



Brief note on the history of statistics

The outset of the official statistics in Poland relates to 1789, when the first national population census was carried out.

A continuous recording of vital statistics was introduced as of 1 January 1790.

Even earlier, since the beginning of 15th century various registers, inventories and records existed in Poland that served tax, economic, military and church purposes.

In 1807 the first publication entitled "On Polish Statistics" was published, presenting Polish statistics by region.

In 1808 and 1810 respectively two censuses were held on the Polish territory, which referred to the demographic and occupational characteristics of the population.

In 1810 the first Statistical Office on the Polish territory was established in Warsaw as the central state statistical institution. This was one of the first European statistical offices.

In 1811 the School of Law and Administration was founded in Warsaw at which lectures on statistics were offered.

In the period when Poland lost its independence (1795–1918), since the beginning of the second half of the 19th century, statistical services subordinated to the Central Statistical Offices of the occupying states (Russia, Austria and Prussia) were operational on the territory.

The Central Statistical Office was established on 13 July 1918 with the objective to collect, compile, and publish statistical data. The legal basis of the CSO as the central administrative body of statistics in Poland was provided by the Law of 21 October 1919 on the organisation of administrative statistics.

The Polish system of official statistics

After the World War II the CSO relaunched its operation (in March 1945) as an independent office, but between 1950 and 1956 its research and publishing activity was very limited. The organisation of official statistics and the Central Statistical Office was regulated by the Ordinance of the Council of Ministers of 31 July 1947.

The subsequent legal regulations concerning statistics were the following:

- ▶ The Law of 15 February 1962, establishing regional bodies of the state statistics, and
- ▶ The Law of 26 February 1982 on the state statistics.

After 1989, when the transformation began, the Polish statistics established relations with the Statistical Office of the European Union and started a close cooperation with several EU national statistical offices.

The Law on official statistics of 29 June 1995 currently in force fully complies with the international standards, including the European standards.

1. Statistical surveys may refer to any area of social and economic life, and can cover the phenomena that can be observed and analysed with statistical methods.
2. Official statistics covers statistical surveys conducted on the basis of annual programmes of surveys approved by the Council of Ministers.
3. The official statistics serve the society, the state and national business entities, providing accurate, objective and systematic information on economic, demographic, social and environmental situation.
4. Official statistical institutions are entitled to collect and store statistical data from all



available sources, specified in detail in the annual programme of surveys, including the data stored in administrative systems of other entities for different purposes.

5. All information obtained from surveys conducted in accordance with those programmes is considered as having the status of official statistics.
6. The information shall not be collected within statistical surveys in an obligatory manner from natural persons on race, religion, personal life and philosophical and political views and opinions.
7. Individual data (pertaining to economic entities) and personal data (pertaining to natural persons) collected and stored as a result of official statistics surveys are confidential and subject to special protection. The statistical information obtained from the surveys may be used solely for statistical studies, comparisons, and analyses, and by the official statistics services for setting up sampling frames for the surveys. The aggregated data also cannot be published or disseminated if a risk of disclosure of identity of a natural person or business entity exists.
8. The results of calculations and analyses made on the basis of statistical data collected in statistical surveys (results of statistical surveys) are publicly available. The official statistics provide equal and simultaneous access to the results of statistical surveys.



The main tasks of official statistics

1. Recognising a demand for statistical information and analyses.
2. Conducting statistical surveys, including censuses and establishing their methodology.

The programme of statistical surveys

3. Working out of standard classifications.
4. Disseminating the results of the surveys, including the selected measures and indicators.
5. Compiling demographic projections.
6. Maintaining the national official registers of: entities of the national economy and the administrative division of the country.
7. Providing reliable data to be used by public administration for decision-making in the areas of its competence.
8. Providing a possibility for exhaustive statistical description of socio-economic changes in the country.
9. Implementing the EU statistical survey programmes and providing comparable data for international statistical databases.
10. Cooperation with scientific centres and international organisations in order to share the experiences.
11. Training, upgrading and improving skills in statisticians.
12. Promoting and disseminating statistical knowledge in the society.

The main tasks of official statistics are specified in the annual survey programmes of official statistics. A draft survey programme is prepared by the CSO's President, after recognising the needs of groups of the users and on the basis of broad consultations.

The document contains, inter alia, information on the subject and type of surveys, subject and object scope, sources of data, types of resulting statistical information, forms and dates of their dissemination, as well as costs. The draft is submitted for an examination to the Statistical Council,



The Statistical Council

which presents the document for approval to the Council of Ministers.

According to the provisions of the Law on official statistics the Statistical Council acts in statistical matters as an advisory and opinion-making body for the President of the Council of Ministers. It consists of persons appointed by the President of the Council of Ministers, representing:

- ▶ government administration bodies,
- ▶ self-government participating in the Joint Government and Territorial Self-Government Commission,
- ▶ the Central Bank of Poland,
- ▶ social organisations, professional and economic self-governments,
- ▶ organisations of employers and trade unions,
- ▶ experts in social and economic sciences.

The President of CSO participates in the activities of the Statistical Council.

The term of office of the Council is five years. The main tasks of the Council are:

- ▶ establishing each year, on the basis of proposal prepared by the President of CSO, a draft statistical surveys programme for the next year and presenting it to the Council of Ministers by 30 June each year.
- ▶ recommending new and periodic surveys to be conducted, including the methodological and preparatory activities related to them.
- ▶ evaluating the statistical surveys programme for official statistics, issuing opinions on budgetary expenditures for statistical surveys and formulating opinions on other issues relevant for the development of official statistics.

Official statistics services

The tasks of official statistics defined in detail in the Law on official statistics are implemented by:

- ▶ **the President of the Central Statistical Office**, being a government administrative body competent in the matters of statistics. The President of CSO is supervised by the President of the Council of Ministers. The President of CSO manages the Central Statistical Office.
- ▶ **Directors of regional statistical offices** operating in each voivodship as official administrative bodies, reporting to the CSO President; Directors of regional statistical offices manage the offices, which are set up and dissolved by the President of CSO.
- ▶ **service units of official statistics**, created by the President of CSO on the basis of article 27 of the Law on official statistics. They include: Central Statistical Computing Centre, Statistical Staff Training Centre in Jachranka, and Statistical Publishing Establishment.

The President is the head of the office and is supported by vice-presidents, Administrative Director and directors of organisational units, i.e. President's Office and 11 Divisions (Figure 1). The tasks of the Central Statistical Office are performed by the organisational units, as well as commissions and groups appointed by the President of CSO as standing or temporary advisory and opinion-making bodies, particularly:

- ▶ The Collegium,
- ▶ The Programme and Methodological Commission – in the area of programming and methodology of statistical surveys,
- ▶ The Editorial Committee – in the area of publishing activities,



- The Convention of Directors – in the area of development, organisation and conditions of operation of official statistics.

The Scientific Statistical Council acting as an advisory and opinion-making body for the President of CSO on issues related to methodology of statistical surveys. The tasks of the Council include presenting opinions and recommendations of methodological activities to ensure the improvement of the system of statistical surveys.

The Central Statistical Library housed in the same building as the CSO was established in 1918, and has the status of a central scientific library in Poland in the area of statistics, demography and related areas. It has gathered approximately 440 000 volumes.

The library has a collection of Polish and foreign, current and retrospective statistical publications (the oldest ones were published at the beginning of the 19th century) which is the largest collection in the country. It stores all statistical publications of the CSO, yearbooks of regional statistical offices in 16 voivodships, and statistical yearbooks of several countries from all over the world and international and supranational institutions such as: the United Nations, European Union and OECD.

The Library possesses also collections of documents referring to the activities of various scientific institutions and associations, as well as the Polish and foreign literature on theoretical statistics and demography.

The collection of newspapers and magazines amounts to 1000 titles, including approximately 500 titles currently issued, among them 270 foreign titles from several countries and 220 Polish titles.

The Polish and foreign users have constant access

Organisation of statistical surveys in Poland

to the library and bibliographical database through the world wide web. Each year the Library, under the auspices of the President of CSO organises a national statistical competition on the knowledge of the Concise Statistical Yearbook addressed to students of secondary schools.

The bodies competent in the area of conducting statistical surveys in the framework of official statistics are the following:

The President of CSO,

Other main or central bodies of state administration and the Central Bank of Poland,

The President of CSO together with another main or central body of state administration, other government institutions or the Central Bank of Poland or the head of a voivodship,

A statistical office together with the head of a voivodship or a body of local government units.

In 2006 the statistical surveys programme included 211 topics, of which 155 were implemented by the President of CSO or in cooperation with other competent bodies. The data were collected by forms or questionnaires. There were 451 types of such forms and questionnaires, of which 206 were designed by the CSO. They are introduced by an Ordinance of the President of the Council of Ministers on forms and questionnaires applicable in a specific year.

In addition, the data may also be derived from administrative systems. In 2006 such data were provided for 96 topics covered by statistics.



The organisation of the surveys includes compilation of an annual plan of surveys. A plan is prepared for designing statistical forms and other materials necessary for the surveys. The sample surveys require preparation of: sampling schemes, algorithms for generating sets, developing an approach to the generalisation and calculation of the accuracy of the results. All statistical surveys involve the need for planning and organisation of the processing of statistical data, as well as the control of correctness of the approach applied in the electronic processing of data. A dossier on methodology and organisation for each survey is prepared, including the electronic processing of data.

Regional statistical offices are responsible for conducting the surveys in their territory. Their main tasks include:

- ▶ collecting, storing and compiling data from surveys conducted by the President of CSO, as well as conducting specific surveys alone or together with public administration bodies operating in particular voivodships, the results of which are to be used by the voivodship, poviats and gminas,
- ▶ performing specialised national tasks detailed in organisational rules and regulations,
- ▶ recognising demand for statistical information and analyses,
- ▶ dissemination of resulting statistical information,
- ▶ conducting additional custom-made surveys, studies and analyses.

Methods of collection, storage and compilation of statistical data

In the information society that we start to build, the information plays a major role in the decision-making process. Techniques of storing, processing, and transmitting information develop rapidly. This also has an influence on the Polish system of official statistics. The collection and transmission of statistical data in the process of surveys implementation requires various methods and techniques.

A large majority of data from surveys is submitted in the form of paper questionnaires and then translated into electronic form. Gradually the traditional way of data recording is replaced with automatic reading (OCR). Up-to-date methods of data transmission (Internet, e-mail) have been introduced, as well as electronic versions of statistical forms.

In 2006 the OCR technology was used in 34 surveys and data collection through Internet was used in 9 surveys.

The activities aimed at improving the methods of collecting statistical data by the interviewers are continued. A network of interviewers exists in all regional statistical offices. The interviewers participate in a number of training courses designed for them and are equipped with personal computers.

Administrative registers are analysed from the point of view of their usefulness in statistics.

Much attention is paid to ensuring high quality data by using a control system, which is applied at each stage of a statistical survey and which makes possible eliminating observed errors.

Data protection

Individual data and personal data collected in the surveys are subject to special protection, irrespectively of the form of their collection, media, and



Storage of statistical data

form of transmission. The activities connected with data protection pertain, inter alia, to:

- ▶ protection of specific data – individual data (pertaining to entities of the national economy) and personal data (pertaining to natural persons), which are subject to statistical confidentiality rules; datasets are also protected against destruction and unauthorized access.
- ▶ ensuring continuous and reliable operation of the statistical system – oriented towards accomplishment of tasks, reliability of operation of the IT networks and systems.

For implementation of those activities specialised organisational structures dealing with data protection have been established.

The statistical data are stored as electronic records in several databases. Various applications systems and data management systems are used in those databases. Such an organisation of data storage is not satisfactory from the point of view of satisfying the users' needs. The situation will improve with the introduction of an Integrated System of Common Database. Data warehouse will store all data collected from all surveys conducted within the system of official statistics. This will allow creating better conditions for ensuring methodological consistency, increasing analytical potential and eliminating the technological incompatibility of the currently existing databases.

At present the warehouse stores:

- ▶ results of the 2002 population and Housing Census,
- ▶ results of the 2002 Agricultural Census,

Dissemination of statistical information

- ▶ data from selected monthly, quarterly and annual reports pertaining to economic activity of enterprises,
- ▶ database on farms consistent with the requirements of the EUROFARM database.

The activities on the establishment of the statistical metadata system have been started.

The basic principle of the statistical information system is equal and simultaneous access of all the users to the statistical information. The public accessibility of statistical information of the official statistics is ensured by means of:

- ▶ presenting in publications of the CSO and regional statistical offices of statistical information describing the economic, demographic, social and environmental situation,
- ▶ announcing the selected measures and indicators characterising the social and economic situation in the form of official announcements of the President of CSO in the “Monitor Polski” Official Journal of the Republic of Poland and the CSO Official Journal,
- ▶ organisation of regular and scheduled in advance press conferences in order to present information for mass media,
- ▶ presenting information on the collected data through a network of statistical information centres located at the CSO and regional statistical offices.

The release dates for the publication of the statistical information and a title of each publication is specified in the programme of statistical surveys. Individual requests for information or for conducting extra surveys not included in the programme



Information services provided to the users

of statistical surveys collected and processed by the CSO Dissemination Division, and in regional statistical offices by Dissemination Sections.

The statistical information is made available and disseminated in the form of flash and final statistical publications, in electronic form and via an Internet website.

In order to increase the efficiency of data dissemination several measures are taken, which include a wide use of electronic media, improvement of the official statistics website, disseminating data from selected databases via Internet. The purpose of those activities is to satisfy in the best possible ways the needs of the principal national and foreign users.

A key element in the dissemination policy of the CSO is the Regional Data Bank. It contains an ordered set of statistical information by territorial division (NUTS 1-5) pertaining to all areas of social and economic life, as well as environment protection since 1995.

All interested parties may use statistical website containing national and regional information.

As of January 2005 all information presented on the CSO website is free of charge. The information is available in Polish and partially in English.

At present Internet is the most popular form of communication with the data users. They can easily access the information, announcements, press releases, publications, etc.

Information not available on the Internet site may be ordered through the data order form provided on the site.

Maintaining
the national
official
register:
of entities
of the national
economy and
territorial
division
of the country

Additionally, for all the national and foreign users a new user support service has been established, providing assistance in accessing the data placed on the Internet site, in publications and Eurostat databases.

The services of official statistics are responsible for the national official registers: entities of the national economy (REGON), territorial division of the country (TERYT).

The REGON register includes information on legal persons, organisational units not having legal personality, natural persons conducting economic activity and all other local units. It constitutes a basis for ensuring consistent identification in all public administration information systems containing information on such entities. Bodies responsible for the registers and other information systems of public administration are obliged to use REGON identification number (besides any identifiers that they may use) and unified coding of the entity's characteristics.

The aim of national official register of territorial division (TERYT) is to create a unified system of identifiers for units of the basic territorial division of the country, list of settlement (localities), streets and for use in censuses – statistical regions and census districts.

Entities keeping the official registers and public administration information systems are obliged to use coding used in the territorial register.



Cooperation with international and regional organisations, as well as with foreign agencies and offices

The international cooperation of the CSO supports the adaptation of the official statistics system to the information needs of the national and foreign users and is oriented towards full harmonisation of the national official statistics with information systems of countries that are members of the EU, UN, and OECD as well as with other organisations. The international cooperation also aims at ensuring the participation of the CSO in statistical activities of international organisations and at developing bilateral and multilateral contacts, particularly important from the point of view of methodology and exchange of experience and best practices in specific areas of official statistics.

Poland participated in many Eurostat actions aiming at implementing new methodology, new areas of statistical interest. It was a beneficiary of multinational Phare programmes covering such areas of statistics as the national accounts, structural enterprise statistics, services statistics, statistics of agriculture and environmental protection, statistics of transport, labour market, foreign trade and energy as well as regional statistics.

The CSO used national Phare funds allocated for institutional capacity building, inter alia, in the field of regional statistics, upgrading of the statistical information system and improving the quality of Polish statistics.

Poland shared its experiences with some Eastern-European countries and Asia. Among the beneficiaries of that assistance were Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine, Russia, Romania, Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia.

Training and improving skills in statistics

Undertaking increasingly difficult tasks related to the permanent upgrading of the statistical system requires a continuous professional development of the staff. Training courses and other forms of upgrading the professional skills in statistics allow for an adequate preparation of the staff for improving their performance at work and contribute to their professional development.

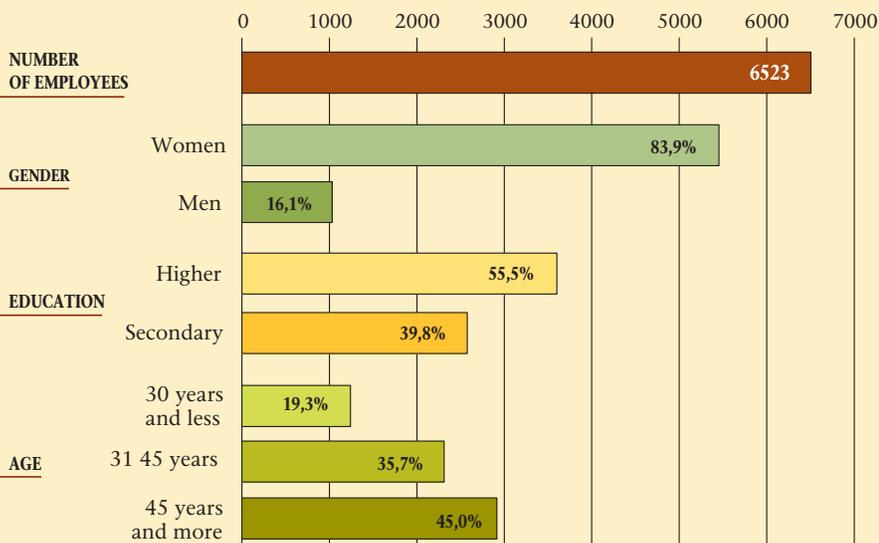
The following forms of training are provided:

- ▶ national – central training organised by the Head of Civil Service and internal training organised by the CSO on the basis of a training plan developed in-house,
- ▶ foreign – in the form of workshops related to the implemented projects the objective of which is to improve the European statistical system,
- ▶ training within the framework of an individual professional development programme for civil servants, the so-called ‘preparatory’ training,
- ▶ training courses, including language training, IT training,
- ▶ specialised statistical training, conferences.

The employees of statistics also participate in seminars and trainings organised by scientific institutions and IT companies – software providers.



EMPLOYMENT, AGE, EDUCATION OF EMPLOYEES OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS (as of 31. 12. 2005)



Major statistical surveys

National accounts – compiled according to the EU principles for the national accounts system. They show the dynamics and direction of development of the country. The major topics cover: financial and non-financial national accounts by institutional sectors, quarterly accounts, gross domestic product by regions, international comparisons of gross domestic product and purchasing power of foreign currencies, quarterly financial accounts of general government institutions.

Public finances – include, inter alia, surveys on revenues and expenditures of the state budget, general government finances statistics and general government public debt.

Enterprise statistics – include non-financial and financial enterprises. The surveys cover, inter alia, financial expenditures of enterprises, estimation of current economic activity of enterprises and annual results of the enterprises, economic situation, changes in the ownership status. The surveys cover also the activities of banks, insurance companies, brokerage houses, investment and pension societies.

Agricultural statistics – include, inter alia, characteristics of production resources of agriculture necessary for estimating the production and market situation in agriculture and national food security. The information is demanded by the national and international users. Balances of major agricultural products are compiled and summary data of agricultural production are produced. One of the most important topics in this area is a statistical description of rural areas, including the changes taking place in those areas.

Manufacturing statistics – the surveys conducted allow for monthly evaluation of tendencies in sold production of industry by type of operation, which constitutes the basic measure of economic situation and estimation of future economic situation. In this area of statistics surveys on fuels and energy supply, consumption of energy and materials by categories of consumers, prices of fuels and energy, consumption of renewable energy sources, providing basis for evaluating national energy security are conducted.

Foreign trade statistics - the main source of information are INTRASTAT declarations – registering turnover between the EU member states, and the customs declaration documents (SAD) registering turnover with other countries. The data obtained are used to evaluate international trade and draw



conclusions on the position of Poland in the international economy.

Environmental statistics – due to trans-border and global character of many ecological phenomena and processes, surveys are conducted in very close international cooperation. The data in this area of statistics are derived mainly from administrative systems monitoring the national environmental protection programmes and activities of services engaged in the implementation of those programmes.

Labour market statistics – the surveys provide information on employment, unemployment and job vacancies. The unemployment statistics are based mostly on the data from an administrative system, as well as on the data from Labour Force Survey (BAEL). Important topics covered include accidents at work, work related health problems of the population and working time.

Living conditions of population, education and professional training – observations refer to the selected aspects of life of the population and changes taking place, situation of households, households budgets, consumer behaviours, households threatened by poverty. The social welfare administrative system is used there for collecting information on individuals, families and households to whom the social assistance is provided. The surveys on education cover all stages of education of children, young persons and adults in the continuous education system, as well as in the system of supplementary training and upgrading professional qualifications at work.

Health and health care statistics – includes a wide range of surveys referring to the health status of the population, illnesses and treatment of selected

illnesses, hospitalisation and health promoting activities, as well as the state and use of health care infrastructure and its economic aspects.

Population and demographic processes statistics – the major surveys refer to the current observation of vital statistics, used, inter alia, for compiling population balances and short- and long-term demographic projections. Surveys on emigrants and immigrants are also conducted. The Gender and Generation Survey is conducted within the international comparisons programme.

The Polish statistics participates also in many pilot projects referring to the statistical observation new social and economic phenomena that are organised by Eurostat.

SURVEYED AREAS PLANNED TO BE CARRIED OUT IN 2006

SURVEYED AREAS 211

of which
carried out by the President
of CSO or jointly with other
authorized bodies

155

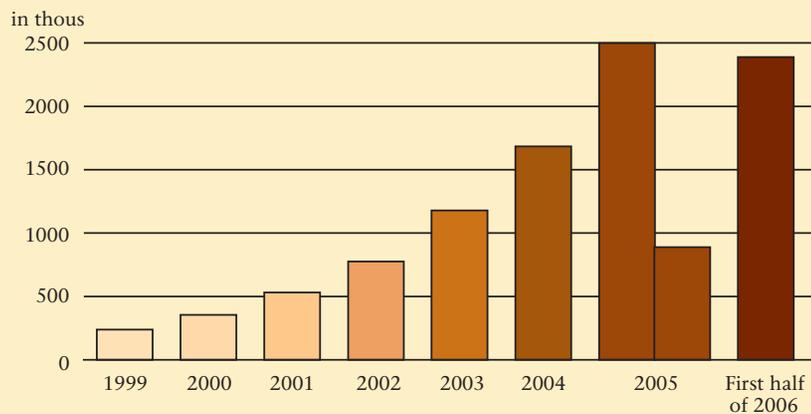


DISSEMINATION OF THE PUBLICATIONS

YEARS	TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLICATIONS	PUBLICATIONS ON INTERNET	% OF PUBLICATIONS ON INTERNET IN TOTAL PUBLISHED PUBLICATIONS
2003	147		28,6
2004	121	53	43,8
2005	125	62	49,6
2006*	119	86	72,3

* according to a planned publishing list.

NUMBER OF CONNECTIONS TO THE CSO WEBSITE



In 1999-2004 a high increase in the number of connections was noted, which shows a great interest in the CSO website.

ORGANISATION OF THE CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE

Central Statistical Office of Poland consists of the following divisions:

- 1) President's Office,
- 2) Co-ordination and Organisation of Statistical Surveys Division,
- 3) Analyses and Regional Statistics Division,
- 4) Data Dissemination Division,
- 5) National Accounts and Finance Division,
- 6) Enterprise Statistics and Registers Division,
- 7) Social Statistics Division,
- 8) Economic Statistics Division,
- 9) Services Statistics Division,
- 10) Agriculture and Environment Statistics Division,
- 11) International Cooperation, Budgetary and Personnel Division,
- 12) Administrative and Accounting Division.