eng.htm</a></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17-Apr-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
<td>Crowdsourcing: Impacts of COVID-19 on Canadians</td>
<td>The crowd-sourcing online questionnaire collects data on the current economic and social situation, as well as on people’s physical and mental health, to effectively assess the needs of communities and implement suitable support measures during and after the pandemic. In order to implement this survey rapidly, the survey is conducted online only. Respondents are also asked if they would like to volunteer to participate in the Canadian Perspectives Survey Series (CPSS).</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17-Apr-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
<td>Canadian Perspectives Survey Series 1: Impacts of COVID-19</td>
<td>Report and infographic of results for the period between 29 March and 3 April. More than 4,600 people in the 10 provinces responded to this survey between March 29 and April 3. The CPSS involves creating a pool of people who agree to complete about six very short online surveys over a period of one year (about one every two months). The CPSS aims at understanding social issues more rapidly, while reducing the cost of collecting data.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17-Apr-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
<td>Web panel survey on the impacts of COVID-19</td>
<td>Statistics Canada launched a web panel survey from 29 March to 3 April 2020 and covered topics on the impacts of COVID19 on Canadians with a reference period that covered 22—26 March 2020. Participants consisted of a web panel of Canadians living in all 10 provinces. The first release from the web panel survey was on April 8 and can be found here. Other iterations of this survey will take place as necessary.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17-Apr-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Analytical work</td>
<td>Modelling and surveillance support</td>
<td>Statistics Canada will respond to pressing information requests mostly coming from Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) by providing expertise and consultative services in the area of modeling and microsimulation to support PHAC work in the area of projections. PHAC has already been engaged on this front and are considering options. Numerous projects utilizing Statistics Canada microsimulation capacity and its data science expertise are under consideration.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17-Apr-20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9 Colombia Dissemination

Geoportal on vulnerable population and health infrastructure (geopíloro de vulnerabilidad)

Set up in the context of the pandemic to present in form of an interactive map, to show where the population is, which, due to its demographic characteristics and health condition, may have more complications if catching COVID-19. It also shows the location of health centers.

10 Finland Dissemination

Analysis of economic situation during COVID-19 crisis: Statistics Finland offers data and competence to situation room established by Helsinki GSE (8 April 2020)

The Helsinki Graduate School of Economics GSE has established a situation room focused on analysing the economic situation together with VATT Institute for Economic Research and Statistics Finland. The aim is to provide a view of economic development during the coronavirus crisis with the help of the situation room analyses.

11 Finland Dissemination

Increasing release schedule and providing new data: 6 April 2020 Corona situation report

Statistics Finland aims to accelerate the release schedule of statistics important from the viewpoint of emergency conditions and to publish information supplementing normal statistics production in the form needed by users.

12 Germany Dissemination

High priority to the production of short-term economic statistics

NSG does not collaborate directly with national agencies or institutions to manage the pandemic. The main activity is providing specific data (economic, social, territorial) and to publish specific statistics and indicators. The focus of work is on essential statistics. The Federal Statistical Office of Germany gives high priority to the production of short-term economic statistics, such as GDP, the consumer price index and unemployment rate. We also disseminate our fastest economic indicator: the truck toll-mileage index (nine days after the reference month).

13 Germany Planned activities

Special page on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and press work (in German)

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are directly visible in many economic indicators over the following month, possibly years. Besides the economic indicators, other statistics can give further relevant structural information in reference to the COVID-19 pandemic (especially health statistics). For January and February 2020, effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are seen, if at all, only with regard to individual countries (e.g. exports to China). However, first disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic are expected for March and April 2020.

14 Germany Lessons learned

Main lessons learned

- Close data gaps and provide information important for the crisis
- Strengthen Digitalisation
- Reliability of time and accuracy
- Transparent communication
- Be quicker: extension of Nowcasts / Flash estimates

15 Ghana Dissemination

COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard

Dashboard with COVID-19 cases and data on vulnerable population groups, access to sanitation and health facilities

16 Ghana Data collection

Press release: New data methods are helping the Government of Ghana fight COVID-19

How Ghana Statistical Services (GSS), Vodafone Ghana, and the Flowminder Foundation are using innovative data science techniques to support the government's response against COVID-19.

17 Ghana Analytical work

Mobility analysis to support the Government of Ghana in responding to the COVID-19 outbreak using mobile phone data

Initial insights into the effect of mobility restrictions in Ghana using anonymised and aggregated mobile phone data

18 Ireland Dissemination

Ireland Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard, Datasets and other sources of information

In response to the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in collaboration with Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi), the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government (DHLPG) and the All Island Research Observatory (AIRO) in Maynooth University, along with Esri Ireland as technical partners, rapidly developed a National Covid-19 Data Hub on the GeoHive platform. GeoHive was identified as the State’s geospatial data platform in the Public Service Data Strategy 2019 – 2023. For this particular action this work has been designated as the GeoHive Covid19 Response Coordination Group, (GH-COVID19-RCG). The Group is part of the IEMAG. The National Covid-19 project partners use best practice methodologies and governance structures to ensure the appropriate overall management of the project and its data.

19 Lithuania Dissemination

COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard

A set of interactive maps with virus-related information on hospitals, doctors, population by age and sex and region and integrated UN and LT monitoring of the virus information

20 New Zealand Analytical work

Provisional indications – effects of coronavirus outbreak on New Zealand trade with China

New Zealand’s daily trade from 1 February to 25 March 2020, comparing 2020 values with those from previous years to show the potential impacts of COVID-19 since its outbreak in late 2019.
State of Palestine: Analytical work

Press Release of Corona Crises lossess

Economic forecasts for 2020 in light of the current outbreak of the Coronavirus

2 17-Apr-20

State of Palestine: Dissemination

Summary of consultation on effects of the COVID-19 on women in Palestine

A Summary of Statistical Indicators on Women in Palestine during the COVID-19 crisis

2 17-Apr-20

Sweden: Dissemination

Coronavirus (COVID-19) portal

Dedicated portal with news and statistics on the spread and effects of COVID-19, including (1) News and statistics on how the spread of the corona virus affects society; (2) information to respondents of surveys.

2 17-Apr-20

United Kingdom: Dissemination

Coronavirus (COVID-19) portal

All COVID-19 related statistics and a blog on the latest work, for example:

- Estimates of deaths from COVID-19 – weekly, monthly, excess deaths (project with DHSC), risk factors, pre-existing health conditions.
- New online social and opinion survey – onto wave 3, results published every Thursday; analysis on disability, young people, vulnerable people, other groups.
- New online business survey – onto wave 2, results published every Thursday; rates of furloughing, impacts on business turnover, etc.
- New online Labour Market Survey to supplement the Labour Force Survey, including COVID-19 questions.
- Exploring potential of high frequency consumer spending data.
- Weekly price index and stock availability for high demand items.
- Considering implications/risk to data collection and fieldwork (including International Passenger Survey).
- Data Science Campus working with data from telecoms providers to assess trends in movement and football.
- Working with HMRC on earlier indications of employment and earnings trends, using PAYE Real Time Information.
- Characteristics of workers and impacts on the labour market – key workers, self-employment, home-working, technology, risk of infection, etc.

Over half of all traffic to the ONS website is searching for the statistics on deaths due to coronavirus. We’ve published new analysis about this in the past week, showing that in March over 90% of deaths involving COVID-19 had an underlying health condition.

The weekly Faster Indicators included results from the new weekly Opinions and Lifestyle Survey, with questions about the impact of coronavirus on people’s lives. Just over half of adults said the coronavirus was affecting their well-being.

20-Apr-20

United Kingdom: Dissemination

Counting deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19)

Introduction to the provisional figures published on 31 March, explaining why the different ways of counting used across the government give different answers.

2 17-Apr-20

United Kingdom: Analytical work

Coronavirus (COVID-19) round-up

Latest data and analysis related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and its impact on the UK’s economy and society.

2 17-Apr-20

United Kingdom: Analytical work

Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain Statistical bulletins

New indicators from the ONS Opinions and Lifestyle Survey to understand the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain.

2 17-Apr-20

United Kingdom: Improving data fitness

Ensuring the best possible information during COVID-19 through safe data collection

Note discussing ONS response to the COVID-19 crisis and its approach to ensure the government has the information it needs to manage the UK’s response to the pandemic.

2 17-Apr-20

United Kingdom: Improving data fitness

Top tips for quality assuring urgent pieces of ad hoc statistical analysis

This note provides advice on how to conduct quality assurance of ad-hoc analyses of official statistical data, with a quick turn-around, to answer specific questions in situations when time and resources are limited.

2 17-Apr-20

United Kingdom: Challenges

Biggest challenges at the moment

Some key challenges include:

- Access to and dissemination/sharing of new data sources;
- Coordination of statistical outputs within government;
- The pressure placed on human resources to deliver analysis at pace while working remotely.

1 20-Apr-20

Turkey: Dissemination

Main focus of current NSO work to support managing the pandemic

TurkStat is not involved in managing the pandemic directly, but it meets the data requests of public institutions and universities related to pandemic. Population statistics with very detailed geographic breakdown (detailed quarters or even streets) are provided to public institutions (Ministry of Health, local governments, etc.) without suppression. Requested social data is mostly on elderly and child population which are under curve but except for some special cases because of pandemic. Data are provided on both person and household level for requested geographic level. Moreover, worker are ongoing to prepare a report which covers every kind of statistics related to COVID-19.

1 20-Apr-20

Turkey: Data collection

Questions added to the Labour Force Survey

To determine the possible impacts on the labour market, a few modular questions were added to the Labour Force Survey (LFS) as of April 2020. Together with these questions added to the LFS, it is planned to estimate the sizes of people who are employed but who are on paid or unpaid leave, started working from home, changed working hours, quit the job due to the epidemic or not looking for a job due to the epidemic.

1 20-Apr-20

Turkey: Dissemination

Statistical tables to be prepared for publishing at the NSO webpage

Statistical tables on COVID-19 pandemic are prepared to be published on TurkStats webpage focusing on statistics that could be beneficial for decision makers, researchers and general public, for example:

- Proportion of child population and elderly population in selected countries,
- Number of households with individuals aged 65 and over by provinces,
- Average size of households by provinces, time distribution in household and family care by sex and employment status,
- Persons responsible for the day care of kids by SR Level 1 and three major provinces,
- Persons responsible for household chores by SR Level 1 and three major provinces,
- Time distribution in household and family care by sex and employment status,
- Values and persons as source of happiness of elderly people,
- The number of elderly people living alone (in order to make social aids),
- The number of households with children under a specific age and working in public sector (in order to create a working structure (work from abroad etc.) that ensures society’s health as well as performing current works,
- Age structure of the country (to determine part of the risk groups),
- Type of the households (to determine expansion capacity of the infection)

1 20-Apr-20

Mexico: Dissemination

Providing data to Government for crisis management

INEGI has been working together with the Federal Government and the National General Health Council to provide data required from different government offices and keeping in mind the health of its personnel.

INEGI data has been used to implement contingency plans for the outbreak of the disease:

- National database of private hospitals and clinics - for the Government to contact them and invite to join the National Hospital Reconstruction Plan.
- Data on elderly people (over 60), so that local Governments will be prepared.

1 20-Apr-20
Currently, the biggest challenge faced by INEGI is its ability to collect high-quality and comparable statistics useful for monitoring the economic, health and public safety situation in the country. Considering that most data collection efforts are based on face-to-face interviews, current public health measures have imposed additional difficulties with the data production cycle. This situation is expected to last several weeks as the critical phase of the pandemic is over, given the fact that institutions will devote human and financial resources to solve unavoidable economic and social problems. It is expected to have a slowdown in productive activities that may last for the rest of the year. Consequently, INEGI is seeking alternative methods for data collection: it is necessary to implement protocols that allow information to be collected without the need to risk the health of interviewers and informants.

Yet this shift may cause comparability and precision issues. In other words, whilst disseminating statistics in a moment like this is crucial for decision making purposes, field and government authorities will likely have an impact on the quality and comparability of the data provided. For the next stage, one of the main challenges is to generate the conditions to give continuity to the historical series of statistical information. Due to the situation of not being able to perform interviews, INEGI will have to be included in the results reports regarding the efforts of altering information collection periods, and altering the design of probabilistic survey samples. Thus, INEGI will need to communicate in the most transparent and comprehensible way possible, the limitations and drawbacks of the data provided.

In particular, in the case of Socioodemographic Statistics, the challenges we face now in order to give continuity to the work of the Directorate are:

- Designing tools to assign work at home to Census 2020 staff, including coverage verification from satellite images and the revision of addresses for sending invitation letters for self-enumeration via Internet or by telephonic interview in those dwellings with non-response status for the Census 2020.
- Redesign and planning of the verification process and the stages of the Census 2020 that were cancel, however, the task is complicated by the uncertainty of the dates to return to normal activities.
- Self-registration via the Internet has been promoted in those dwellings that maintain non-response status for the Census 2020, however, the response rate has been low, remaining below 10 percent.
- To train and equip staff with the necessary instruments to carry out telephone interviews in the dwellings in the Labour Force Survey sample where a telephone number is available; and plan telephone interviews by means of invitation through letters in those dwellings where a telephone number is not yet available.

To soften the impact on the results of the statistical information; it is not only a question of the non-existence of information during the period that the confinement is maintained, but also a possible effect is foreseen as a consequence of a higher non-response rate, the alteration of historical comparability, or the loss of coverage and accuracy.

- Generate the necessary and historic indicators during the confinement phase.
- Generate a short employment questionnaire in order to know the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the labor market.
- A retrospective survey is being considered in order to gain a clearer understanding of the effects of COVID-19 on the labor market; this will be a challenge in every sense since it implies the deployment of human, financial and technological resources for its implementation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>35</th>
<th>Mexico</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Biggest challenges at the moment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>Biggest challenges anticipated for the next phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Planned activities</td>
<td>Specific activities planned for the recovery phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Lessons learned</td>
<td>Main lessons learned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>Analytical work</td>
<td>Press release: people stay in one location 20 hours per day on average (9 April 2020)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistics Estonia is carrying out analysis of how well the #stayhome rule is followed using mobile positioning data (in cooperation with the main mobile operators). A related news release from 9 April is here (people stay in one location 20 hours per day on average). There is also a description of methodology.
**Do you have questions or want to share your experience? Let us know in the comments below.**

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