

Overview of Master Plan Concerning the Development of Official Statistics

Based on Article 4 of the Statistics Act (Act No.53 of 2007), the Master Plan Concerning the Development of Official Statistics was established and approved by the Cabinet in March 2009, and has also been propelled since the beginning of FY 2009 to promote measures for the development of official statistics comprehensively and systematically.

In order to ensure effectiveness of the Master Plan, a “Master Plan Promotion Committee” was established in April 2009 comprising the heads of the statistical offices of all ministries, and each office and ministry promotes the measures described in the Master Plan in a unified manner.

The summary of the Master Plan is the followings.

(1) Fundamental policy regarding measures for compiling Official Statistics

(1)-1 Role of Official Statistics

Considering official statistics are important information to assist the public in making rational decisions, it is necessary that official statistics be compiled as information resources that can be used by a broad spectrum of society.

(1)-2 Basic perspectives in designing measures

“Ensuring the Usefulness of Statistics” is an important objective in developing statistics. The following four perspectives are essential to improve the usefulness of statistics.

- (a) Systematic development of statistics
- (b) Responses to socio-economic changes
- (c) Effective use of statistical data
- (d) Efficient production of statistics, and effective use of statistical resources

(2) Comprehensive and systematic measures in the development of Official Statistics

(2)-1 Development of “fundamental statistics” as the core of statistical systems

To designate statistics that can serve as the core for systematic development of official statistics, including processed statistics and survey statistics, as “fundamental statistics,” and improve the usefulness of such statistics.

- To establish the Economic Census that enables a comprehensive understanding of economic activities in all industries at the same point in time by reorganizing the existing large-scale censuses and statistical surveys. Based on the Economic Census, to compile industrial statistics more systematically and establish estimation methods for National Accounts.
- To integrate statistics on the production activities of the manufacturing industry, currently compiled by 4 different ministries, into one set of statistics.

(2)-2 Ensuring and improving the consistency and international compatibility of statistics

< Compilation of National Accounts, and strengthening the correlations between National Accounts and primary statistics >

- To strengthen the correlations between National Accounts and Input-Output Tables, and ensure their consistency
- To review selection of fundamental statistics used in estimating National Accounts and estimation methods

<Construction and utilization of a business register (the Establishment Frame Database)>

- To maintain accurate population information based on the Economic Census and using administrative records
- To review production of useful statistics by combining results of various statistics and administrative records

<Compilation of comprehensive statistics on welfare and social security >

- To review the consistency of statistics on social security benefits with various

international standards

<Establishment of statistical standards>

- To establish statistical standards such as the Japan Standard Industrial Classification, and the Classification of Diseases, Injuries and Causes of Death, and review the need to revise such standards approximately 5 years after their introduction or revision

(2)-3 Compilation of statistics in response to needs due to socio-economic changes

<Compilation of statistics on service activities>

- To compile statistics to comprehend the current state of sophisticated information and communications services across ministries
- To compile statistics on intellectual property activities and make advanced use of them

<Compilation of statistics in response to the low birthrate and aging population, and the work-life balance>

- To review the survey on low birthrates, including marital status, timing for marriage, and the number of children by large-scale sample surveys
- To review surveys covering the topics in this field in order to analyze the relationships between work (status of people starting and leaving jobs, factors preventing one from starting work, etc.), marriage, childbirth, raising children, and long-term care, etc., in detail

<Phased development of statistics on environment>

- To enhance statistical data on emission and absorption of greenhouse gases, and develop statistics on the impact of climate change
- To promote earlier release of preliminary figures for energy statistics

<Compilation of tourism statistics>

- To enhance major tourism statistics, and promote the compilation of tourism statistics that can be compared across prefectures by formulating common standards

<Compilation of labor statistics in response to changes in corporate activities and diverse ways of working, etc.>

- To promote approaches to initiate statistical surveys which reveal the actual situation of non-regular employment every year
- To develop indicators for creating and terminating jobs in order to reveal the impact on employment due to the opening or closure of establishments

(3) Necessary matters for Promoting the Compilation of Official Statistics

(3)-1 Effective production of statistics

<Use of administrative records>

- To review the use of data from financial statement reports, and information regarding establishments to which labor and employment insurance are applied
- To require preliminary surveys and reviews which verify whether administrative records are available for statistical surveys or not, when plans for implementing the surveys are formulated

<Participation of private enterprises>

- To promote active participation of private enterprises in the industrial field where they have superior know-how and resources
- To develop an environment for promoting participation of private enterprises more appropriately and effectively by revising guidelines for commissioning statistical surveys of them

(3)-2 Ensuring effective use of statistical resources

- To secure the statistical resources necessary for implementing the Master Plan, and involve researchers and core personnel in order to resolve issues of National Accounts in particular
- To implement multifaceted measures, such as reviewing statistical surveys via local governments, standardizing the amount of work, and streamlining survey affairs, etc.

(3)-3 Responses to socio-economic changes

- To reflect the need for users of statistics, and compile and improve statistics by exchanging opinions with them
- To review statistics by evaluating their quality, and promote more efficient methods for producing them implement public and educational activities effectively in order to gain public understanding of statistics

(3)-4 Promotion of effective use of statistical data

- To initiate the production and provision of anonymized data and tailor-made tabulations that were recently introduced at an appropriate time, and expand the coverage of available statistical surveys in a phased manner

(3)-5 Others

- To promote sharing and providing statistical data across ministries by using the Inter-Ministry Information System for Official Statistics (IMISOS)
- To promote further transparency in the process of producing statistics, in order to ensure neutrality in statistics

(4) Promotion and evaluation of the Master Plan

- To organize a “Master Plan Promotion Committee”, and promote the Master Plan by the government as a whole
- To evaluate and verify the situation of approaches to the implementation of the Master Plan in each ministry, and advise improvements by the Statistics Commission