

History of the Official Statistics in Azerbaijan

The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan (hereinafter should be indicated as Statestatcom (SSC)) is the central executing agency which pursues public policy in the field of statistics and forms the official statistics on social, economic, vital and ecological situation in the country on the basis of integrated methodology. Official statistics in Azerbaijan has gone a long way to achieve the current level of development. Numerous statistics on population, industry, agriculture, trade, foreign trade and etc. were provided and researches were performed as far back as the 19th century.

In the period of existence of Azerbaijan Democratic Republic for 23 months (1918-1920) there were efforts to establish a unified agency to be in charge of statistical issues in the country. However, the goal wasn't achieved and certain bodies were found in the composition of separate ministries. These bodies had functioned as Statistics Department in the composition of the Ministry of Agriculture and State Property since November 1918 and as Statistics Bureau at the department of Land Found of the Ministry of Agriculture since July 1919.

As it is obvious, there wasn't the unified agency managing statistical issues in the current territory of Azerbaijan till 1920. In April 1920, measures related to establishment of the official statistics in the country were carried out parallel with other governmental measures, on July 8 of the same year the Regulation on the temporary collegium of statisticians signed by Nariman Narimanov was approved by the Revolutionary Committee of Azerbaijan.

In accordance with the Azerbaijan Revolutionary Committee's Decree dated August 9 and the Decision dated December 17 1920, the Central Statistical Agency consisting of 15 departments was established in December 1920. The establishment of local statistical bodies has been started in 1920 and this process was generally carried out in the provinces during the following years.

On September 28, 1928 the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of Azerbaijan SSR had approved the new Regulation on the Central Statistical Agency of Azerbaijan SSR. Ever since, the Central Statistical Agency had all rights that were assigned by People's Commissars of Azerbaijan SSR and all activities were realized by province statistical branches of the Central Statistical Agency, the Central Statistical Bureau of Nakhchivan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and Regional Statistical Bureau of Daghlig Garabagh Autonomous Region.

The Central Statistical Agency of the Republic is subordinated to the Central Statistical Agency attached to the Council of Ministers on August 1948 and according to Decree of the Presidium of Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan SSR dated on 24 March 1959 the Statistical Agency is changed into Central Statistical Office attached to the Council of Ministers of Azerbaijan SSR.

One of the other main events in the activity of the statistical bodies was to change the Central Statistical Office attached to the Council of Ministers of Azerbaijan SSR into Central

Statistical Agency (CSA) of Azerbaijan SSR and to include it in a list of ministries and state committees and to include the head of the CSA in staff of government of the republic.

The improvement of the state statistics during 1960-1990 was on the base of mechanization and automation of the input and processing of accounting-statistical data by means of modern computing machineries. Machine-Accounting Station of the CSA of the Azerbaijan SSR, which was created in 1957, being provided with modern computers then changed into Republican Accounting Center that covered 26 departments. During 1956-1958 the republican statistical bodies were engaged with mechanization of accounting (recording) in national economy, mainly in agriculture.

The main event in the statistics during this period was centralization of the reports in the statistical bodies. The reports on purchasing of agriculture products in 1956 at all levels were centralized at the statistical bodies. Some later, namely in 1957 and 1958, the report forms of enterprises of industry and construction as well as enterprises of agriculture were centralized at the statistical bodies.

The Central Statistical Agency of Azerbaijan SSR was changed in 1987 into the State Statistical Committee of Azerbaijan SSR and statute on the State Statistical Committee of Azerbaijan SSR was confirmed by Decree of the Cabinet of Ministries of Azerbaijan SSR dated 30 March 1988.

Azerbaijan had started to establish public administration authorities after re-gaining the independence in 1991. The State Statistical Committee was among of them. During this period there were operated statistical bodies at all administrative-territorial areas.

At present, there are 86 organizations at the system of the State Statistical Committee: central committee, Main Accounting Center, Research and Design Technological Center of Statistical Information, Training Center, the State Statistical Committee of Nakhchivan AR, Baku city Statistical Departments, 81 rural (urban) statistical departments (divisions). Generally, 1480 persons are engaged in official statistical system, including 174 persons – at the central committee.

1994 was an important year in the history of statistics. So, the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on “Statistics” was signed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on 18 February 1994. The Law was revised by National Assembly in 2005 and confirmed by Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on 2 February 2006. The main purpose of the changes were widening of the available legal basis on production of the statistical materials, to correspond the law of the country with the law of the statistical bodies of the EC countries and recommendations of the Eurostat, taking into account normative-legal acts adopted during the last years in the country and “main principles of the official statistics” adopted by Statistical Commission of the UN. Based of this Decree the law was called as Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on “Official Statistics”. The Law has covered specified articles on creation of the state register of subjects engaged with economical activity in the Republic of Azerbaijan as well as creation of the national classifications coordinated with international classifications, conduction of the state statistical surveys, articles on statistical council, statistical secret,

principles and independence of the official statistics, social protection of employees of the official statistics and etc.

There were changes in the structure and activities of the official statistical system in 1994 and during the next years according to requirements of the Law. In connection with that the new statute on “the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan” has been confirmed by Decree of the Cabinet of Ministries of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated on 6 November 1995, №238. During this period there were established new structural branches such as departments of price statistics, national accounts and macroeconomic indicators, divisions and sectors of food security, organization of the state register and classifications, foreign trade, tourism. Taking into account growing demand for statistics regarding to development occurred in the country, the statute on “the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan” has been re-confirmed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 24 November 2005.

Integration of the country economy to the world economy system as well as membership of the country in different international organizations requires correspondence of the statistical data with commonly accepted methodology. In this connection transition to internationally accepted record and statistical system in the Azerbaijan confirmed by Decree of the Republican Government dated on 8 December 2006, № 653 as well as implementation of the State Programs- main element of which was application of SNA - on ‘Realization of reforms in the State Statistical System of the Republic of Azerbaijan’, ‘improvement of the official statistics of the Republic of Azerbaijan during 2003-2007’ and ‘improvement of the official statistics of the Republic of Azerbaijan during 2008-2012’ confirmed by Decrees of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated respectively on 20 August 1998, 20 February 2003 and 26 December 2007 was main duty of the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Realization of these programs was by means of widening of international relations and co-operations of the SSC Azerbaijan. Changing of status of the statistical bodies was main condition of the record and statistics system and provision of the country leaderships with data.

During the last years memorandums on cooperation in the field of statistics were signed with statistical agencies of Russia, Turkey, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Moldova, Tajikistan, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Generally, after re-gaining of the independence in the country the State Statistical Committee of Azerbaijan cooperates with UN Statistics Division, IMF, ILO, WB, UN FAO, UNESCO, UNICEF, ECO, ECE, Eurostat, CIS Intergovernmental Statistical Committee, BSEC and statistical agencies of 43 countries of the world and exchanges the data.

The main lines of activity of the State Statistical Committee according to the Law on official statistics and statute on the State Statistical Committee are provision of the development of statistics by means of active participation in formation of the unified state policy in the field of statistics and organization and carrying out of statistical surveys and researches on situation of economic, social, demographic and ecological area, conduction of the state register of statistical units, realization of education in the field of statistics and other activities defined by legislation.

According to statute on the State Statistical Committee the main duty of the SSC is timely collection of the statistical data and provision its correspondence with social-economic processes occurred in the country; carrying out of the statistical observations, censuses, and surveys based on normative-legal acts of the Republic of Azerbaijan; adoption of rules based on Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Official Statistics and other normative-legal acts on preparation of the official statistical materials and filling in of the report forms; receiving of the complete and precise data without payment from all legal entities belong to the state property of the Republic of Azerbaijan and corresponding state authorities, representatives and branches of foreign legal entities registered at the state register of the Republic of Azerbaijan based on legislation and rules defined by the State Statistical Committee as well as independence from subordination, organizational-legal and property form, location at the territory or out of the state borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan; analysis of the results of carried out statistical researches and surveys on social-economic processes, living standards and consumption expenditures of the population; conduction of the social-demographic observations, inquiries, carrying out of the household statistics, compilation of the results by the country and regions based on collected data; publication of the statistical yearbooks, collections, bulletins, reviews, and other statistical issues, its distribution among users; provision of the state authorities, international organizations as well as legal and natural entities with statistical information taking into account and guarantying confidentiality of the private data; working out of the official statistical report forms, liquidation of the out-of significance official statistical report forms, development of the State Register of the statistical units; preparation of the national classifications for provision of the international comparability of data taking into account requirements of legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan; provision of realization of the international agreements, participation in the measures of the international statistics organizations, conduction of the press conferences with journalists regularly, as well as other measures entrusted by legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the State Statistical Committee. All of these duties are realized mainly by the State Statistical Committee and centers under its subordination such as Main Accounting Center, Research and Design Technological Center of the Statistical Information, Training Center, rural (urban) statistical departments, as well as the State Statistical Committee of Nakhchivan AR.

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