Activities

Ongoing:

- The Executive Board of High-Level Group for Modernisation of Official Statistics and its Blue-Skies Thinking Network established a protected digital space where its members share their views and experiences regarding the response to the crisis in their organizations.
- Facilitating knowledge exchange in the expert community within existing activities (e.g. on usage of mobile data).
- The geo-statistical response to the COVID-19 crisis

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)
- Using geospatial data and tools for measuring COVID-19 impact - jointly with UN-GGIM: Europe

Country practices

The examples below illustrate how NSOs deal with the challenges of continuing their operations during the COVID-19 crisis.

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.

Examples on crisis communications during COVID-19 are available on the dedicated page under Strategic Communications Framework.

For updates and adding of information please leave a comment at the bottom of the page or contact Malgorzata Cwiek.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Title and/or link</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>Statistical production</td>
<td>Data dissemination and dedicated section on the web</td>
<td>Data dissemination was adapted timely, so to stay relevant and serve decision makers and public. Extra info graphics were prepared with COVID-19 related statistics, like, map with territories with the biggest share of senior population, number of population with chronic diseases etc. As of 9 April special section on the web page introduced with COVID-19 related socio-economic indicators (number of employees in most affected sectors etc.) All recent releases can be found there.</td>
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<td>17 July 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>Statistical production</td>
<td>New practices for existing surveys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>Statistical production</td>
<td>Extra activities</td>
<td>Daily updates of the Statistical Business Register's information of the VAT payers' register and the sign of termination of activity for enterprises, which have been liquidated, insolvency and liquidation proceedings have been initiated, reorganized, economic activity has been terminated and receives downtime benefits.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17 July 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>Consumers and data suppliers management</td>
<td>New practices and data sources</td>
<td>Considering that since March 2020 all CAPI interviews were suspended, extra efforts were invested to promote and organize wider use of CATI and CAMI for social surveys. The need for timely and qualitative statistical information was recognized by Cabinet of Ministers and National Parliament, so on 30 April special amendments were made and approved in the Order &quot;On Declaring the State of Emergency&quot;, establishing the obligation for the State Revenue Service, Office of the Citizenship and Migration Affairs and the Road Traffic Safety Directorate to provide upon request from the Central Statistical Bureau the information on contact telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of natural persons included in the sample of the Labor Force Survey, EU SILC and ICT survey. Cooperation with involved institutions has turned out very successful. The work of interviewers’ team is being reorganized accordingly. Besides that, the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia has been able to agree with the State Revenue Service on faster information exchange on the volumes of performed transactions from VAT declarations, in addition to the existing agreement (letter to the SRS, referring to the state of emergency in the country).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>Consumers and data suppliers management</td>
<td>Communication with user groups</td>
<td>The Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia has put a lot of efforts in communication with user groups during the COVID-19 outbreak. As soon as state of emergency was announced in mid-March, information on suspended home interviews on social media was published and press release prepared. Soon after separate press release for business statistics respondents and individual persons stressing importance of continuous data providing so to assess the impact of COVID-19 was prepared. In the beginning of April special press release with our greatest gratitude to respondents who have continued to provide data for statistical purposes was issued and special call (info graphics) for enterprises and individual persons to participate in surveys followed shortly after.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17 July 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Consumers and data suppliers management</td>
<td>ABS COVID response webpage</td>
<td>ABS has created three webpages dedicated to COVID-19 response.</td>
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<td>11 May 2020</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The ABS is committed to delivering timely and accurate information about the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on Australian society and the economy.

The ABS is producing a range of existing and new statistical products, providing relevant insights on households, employment and industry. To inform government, business and community responses to the pandemic, a dedicated task force has been established to identify and secure new data sources to supplement the production of existing ABS products, address emerging policy questions and data needs in response to COVID-19, and deliver novel and innovative products in the future.

New statistical releases will provide information on:
- Business impacts such as cash flow and turnover
- Additional monthly analysis on hours worked, including reasons for working less hours, and quarterly hours worked analysis by industry
- Preliminary retail turnover data
- Interactive employment maps
- Preliminary import and export data
- COVID-related employment and health implications for households
- Additional analysis of short-term overseas visitors and international students
- Interactive age and health conditions population maps
- Confidentialised microdata for Australian businesses will be made available for researchers through TableBuilder so they can produce tables, graphics and maps.

Australia  Statistical production

Protection of the health of staff and respondents, while ensuring the continuity of service

ABS is protecting the health of its staff and respondents, while ensuring the ongoing operating capacity.

By mid-March, given the risks associated with travel and gatherings in confined spaces, ABS reduced the number of agencies and individuals attending face-to-face meetings. ABS also suspended surveys that required face-to-face contact, including those within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, to protect vulnerable populations.

Some of the regular activities were paused to free up resources to ensure the key economic series weren't at risk, or to make way for the collection of COVID-19 related data. Critical teams were identified, and surge capacity and shadow teams put in place to keep production processes going in the event that infection rates of ABS staff rose to critical levels.

France  Statistical production

Impact of COVID-19 on statistical production (press releases of 19 March and 25 March) and a dedicated COVID-19 web page

INSEE has been complying with the confinement and has been able to ensure continuity of its mission through teleworking. This has required redefining priorities and adapting certain operation to the new conditions. INSEE informs about the impact of the COVID-19 on its work through press releases and a dedicated web page.

Registers: INSEE assured the public about that it will continue to maintain the population register and the business register which are under its responsibility.

Surveys: INSEE carries household surveys exclusively by phone or online if possible (employment survey and living conditions survey). ICT survey will not be carried out in 2020. Replies already provided by companies online will be preserved but there will be no reminders and no legal consequences of non-response. Certain large companies whose responses are indispensable can be contacted.

Statistical production: INSEE aims to ensure the continuity of the production of national accounts. The provisional annual accounts for 2019 should be published as planned. The publication of trimestral accounts for first and second trimester 2020 may not follow the usual calendar, in particular the first estimate, which is scheduled 30 days after the end of each trimester.

INSEE will continue to publish according to the usual calendar (or almost) all the main economic indicators, including monthly industrial production index, trimestral employment figures and monthly price index. Economic developments and difficulties in data collection may however affect the quality of certain indicators. This will be systematically documented.

Every week, INSEE will publish daily number of deaths reported by the communes, based on the civil registration system.

INSEE is in contact with mobile operators to measure the distribution of the population on the territory. This work will lead to a publication as soon as possible.

Economic impacts: INSEE aims to publish an analysis of the economic situation every two weeks. INSEE will issue updated press releases as necessary if conditions of data collection deteriorate or if INSEE encounters difficulties in ensuring continuity of service.

Netherlands  Statistical production

A dedicated website Coronavirus Crisis - CBS figures

Statistics Netherlands created a dedicated website with CBS figures on COVID-19 impacts on economy, society, public health, public mobility and supply chains, and related news articles.

Measuring article stockpiling with scanner data

On 24 March, Statistics Netherlands published an analysis on article stockpiling based on weekly transaction data.

Netherlands  Statistical production

Preliminary import and export data by industry

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Mexico | Statistical production | No interruption of production and publication of short-term economic indicators and maintaining information quality standards | 1 | 24 Apr 2020

The main challenge is not to interrupt the production and publication of short-term economic indicators and maintain information quality standards.

In case of the production of short-term economic statistics, we anticipate problems in surveying and in the imputation methods of missing data, as well as the temporary or definitive suspension of some businesses in certain industries.

The main challenges for the price indices are:
- Preserving the health integrity of the work team.
- Carry out the day-to-day work of operation, facing existing restrictions, but seeking to obtain the result by alternative methods.
- Resolve the no response problem by alternative methods of data collection and processing.
- Ensure the publication of the National Consumer Price Index, defined as data of national interest.
- Ensure the quality and reliability of the data.

Mexico | Risk management | Evaluation of the operating conditions in economic units | 1 | 24 Apr 2020

According to the Contingency Plan of the National Economic Surveys, INEGI will carry out an evaluation of the operating conditions that prevailed during the health crisis in the economic units, in such a way that the data available is ratified or rectified.

This activity will be a determining input for the generation of statistical results for the contingency period, in such a way that the data is generated in accordance with the quality, accuracy, relevance and opportunity established by the Law.

It is essential to carry out an evaluation of the actions taken during the contingency, both statistical and non-statistical, in order to prepare a detailed report of the actions, highlighting the impacts, conclusions and alternatives of solution for the areas of opportunity that may be found. This report will be the fundamental input for the design of a contingency plan of greater scope.

Germany | Statistical production | Biggest challenges at the moment | 1 | 20 Apr 2020

Monitoring of company responses and the share of estimation:
Due to the difficulties experienced by companies during the pandemic, non-responses are expected. As far as possible, this is compensated by utilizing estimates, accepting a higher error tolerance and reducing the publication depth. The present situation is particularly difficult for many companies, public authorities and private individuals obliged to report data for the production of official statistics. We are nevertheless asking for the submission of data via the familiar electronic transmission channels. Since, this data will help to provide policymakers and administrative authorities with the basic information they need to decide on measures for coping with the crisis.

Contributions by other public authorities:
Important contributions by other public authorities might be missing, because they are also affected by the disease.

Germany | Human resources management | Biggest challenges at the moment | 1 | 20 Apr 2020

A reduction of active staff is expected because of the pandemic. The existing staff is “reorganised” according to the statistical priorities.

Mexico | Human resources management | Providing data to government for crisis management | 1 | 20 Apr 2020

NSO sent most of its office employees to work under a home office structure starting March 23th 2020, keeping just a small crew to operate.

Field personal worked on the census until March 30th 2020.

On April 6th 2020 practically everyone still in the office was sent home.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare indicated to NSO that the contracts of its temporary employees who carry out field activities should be maintained.

Turkey | Human resources management | Biggest challenges at the moment | 1 | 20 Apr 2020

In line with the TurkStat National Data Release Calendar, in order to ensure timely publication of news bulletins and statistics, home office working has been initiated and remote access to databases has been provided.

Personnel started to work in shifts both in the central office and regional offices by rotation and by remote accessing from home (telecommuting). Approximately 10 % of the staff goes to work in every unit. In each department, in every unit, there is some staff on duty to take necessary precautions. Except this, each unit organizes their work schedule themselves in control of their superior. As a result, the number of personnel has been decreased in the offices (% 90 of staff telecommuting ) to decrease the contagion of the pandemic. Meetings and other social interactions were stopped, instead of it, video conferences were organized.

Turkey | Statistical production | Data compilation issues | 1 | 20 Apr 2020

There are 26 regional offices of TurkStat (corresponding to NUTS II level regions), which are in charge of the compilation, evaluation, quality control, analysis of the data and its transfer to the Center. Approximately 3/4 of the total staff are working in the regional offices, with the majority of them are interviewers who are primarily engaged in data collection. Therefore, due to the Covid-19 illness, some challenges are expected to be experienced during data collection processes in surveys and hence, some measures mentioned below have been taken by NSO to overcome these challenges.

- In Regional Offices, face to face interviews with the households and workplaces for some surveys were stopped temporarily. Instead of it, interviews by e-mail, telephone, web survey and data collection by administrative register methods will be continued during the pandemic.

- Sim cards are bought each consisting of adequate minutes and internet data for interviewers in the regional offices so that they can call the respondents at home, including the first meeting of Labour Force Survey. This application is valid only for three months. Afterwards it is planned to adopt and reorganize the regional offices to our Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) system and software.

- By optimising the software infrastructure, CATI operators (Working for LFS and CPI Rental Prices) are made to work at home as if they were at office. Thus, all the phone calls are still recorded and given quality scores. Our experts can listen all the calls at their homes by connecting our call center software.

- An official application to “Informatics and Communication Authority” is made to get a special phone number (1XX) that is only given to governmental institutions working for common good. With this application, it is aimed to make respondents feel safe when they are called-up to conduct a survey.

- NSO have been sending information letters to the respondents before the starting of the fieldwork of each survey according to the agreement between TurkStat and Turkish Post Office for years. These new practices are announced with our informative letters and Respondent Information Module on our website to inform respondents that they can be called by phone during COVID-19 in order to conduct surveys.

- Besides letters, respondents are also given information by SMSs and emails.

- In terms of business surveys, Computer Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI) method was the main channel. Our staff in regional offices ensures respondents participation to surveys by reminding them with phone calls and emails.

- Household Budget Survey (HBS) is postponed 1 month due to quality problems that it is not nominal enough to conduct this survey by CATI.

- Alternative data sources like outlets’ websites, e-invoice, e-archive invoice, card payments for some studies are used to fill data gaps in data collection during this Covid-19 period.
Do you have questions or want to share your experience? Let us know in the comments below

You need to log in to be able to add comments. If you are not a registered user, please click here to register.