2nd Meeting of the Friends of the Chair on Economic Statistics – Notes from Brazil

Governance of the system of economic statistics

The Brazilian NSO (IBGE) is, until now, governed by the law dated of May 1973, a review of the two previous decrees (of 1967 and 1969).The law states that IBGE will act in the following areas: I - primary statistics (continuous and census);II - derived statistics (economic and social indicators);III - surveys, analysis and statistical, demographic, geographic, geodetic and cartographic studies.IV - cartographic activities;V - systematization of data on the environment and natural resources.In order to achieve the objectives, the law also says that information required shall be provided by people and enterprises and that IBGE can make agreements with public and private entities to access data (preserving the confidentiality).

Before 1988 Brazilian Constitution, the National Accounts Department of IBGE had an agreement with the fiscal authority to receive an individualized and identified access to enterprises annual fiscal questionnaire, with the commitment of respecting statistical confidentiality. But in 1988 Constitution the fiscal confidentiality became a crucial issue and, since then, IBGE no longer received the identified enterprises data. This source is very important to economic statistics and can be use do criticize or even replacepartially or totally annual industrial surveys, releasing financial and human resources for other statistical operations that can attend other users demands.

The recent system of Brazilian fiscal notes is also an administrative data source very important for economic statistics, especially in the case of high frequency indicators. As in the case of annual surveys, the administrative data can also be used to replace monthly industrial surveys and even allows indicators more timeliness and with more industrial disaggregation. IBGE is in negotiation with the institution that owns the database (composed by the governors of the 27 States called CONFAZ) to establish an agreement. We already have an agreement with São Paulo government (the major State in Brazil) to have some data extractions to use in National Accounts allowing the compilation of a Supply and Use Table and an Input Output Matrix for the State, as requested by them. The access of fiscal administrative data is extremely important for the development of the Brazilian Economic Statistical System. Besides, there are also initiatives regarding big data to use, for example, in price indexes compilation, especially in the official consumer price index (IPCA) which is used in the inflation target for the country.

The 1973 law also mentioned the role of coordination of the Brazilian statistical system: "IBGE will act through the production of information and the coordination and guidance and development of the technical activities of the national statistical and cartographic systems." IBGE, jointly with Central Bank and Treasury Secretary, is creating an Economic Statistical Committee which is going to strengthen IBGE´s position of coordinator of the national statistical system. The main purpose of the Committee is to establish a cooperation of official statistics entities to strengthening and improving official economic statistics, including the development of new economic statistics and indicators and the periodic evaluation of the users demands.

The system of economic statistics (the 'what')

Brazil agrees with the finding of the "First Meeting of the Friends of the Chair Group on the Future of Economic Statistics" about the lack of data regarding informal economy. Specially for national accounts new base year (probably 2020) it is very important to have more data on informal economy and household production. The main data source used now is the Continuous National Household Sample Survey (PNAD-contínua) allowing us to impute a household production through income. We used to have also an Urban Informal Economy Survey (ECINF), discontinued due to budget constraints, bringing the situation of small informal non-agricultural businesses, with data about investments, revenues and expenses.

Nowadays, in Brazil, the fiscal authority also has some fiscal data about the individual microentrepreneur, called MEI, which are being formalized but probably still be considered as household in National Accounts.Each year, the Individual Microentrepreneur (MEI) must declare the amount of revenue from the previous year through the National Simplified Annual Statement.

The other topics mentioned at the summary report of the first meeting, especially digital economy, globalization, well-being and environment are also areas of studies for us and we participate in two existing economic statistics groups: classification and globalization. The development of economic statistics should contemplate de compilation of these topics mentioned above, even because they are included in the sustainable development indicators (SDGs).

Furthermore, within the compilation of National Accounts, Environmental Economic Accounts, Balance of Payments and others macroeconomic statistics it is possible to identify gaps in the primary economic statistics.

Other important issue regarding infrastructure is the computing scale and data science to deal with large amount of data coming from administrative and big data. The NSOs must have also, within the institute, the expertise to transform administrative and big data in statistical data that meet users' needs.