

National Administrative Department of Statistics

# National Code of Good Practice for Official Statistics



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Printed in Imprenta Nacional de Colombia (*National Press of Colombia*)

## PRESENTATION

With the purpose of improving the quality of the processes and the production of official statistics generated by entities belonging to the National Statistical System (SEN for its Spanish acronym), DANE, as its governing, coordinating and regulating body, presents to producers and users the *National Code of Good Practice for Official Statistics*.

The implementation of this set of practical rules improves the quality and credibility of statistics required for the design, formulation, monitoring and evaluation of plans, programs and public policies.



## BASIC CONCEPTS

The Code of Good Practice is a technical and regulatory instrument that aims to contribute to the continuous improvement of statistical activity.

Principles are fundamental rules or ideas that govern the thinking or behavior in the generation of official statistics.

Good statistical practices are replicable actions based on proven experience with good results, contributing to the improvement of the statistical activity.

### PRINCIPLE

# 1

***Coordination of the National Statistical System:***  
*The national statistical activity shall be planned and implemented within a participatory framework between entities, taking into account the information requirements of the country.*

### *Good Practices*

- 1.1. The National Administrative Department of Statistics, as the coordinating body of the National Statistical System (NSS), must establish the guidelines, plans and programs for the statistical activity.
- 1.2. Entities belonging to the NSS must implement the guidelines established by the coordinating body.

- 1.3. The NSS coordinating body must participate in the development of topics to improve the quality of the statistical activity, at an international level.
- 1.4. The NSS coordinating body must promote the transfer of technical knowledge to all entities belonging to the system.
- 1.5. Entities belonging to the NSS must strengthen inter-institutional communication.
- 1.6. Entities belonging to the NSS must cooperate in the statistical field in order to improve the system's performance.
- 1.7. Entities belonging to the NSS must prioritize in a coordinated manner, the generation of statistical information required for decision-making.
- 1.8. Throughout the development of the statistical planning process, entities belonging to the NSS must make available the metadata of their statistical operations.
- 1.9. Entities belonging to the NSS must promote the exchange and implementation of good statistical practices.

## PRINCIPLE

# 2

***Statistical mandate for data collection:*** *The NSS coordinating body must have a clear legal mandate for the collection of information addressed to the elaboration of official statistics.*

### *Good practices*

- 2.1. Legislation in force must grant the coordinating body a mandate to collect information addressed to the preparation and dissemination of official statistics
- 2.2. The legislation in force must specify that individuals and enterprises are bound to provide information to the

- NSS coordinating body and provide for penalties for failure to comply with the law.
- 2.3. Legislation must grant the governing body of the national statistical system access to, and use of, administrative records for the purpose of generating official statistics.
  - 2.4. Entities belonging to the NSS must facilitate access and use of administrative records for the generation of official statistics, safeguarding confidentiality.

## PRINCIPLE

# 3

***Adequacy of resources:*** *The resources allocated for national statistical activity must guarantee the generation of official statistics required for the country, and must be used in an efficient and effective manner.*

### *Good practices*

- 3.1. Entities belonging to the NSS must be provided with sufficient human, financial, physical and technological resources in order to meet the need for statistical information.
- 3.2. The scope, detail, cost and time for the generation of official statistics must be proportional to information needs (cost-benefit relation).
- 3.3. Entities belonging to the NSS must effectively and efficiently manage the resources allocated for the statistical activity.
- 3.4. Entities belonging to the NSS must have appropriate procedures for selecting human, physical and technological resources for the production of official statistics.
- 3.5. Entities belonging to the NSS must implement mechanisms to control and monitor the management of the resources allocated for the statistical activity.

## PRINCIPLE

# 4

***Impartiality and standards:*** Entities belonging to the NSS must guarantee that official statistics are generated and disseminated according to rules, methods and procedures, respecting the scientific and technical independence of the statistical process.

### *Good practices*

- 4.1. A statement must be made on the conduct, standards and ethical values governing the statistical practices.
- 4.2. Require the staff involved in statistical practices, to comply with the statement on conduct, standards and ethical values.
- 4.3. Have agreements and protocols to maintain impartiality at all stages of the statistical process.
- 4.4. Perform duties in an objective manner, based on technical and scientific criteria.
- 4.5. Guarantee that the statistical process is protected from any external intervention that may influence official statistics.
- 4.6. Choose the sources of information, methods, processes, concepts and data dissemination paths based on principles, statistical criteria and good practices.
- 4.7. Official statistics must be delivered to users in an objective and impartial manner.
- 4.8. Announce the release calendar, prior to the publication of results.
- 4.9. Disseminate official statistics to all users at the same time.

- 4.10. Correct and communicate the errors discovered in published statistics in a timely manner.
- 4.11. In the event of misinterpretations of official statistics, clarifications must be formulated.

## PRINCIPLE

# 5

**Confidentiality:** *Entities belonging to the NSS must guarantee the protection and confidentiality of the information used to produce official statistics and shall prevent disclosure of sources.*

### *Good practices*

- 5.1. Respondents must be informed of the commitment to confidentiality and/or reserve, as the case may be.
- 5.2. Persons with access to individual or confidential information must sign a declaration stating their commitment to confidentiality and taking note of the penalties for non-compliance.
- 5.3. It must be ensured that the publication of official statistics does not allow the individual identification of respondents.
- 5.4. Protocols must be applied for the protection and security of the information.
- 5.5. Information must be stored in accordance with established security and confidentiality protocols and legislation in force.
- 5.6. The access to anonymised microdata on behalf of external users must be subject to protocols that guarantee confidentiality.

## PRINCIPLE

# 6

**Transparency:** *Entities belonging to the NSS must disseminate the methodology used for the generation of official statistics and enable access to the documentation of each of the processes.*

### *Good practices*

- 6.1. To document and enable access to plans, programs, concepts, norms, classifications, methods, processes and procedures used in the production of official statistics, as well as performed quality assessments.
- 6.2. To document the information needs of the users and its prioritization.
- 6.3. Any modifications made to the methodological aspects of official statistics that have been produced, must be announced prior to the publication of results.
- 6.4. To publish the updated metadata of statistical operations.
- 6.5. In the event of using statistical data collected or originally produced by other entities, cite the original source when disseminating official statistics, applying established rules for citing sources.

## PRINCIPLE

# 7

**Quality commitment:** *Entities belonging to the NSS must be committed to the continuous improvement of their statistical activity.*

### *Good practices*

- 7.1. To systematically promote and encourage a culture of continuous improvement in statistical activity.

- 7.2. To guarantee compliance with internationally recognized statistical quality requirements.
- 7.3. To periodically evaluate the quality and usefulness of the statistical product.
- 7.4. To promote specialized training for staff involved in statistical production on a continuous basis.
- 7.5. To establish cooperation mechanisms with international experts and agencies in order to improve and strengthen methods, concepts and procedures used in the statistical processes.

## PRINCIPLE

# 8

***Selection of statistical sources:*** *The entities belonging to the NSS must select the information sources with statistical criterion, considering the cost and burden on respondents.*

### *Good practices*

- 8.1. To evaluate the possibility of using data from administrative records for statistical purposes.
- 8.2. To promote the necessary adjustments to the administrative records, in order to enhance their statistical use.
- 8.3. To select the sources with a statistical criterion, considering the cost of obtaining the necessary information.
- 8.4. To analyze the burden on the sources, with respect to the scope and detail of the information needs.
- 8.5. To use and/or develop techniques to reduce the burden on the sources of information.
- 8.6. To make use of information technologies to ensure updated and consistent databases.

## PRINCIPLE

# 9

**Use of statistical standards:** *The entities belonging to the NSS must use national and international statistical standards that enable the comparability of official statistics.*

### *Good practices*

- 9.1. To implement statistical standards defined or endorsed by the NSS coordinating body.
- 9.2. To evaluate the relevance of the implementation of statistical standards.
- 9.3. To take into account national and international recommendations for statistical production, defined or endorsed by the NSS coordinating body.
- 9.4. The NSS coordinating body must review the implementation of statistical standards used in the production of statistics.
- 9.5. When incorporating new standards the comparability of historical series must be ensured.
- 9.6. The NSS coordinating body must ensure consistency between national and international classifications.

## PRINCIPLE

# 10

**Quality in the statistical process:** *The entities belonging to the NSS must implement quality procedures at all stages of the statistical process.*

### *Good practices*

- 10.1 The methodologies, questionnaires, manuals, computer applications and other instruments should be tested and

validated before beginning the process of collecting statistical data for any operation.

- 10.2. To review and regularly update statistical frameworks.
- 10.3. To periodically evaluate and make appropriate adjustments to the methodologies of surveys and administrative records for statistical purposes.
- 10.4. To review or update the stages of the statistical process.
- 10.5. To establish control mechanisms in the operating field in order to ensure that the ideal or selected informant can be interviewed.
- 10.6. The processes of design, execution and analysis must employ statistical techniques.
- 10.7. To perform revisions using standardized and systematic processes according to the established schedule.
- 10.8. To use updated computer systems in the process of capturing and processing information.
- 10.9. To ensure consistency in official statistics, allowing the possibility of linking different data series.

## PRINCIPLE

# 11

**Relevance:** *The entities belonging to the NSS must ensure that official statistics meet the users' information needs.*

### *Good practices*

- 11.1. To have permanent consultation mechanisms to identify user needs.
- 11.2. To identify, evaluate and document the needs of users with respect to statistical information.

- 11.3. To perform satisfaction surveys to users, including the perception of statistical services, the quality and presentation of data and the frequency and timing of publication.
- 11.4. To consolidate and analyze the suggestions, requests and complaints from customers with regard to statistical information, considering improvement or corrective actions when necessary.

## PRINCIPLE

# 12

***Accuracy and reliability:*** *The entities belonging to the NSS must ensure that official statistics are accurate and reliable.*

### *Good practices*

- 12.1. To evaluate and validate the original data, intermediate results and final statistics generated by a statistical operation using direct and indirect methods.
- 12.2. To measure, evaluate, adjust and document the diverse errors that may occur in the stages of the statistical process.
- 12.3. To examine and document sampling and non-sampling errors (only for statistical operations by sampling).
- 12.4. To perform tests of the questionnaires before the data collection stage, in order to validate the modules, the wording flow and sequence of questions.

## PRINCIPLE

# 13

**Timeliness and punctuality:** *The entities belonging to the NSS must ensure that official statistics are released in a timely and punctual manner.*

### Good practices

- 13.1. The elapsed time between the reference period and the availability of statistics must ensure the timeliness of information, according to user needs.
- 13.2. To submit official statistics in a timely and punctual manner in compliance with the dissemination time schedule previously established, and in the event of delay in the publication, the reasons for such delay must be provided.
- 13.3. To establish the periodicity of collection and dissemination of official statistics, taking into account the users' needs.

## PRINCIPLE

# 14

**Accessibility:** *The entities belonging to the NSS must ensure equitable access to official statistics and release them in a clear and understandable manner to all users.*

### Good practices

- 14.1. To ensure all users have direct access to official statistics and their documentation.
- 14.2. To publish official statistics in a clear form, so as to allow proper interpretation and proper use.

- 14.3. The dissemination of official statistics must be performed using different media and technology so that they meet the users' needs and ensure greater coverage.
- 14.4. To define the protocol for user access to official statistics produced.

## PRINCIPLE

# 15

**Statistical culture:** *The entities belonging to the NSS must create, promote and implement strategies for the strengthening of statistical culture.*

### *Good practices*

- 15.1. The NSS coordinating body must implement strategies to strengthen and promote statistical culture of producers and users of information.
- 15.2. To strive for the strengthening of statistical culture.
- 15.3. To raise awareness among the sources (information providers) on the importance of providing truthful information.
- 15.4. To implement processes to advice, educate and inform users with respect to statistical outputs.
- 15.5. To encourage users to make a correct interpretation and use of official statistics.
- 15.6. To promote the participation of associations, academia and industry organizations in the statistical activity.
- 15.7. To promote statistical culture through mass media at the local, and regional levels.

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