

# Statistics Portugal – Statistical Metadata System

**Isabel Morgado, Statistics Portugal**

Key words: Metadata, integration, statistical coordination

In Portugal, the Statistical Council (SC) is the Government body which oversees and coordinates the National Statistical System (NSS). Among other functions the SC approves technical instruments for coordination, which are mandatory in the production of official statistics, namely concepts and classifications, and promotes the respective understanding, publication and use, with the possibility of proposing that the Government extends this imperative use through out the Bodies of Public Administration.

Statistics Portugal is the central body that produces and disseminates official statistics, supervising and coordinating technical and scientific matters within the NSS.

A major coordination tool to Statistics Portugal is its integrated statistical metadata system. It supports both statistical production and dissemination of statistical data, and is composed by four main subsystems: Concepts, Classifications, Variables and Statistical Sources, with close interrelationships.

Concepts and definitions used in surveys of the National Statistical System are stored in a database, classified by statistical domain. These concepts are afterwards analysed and approved by the Statistical Council. Once approved their use is mandatory.

The classifications system is based on a classifications database. National, European and International classifications are catalogued and most of them are stored in the database or referenced by a link to their original sites. Classifications are stored in a standardized way and can be downloaded. Each classification is characterized by its own metadata attributes. The main classifications used in the NSS are approved by the Statistical Council.

Observation variables from questionnaires and dissemination variables - available in our portal- are stored in a Variables Registry. Names of variables are standardized using a naming convention. Value domains of variables are considered as classifications and are stored in the classifications database.

Methodologies used in surveys are organized in a standard format – the “Methodological Document” - approved by the Statistical Council. This standard format comprises General Attributes with administrative metadata about the survey, such as name, objectives, legal base, type of statistical operation and others; description of Methodologies applied like sampling, imputation, estimation and quality evaluation methods. There are also links to the concepts and definitions, classifications, variables and questionnaires used. A last chapter has a list of related documents with links to the documents themselves.

Survey managers are responsible for the production of all the documentation according to the standard format. A Metadata Unit, responsible for the central coordination of this system, has conceived and implemented it, in agreement with survey managers, and deals with harmonization and normalization issues.