



DISSEMINATION POLICY

of Statistical Office of Montenegro

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
1. SECONDARY LEGISLATION AND OTHER STRATEGIC ACTS IN AREA OF DISSEMINATION	3
<i>Dissemination strategy</i>	3
<i>Revision policy</i>	3
<i>With the internal acts,</i>	3
2. Dissemination principles.....	4
<i>Relevance</i>	4
<i>Impartiality and objectivity</i>	4
<i>Timeliness and punctuality</i>	5
<i>Coherence and comparability</i>	5
<i>Accessibility and Clarity</i>	6
<i>Confidentiality</i>	6
3. RELEASE POLICY OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS RESULTS	7
<i>Where the official statistics results are released?</i>	7
<i>Periodicity of releasing the official statistics results</i>	7
<i>Overview of releasing the official statistics results</i>	7
<i>Statistical products</i>	8
4. REVISION OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS RESULTS	9
<i>Regular revision</i>	9
<i>Major revisions</i>	9
<i>Unscheduled revisions of released official statistics results</i>	9
5. USERS OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS RESULTS	10
6. COMMUNICATION CHANNELS	10
7. USER SATISFACTION SURVEY	11
8. COOPERATION WITH MEDIA.....	11

INTRODUCTION

Dissemination policy is the key document of Statistical Office that relates to the dissemination of official statistics results. All strategic acts and documents are defined on the basis of this document in area of dissemination with aim to meet the users with the activities in area of dissemination.

The dissemination of official statistics results is the final phase of production statistical activity and it has an important role in the entire society. Statistical Office is obliged to disseminate the statistical data in accordance with conditions and deadlines defined by the Programme of Official Statistics and Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System (*Official Gazette of Montenegro* No 18/12). Additionally, the law regulates the organization of official statistics affairs, so that the Dissemination Policy is adopted in accordance with the Articles 6 and 47 of the mentioned law that refers to the dissemination of statistical data. When drafted, the acts related to the Statistical Office's quality management were consulted:

1. The Commitment on Confidence in Official Statistics;¹
2. Quality Management Strategy;²
3. Guidebook for the implementation of quality management.³

Drafting also included international acts and documents:

1. Regulation No 223/2009 of the European Parliament⁴;
2. *European Statistics Code of Practice*⁵;

With the adoption of *Dissemination Policy*, Statistical Office has defined the activities in the area of dissemination, which refer to:

- Adoption of secondary legislation and other strategic acts in area of dissemination;
- Presenting dissemination principles;
- Defining official statistics result dissemination policy;
- Implementation of official statistics results' revision;
- Defining the users of official statistics results;
- Defining communication channels;
- Carrying out the user satisfaction survey; and
- Cooperation with media.

¹ The Commitment on Confidence in Official Statistics

[http://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/o%20nama/2018/Deklaracija%20o%20posvecenosti%20povjerenju%20u%20zvanicnu%20statistiku%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/o%20nama/2018/Deklaracija%20o%20posvecenosti%20povjerenju%20u%20zvanicnu%20statistiku%20(2).pdf)

² Quality Management Strategy: <http://monstat.org/userfiles/file/KVALITET/Strategija%20upravljanja%20kvalitetom.pdf>

³ Guidebook for Implementation of Quality Management Strategy:

<http://monstat.org/userfiles/file/KVALITET/Vodic%20za%20implementaciju%20Strategije%20upravljanja%20kvalitetom.pdf>

⁴ Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009

⁵ <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/4031688/8971242/KS-02-18-142-EN-N.pdf/e7f85f07-91db-4312-8118-f729c75878c7>

1. SECONDARY LEGISLATION AND OTHER STRATEGIC ACTS IN AREA OF DISSEMINATION

Certain issues on functioning the official statistical system are regulated by special secondary acts. Aimed at the implementation of legislative framework in area of dissemination there was adopted as it follows:

Dissemination strategy

Dissemination strategy⁶ is an act of Statistical Office with the purpose to make the activities on official statistics results' production visible and available through defined strategic aims.

Revision policy is the act of Statistical Office that defines the general rules for revision of official statistics results, manner of informing users on possible causes of revision, categorization of revision and documentation that cover all aspects of revision. Based on the Revision Policy, obligations to create sector policies of revision and internal instructions have been defined (*Instructions on Unscheduled Revisions*), by which the process quality and official statistics results are improved.

With the internal acts, Statistical Office standardizes the working procedures and clearly defines competence and responsibility for every aspect of dissemination process, in accordance with the Dissemination Policy and Strategy. In previous period, Statistical Office has adopted the following instructions in the recent period:

1. Instructions on Production of Statistical Release Calendar (No 01-3904 of 29. 12. 2017);
2. Instructions for Entering, Updating, and Publication of Reference Metadata (No 01-2394 of 18 July 2018);
3. Instructions for Production and Publication of Releases (No 01-2505 of 27 July 2018);
4. Procedure for Drafting Publications of Statistical Office (No 01-2507 of 27 July 2018);
5. Instructions for Organization of Media Conference (No 01-2506 of 27 July 2018);
6. Instructions on Use of Individual Statistical Data Without Identifiers in Scientific and Research Purposes;
7. Instructions for Drafting National Quality Report (No 01-2504 of 27 July 2018); and
8. Instructions for Reactions in Case of Misinterpretation and Misuse of Official Statistics (No 01-547 of 20 February 2012).

⁶ Dissemination Strategy (No 01-1013 of 21 March 2013)

2. DISSEMINATION PRINCIPLES

The dissemination of official statistics is done in accordance with the Principles of European Statistics Code of Practice which are fully incorporated in the Article 6 of the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System. Official statistics is produced and disseminated on the basis of uniform standards and coherent methodologies, and the principles used in the area of dissemination are explained under this part:

Relevance

Official statistics must be relevant for users, comprehensive and more detailed in statistical terms, with respecting conditions in area of legislation, confidentiality, and quality. Statistical Office put efforts to meet the needs of all users, measure the satisfaction of users using indicators and define processes of dissemination adapted to the users' needs.

Impartiality and objectivity

Official statistics results are available in an impartial and objective manner for all users.

Using standards and model of quality, users are familiar with the process of producing official statistics results, from collection, processing, production, use, and storage of data.

A selection of data sources, concepts, methods, processes and channels of dissemination is based on the statistical bases and on examples of good international practices.

The staff members in Statistical Office protect the professional credibility of official statistics from the unprofessional influence of any kind, in such a manner that they do not participate in the political debates, do not give statements on political issues, contents and time of releasing the official statistics results. The statements of staff members are objective and impartial, without political and other types of influence.

All users have equal access to the official statistics results at the same time. The data are published in accordance with the Statistical Release Calendar and any divergence from the defined date is published and justified, one day before the planned release, together with the new date of data publication.

Five-year Programme and Annual Plan of Official Statistics determine the overview of expected official statistics results per domain on their periodicity and level of harmonization with the international standards, and they are available at the official website. Additionally, selection and criterion of data sources for every statistical survey via published metadata and quality report are

in detail presented for every statistical survey, while internal instructions more closely define organization and manner of data source selection (*Instructions for Use of Administrative Data for Statistical Purposes*⁷ and *Procedure on Use of Administrative Source Data for needs of official statistics*.⁸).

Timeliness and punctuality

In accordance with the Article 6, paragraph 13 of the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System, official statistics producers publish official statistics results in a timely and punctual manner. Dissemination of statistical data is done respecting the international standards for timeliness and punctuality, so that the data are available for users in an appropriate form as soon as possible.

A standard time for releasing the official statistics results is fixed (11 a.m.), and users are informed via the official website of Statistical Office.

The revision of statistical data is done in line with the adopted *Revision Policy*, which defines the revisions carried out in Statistical Office (major, regular, and unscheduled revisions).

Errors discovered in the published data are corrected as soon as possible in a manner defined by internal *Instructions on Unscheduled Revisions*, and corrections are released on the official website of Statistical Office.

Coherence and comparability

The official statistics results must be accurate, reliable, consistent and comparable in space and over time. Statistical Office publishes the results in accordance with the internationally accepted concepts, nomenclatures, classifications, definitions and methods, and in this manner provides the data comparability.

Pursuant to Revision Policy, Statistical Office announces in the Statistical Release Calendar regular data revisions and in this manner the users are informed in advance on the statistical activities.

⁷ Instructions for Administrative Data Use for Statistical Purposes

⁸ Procedure on Administrative Data Use for Official Statistics' Needs (No 01-1886 of 2 June 2015)

Accessibility and Clarity

The official statistics results are presented in a clear and understandable manner to all users.

Statistical Office releases metadata, methodological and other explanations on its official website, making easier for users the interpretation of statistical data.

When defining the data release form, metadata and analyses, Statistical Office takes into consideration opinion and needs of users, using modern information and communication technology, and if necessary, printed copies.

In accordance with the Article 49 Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System, official statistics results are public and free of charge. They may be used and distributed by other institutions, both for commercial and non-commercial purposes, under condition that the users when using these data refer to the source of these data (Article 51 of the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System).

Confidentiality

In the process of producing the official statistics results, Statistical Office respects and implements the provisions of confidentiality defined by Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System. In accordance with the provisions, Statistical Office defined a limited access to confidential data (signing the Statement on Respecting the Confidentiality Principle for all participants/employed in the statistical production process) and adopted internal instructions by which the Statistical Office more closely defined respecting the confidentiality principle:

1. Instructions on Recording and Storage of External Memory with Data from Administrative Sources⁹;
2. Instructions on Measures of IT Security in Statistical Office¹⁰;
3. Instructions on Use of Individual Statistical Data Without Identifiers for Scientific and Research Purposes¹¹;

⁹ Instructions on Recording and Storage of External Memory with Data from Administrative Sources (No 01-2393 of 18 July 2018);

¹⁰ Instructions on Measures of IT Security in Statistical Office (No 01-2395 of 18 July 2018)

¹¹ Instructions on Use of Individual Statistical Data Without Identifiers for Scientific and Research Purposes

3. RELEASE POLICY OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS RESULTS

The release policy of official statistics results represents narrower concept of *Dissemination Policy*; it indicates manner and free access to released official statistics results for all users. The policy of releasing the official statistics results explains:

- a) Where the official statistics results are released;
- b) Periodicity of releasing the official statistics results;
- c) Overview of releasing the official statistics results;
- d) Statistical products.

Where the official statistics results are released?

Official statistics results are released on the official website of Statistical Office, www.monstat.org. The purpose of official website is to inform the public on existence and availability of statistics, as well as to ensure electronic versions of statistical products and services to users. Using this approach in releasing, there is ensured the compliance with the Article 47 of Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System which defines that statistical data must be available to all users in the same time and under same conditions.

Periodicity of releasing the official statistics results

Periodicity of releasing official statistical data takes into account the users' requirements and may be monthly, quarterly, annual or multiannual. Standard time for releasing the data with the aim of ensuring impartiality and objectivity is 11 a.m.

Overview of releasing the official statistics results

The overview of releasing the official statistics results is contained in the *Statistical Release Calendar*, which refers to type and date of releasing statistical data, period which the data refer to, manner of releasing the data, name of competent producer, and type of released data (preliminary or final).

It is prepared at the annual level, in the current year, for the next year, with accurately defined date for releasing statistical data or publication. In this manner, Statistical Office ensures its professional independence and inability of external influence on produced official statistics results. The results are published in accordance with the publicly available Statistical Release Calendar, and divergences are publicised in advance and explained in line with the adopted internal instructions (*Instructions for Production of Statistical Release Calendar* and *Instructions for Production and Publication of Releases*).

New release date with reasons of delay is announced on the official website of Statistical Office.

Statistical products

Statistical products are consisted of different types of official statistics results editions: releases, publications, specific statistical reports. Guidelines for the preparation of editions that are published are regulated by internal instructions (*Procedure for Drafting Publications, Instructions for Production and Publication of Releases and Instructions for Production of Quality Reports*) of Statistical Office, and they apply for any result of statistical surveys.

All statistical products of Statistical Office are released in the PDF format with short methodological notes and appropriate Excel tables that contain the logo of Statistical Office. Name and contact data of competent person are indicated in all statistical editions.

Statistical products of Statistical Office are released in both Montenegrin and English language to meet the needs of national and international users.

4. REVISION OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS RESULTS

Statistical Office adopted the *Revision Policy* laying down general rules for using the revision on released official statistics results; manner of informing users on possible causes of revision; categorization of revision and documentation, which covers all aspects of the revision.

Revision Policy of Statistical Office recognises three types of revision:

1. Regular revisions;
2. Major revision, and
3. Unscheduled revisions.

Regular revision

Regular revision means a revision used when data series are aligned with the different releasing periodicity (for ex. monthly or quarterly data with the annual ones). The subject of regular revision can be all statistical data if this is defined under *Statistical Release Calendar*. Statistical data that can be regularly revised are preliminary data. Statistical data are considered to be preliminary (subject to changes during the statistical data processing) as long as they are subject to regular revisions.

Preliminary data are released because it is important for users to have the official statistics results released before the full and final data set is collected which is used for the calculation of statistical data. The calculation of final data requires complete and final data set which is methodologically defined for the calculation of statistical data.

Major revisions

Major revisions take into considerations important changes in data. Major revisions ensure longer time data sets so as to minimise a negative influence of interruptions in the data sets. Major revisions require the analysis of their influence on other statistical indicators of related and not related statistical domains. The reasons for using the major revisions refer to changes of classifications, definitions, methodologies, change of base period, development of new sources and methods or availability of new statistical data. Major revisions imply significant changes in the data.

Unscheduled revisions of released official statistics results

Unscheduled revisions are caused by events that cannot be envisaged and cannot be in advance plan. Unscheduled changes in the data sources due to the changes in data or subsequent observed errors in data provided are the most frequent reasons for introducing unscheduled revisions. Aimed at more detailed manner of acting in case of unscheduled revisions, Statistical Office adopted the *Instructions on Unscheduled Revisions*.

5. USERS OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS RESULTS

Official statistics results are further analysed via publications, academic and scientific papers written by researchers, analysts, and journalists. The data usage is utilised for the observation of government policy effects and other issues in the society, what increase value and brand of official statistics.

Users of official statistics are defined in the *Dissemination Strategy* and can be divided in seven groups as it follows:

1. Public institutions;
2. Local government units;
3. NGOs, research centres, both national and international;
4. International organizations and embassies;
5. Financial institutions;
6. Enterprises, associations, chambers;
7. Public (media, education institutions, and citizens).

6. COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

The main purpose of disseminating statistical data is to meet the needs of users for official statistics. Users of official statistics results are able to reach necessary statistical data, send a request, ask for statistical services or be informed on statistical activities on time via different communication channels and services.

Communication channels for users are following:

- **Official website of Statistical Office**, which represents the main communication channel for the dissemination of statistical results. The results on the website are presented in the form of releases or in the databases what makes easier for users to do additional comparisons and analyses in different manners;
- **Official e-mail address** of Statistical Office, contact@monstat.org, enables to users to submit requests for the data which are not released on the official website, additional questions and explanations related to the released official statistics results. The deadline for giving answers upon the user's request is up to 15 days, depending on the complexity of requests pursuant to the *Law on Administrative Procedure* (Official Gazette of Montenegro No 37/2017).
- **Library of Statistical Office** where users can find both latest and historical editions of printed statistical publications.

7. USER SATISFACTION SURVEY

User satisfaction survey is a survey by which feedback information is collected on the users' needs for statistical data and statistical services provided by Statistical Office. With the continued carrying out and analysing of user satisfaction survey every second year, there is provided an insight into the users' needs for statistical results, and in this way the official statistical system is improved. Additionally, in this manner a positive image and brand of Statistical Office is created in public.

8. COOPERATION WITH MEDIA

For Statistical Office, media is the main partner in the process of re-dissemination of official statistics results. Media promote the work of official statistics producers passing message to the public. Media possess a potential to raise awareness or interest of public to a significant degree, with purpose of strengthening the confidence in the work of official statistics.

There are especially important *media conferences* organized on the occasion of presenting the statistical results, new projects or if significant changes in statistical surveys occurred.

For needs of Statistical Office, it is possible to engage a PR agency that will make press clipping of texts published in media which refer to Statistical Office (print and electronic media). The importance of press clipping is important because of possible discovering irregular use of statistical data, misuse or misinterpretation by different users.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System (Article 11) Statistical Office is entitled to provide public explanation in case of incorrect interpretation or misuse of statistical data. Pursuant to this legislative provision, Statistical Office internally adopted *Instructions for Reaction in Case of Misinterpretation and Misuse of Official Statistics*.