



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
HELLENIC STATISTICAL AUTHORITY

ELSTAT

Annual Report

2017

PIRAEUS 2018

A. INTRODUCTION

In this Annual Report, ELSTAT accounts for its activities in 2017. Besides the activities concerning the statistical surveys and tasks outlined in the 2017 Statistical Work Programme, the Chapters of this Annual Report also contain information about the major issues in the area of statistics in 2017.

In 2017, ELSTAT continued its actions to improve the completeness, quality and timeliness of its statistics through the continued implementation of the Greek and European statistical legal framework in force and by adopting the higher European and international statistical standards. In this context, in November 2017, a Working Group was set up to improve the quality of the primary survey data.

The above actions include those undertaken to support the improvement of the quality of the statistics of the other agencies of the Hellenic Statistical System (ELSS), where necessary, by coordinating the statistical activities of the other ELSS agencies and assessing their statistics for their certification as "official".

ELSTAT maintained its active role within the European Statistical System (ESS) in 2017, through its close cooperation with the other members of the ESS, in the framework of Task Forces/Working Groups and Sector/Directors' Groups organised by Eurostat on various statistical issues, as well as through its participation in European decision-making centers on statistical issues.

Among the major events of 2017 for ELSTAT is the compilation of Structural Business Statistics, with reference year 2015, mainly using tax data. In addition, in 2017, ELSTAT, by considering the standardisation in the transmission of statistical information to the Greek society as an integral part of the statistical product cycle, depicted with infographics selected statistical surveys it conducts, as well as their production processes, in a way that, on the one hand, is understandable to the general public and, on the other hand, is appropriate for reproduction by the social media also, which are an important source of information for millions of users. Furthermore, in this context, two thematic Press Conferences were held, the first on the Excessive Deficit Procedure⁽¹⁾, in April 2017, and the second on GDP data⁽²⁾, in October 2017.

To demonstrate the importance of statistics on vulnerable children –including refugee and migrant children and children from ethnic minorities– for the reduction of inequality and the protection of children's rights, ELSTAT coorganised with UNICEF, for the first time in Athens, on 24 and 25 October 2017, the annual "Network Meeting of National Statistical Offices: Data on Refugee and Migrant Children and Children from Ethnic Minorities". Furthermore, on the occasion of the European Statistics Day, the Annual User Conference was held on 20 October 2017, focusing on "Demography – Migration".

B. IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND RELIABILITY OF STATISTICS

1. Implementation of improvement actions in line with the recommendations of the Peer Review Report

In line with the recommendations of the Peer Review Report for Greece, ELSTAT undertook in June 2015 to implement forty seven (47) improvement actions with a specific timetable for completion. These improvement actions have been incorporated by Eurostat, with ELSTAT's consent, to the actions of pillar A of the Joint Overall Statistical Greek Action Plan (JOSGAP), which aim at enhancing the institutional framework of the ELSS.

Twenty seven (27) out of the above actions had been completed by 31/12/2016. During 2017, five (5) of the remaining improvement actions were completed –one of these actions is included in the

(1) <http://www.statistics.gr/en/press-conference-2017>

(2) <http://www.statistics.gr/en/press-conference-oct-2017>

list of improvement actions of two different recommendations of the Peer Review Report and has been counted twice. Thus, a total of thirty two (32) out of the forty seven (47) improvement actions had been completed by 31/12/2017. The actions completed in 2017 refer to:

- The appointment of the Statistical Head in each National Authority of the ELSS, with the exception of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Bank of Greece, which does not accept its inclusion in the ELSS.
- The regular provision of information to users, during the User Conferences and through announcements on ELSTAT’s website, on the developments taking place in ELSTAT as regards the access of users to microdata of its surveys.
- The compilation of a report on the assessment of the response burden for filling in questionnaires of statistical surveys of ELSTAT –for the most recent surveys conducted up to 2016– in the framework of developing a monitoring system for the response burden of the surveyed units. This report includes, inter alia, information on the time spent by the surveyed units to fill in the survey questionnaires, per type of questionnaires and survey, as well as the actions, per survey, to reduce the response burden of the surveyed units, which have been undertaken by ELSTAT’s Divisions conducting the relevant surveys. The report is available on ELSTAT’s website at the following link:
http://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/300673/Report_response_burden_2016_EN.pdf/09e08ea3-469f-47cf-abe0-56f2f82c3489
- Regular evaluation of the quality of statistical products of ELSTAT.

During 2017, in addition to the aforementioned improvement actions, progress was made in the implementation of other improvement actions. These actions concern the following:

- *Compilation of the new Organisation of ELSTAT.* The Working Group, consisting of ELSTAT officials, that was set up in November 2016 with the mandate to draw up a draft of the new Organisation, proceeded to the compilation of a preliminary draft of the new Organigram. An overview of this Organigram was presented at a meeting of the Good Practice Advisory Committee held in 2017. The Working Group is dealing with the drafting of the new Organisation on the basis of the above Organigram.
- *Development, by the National Authorities of ELSS, of internal quality assurance processes in the production of their statistics and documentation of the processes.* A template for the documentation of the statistical processes of the National Authorities and the other agencies of the ELSS, as well as a template for the Quality Policy and the Statistical Confidentiality Policy were compiled and transmitted to them.
- *Documentation of statistical processes by ELSTAT’s Divisions.* A template for the documentation of the statistical processes of the Divisions of ELSTAT conducting statistical surveys was compiled and distributed to them.

It is noted that the implementation of five (5) out of the remaining fifteen (15) improvement actions depends on entities other than ELSTAT.

2. Revision of the European Statistics Code of Practice

In May 2016, the High Level Group on Quality (HLG-Q), of which the President of ELSTAT is a member, was assigned by the European Statistical System Committee (ESSC) the updating of the European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP), after its first revision in September 2011. The HLG-Q was supported in its work by the Qual Steering Committee.

The second revision of the CoP was finalised in November 2017.

The purpose of the recent revision of the CoP is to take into account the latest changes and innovations in the development, production and dissemination of official statistics in the European Statistical System and beyond, such as the new emerging data sources, the use of new technologies, the modernisation of the legal framework of European statistics and the lessons learnt of the second round of the peer reviews, which took place during the period 2014 – 2015. It was considered that the changes should be limited to what is absolutely necessary to achieve the objectives of the revision. More specifically:

- The "Quality Declaration of the European Statistical System" was added in the preamble of the CoP, which was updated.
- A new Principle 1bis on "Coordination and Cooperation" was added. This addition was made in the context of the alignment of the CoP with the Regulation (EC) 223/2009, as amended by Regulation (EU) 2015/759, and aims at strengthening the cooperation within the national statistical systems and the coordinating role of the National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) in them.
- Principle 2 was updated to consolidate the necessity for the NSIs to have access to data from various sources (administrative and non-administrative).
- Principle 4 was strengthened, with reference to the necessary procedures for measuring and improving the quality of statistical processes, including the integration of data from multiple sources.
- Principle 5 was updated, with reference to the adoption of the necessary regulatory, administrative, technical and organisational measures to protect the security and integrity of statistical data and their transmission, in accordance with best practices, international standards, as well as European and national legislation.
- The reference that the Statistical Authorities independently decide on the time and content of statistical releases, while taking into account the goal of providing complete and timely statistical information was added to indicator 6.7 of Principle 6, which deals with the equal and simultaneous access of users to statistical releases.
- The scope of indicator 7.3 of Principle 7 was extended, with reference to the need for regular evaluation and adjustment of all the registers and frames used for European statistics to ensure the high quality of the statistics produced.
- The scope of Principle 8 was extended to cover data from all sources (administrative and non-administrative). Furthermore, an explicit reference to the management of metadata related to statistical processes and their dissemination, as appropriate, was added.
- The scope of Principle 11 was broadened, by adding the reference to the value of existing statistics beyond their relevance. Emphasis was also put on the development of innovations to continuously improve statistical output.
- The reference to the paper-based dissemination in indicator 15.2 of Principle 15 was deleted and the reference to communication platforms and open data standards was added

3. Coordination of statistical activities within and between the ELSS agencies

With a view to strengthening ELSTAT's coordinating role within the ELSS and to accelerating the completion of the certification process of statistics of the ELSS agencies, an ESS expert in the area of assessment and certification of statistics, provided relevant expertise to ELSTAT during the period 23 – 27/1/2017.

The expert has drawn up, inter alia, instructions in the framework of the compilation by ELSTAT of guidelines to the ELSS agencies, pursuant to Article 5a of Regulation (EC) 223/2009, as amended by Regulation (EU) 2015/759. In addition, he met the statistical heads of the ELSS agencies. During

the meeting, the statistical heads had the opportunity to present their views on their role and responsibilities, as well as on the challenges they face in the performance of their tasks. The statistical heads pointed out, inter alia, the need for legal strengthening of their responsibilities, recognition of their role within the agency and their training, through the undertaking by ELSTAT of initiatives and actions to better fulfill their role and to be trained and informed in more general terms on the developments in the European Statistical System on issues pertaining to quality assurance of statistics.

On the basis of the expert's instructions, as well as of the experience gained from the implementation of the basic stage of certification of statistics of ELSS agencies, the main document used for the above certification "Statement of Principles and Procedures for the Certification of the Statistics of the Hellenic Statistical System (ELSS)" has been updated, mainly in the Section concerning the stages of the certification process, with a view to clarifying procedures and delimiting the "official statistics". The updated document is available on ELSTAT's website at the following link: http://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/1196143/Principles_ELSS.pdf/bf9867f1-5dba-4d41-ab0b-b5d55bd84af9.

In addition, a draft "Guide to the Agencies of the Hellenic Statistical System for the Implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice" has been compiled.

This Guide includes instructions to the ELSS agencies, aiming at facilitating the practical implementation by them of the various CoP principles. The Guide records and clarifies the obligations of: a) the ELSS agencies, b) the statistical heads of the agencies, c) the employees of the agencies involved in the production and dissemination of statistics and d) ELSTAT towards the agencies, in the framework of the compliance with the CoP principles. It concerns, in particular, those principles and indicators of CoP principles that ELSTAT considers are likely to present challenges in their implementation. It is a tool for quality assurance at the various stages of the production process of statistics by the ELSS agencies, in order for the agencies to provide users with high quality statistical products and services that meet their needs. The guidelines are equally applicable to all ELSS statistics, since, in accordance with the Greek Statistical Law, the CoP applies equally to all official statistics produced by the ELSS agencies.

Once approved by the President of ELSTAT, the Guide will be forwarded to the ELSS agencies and its implementation will be monitored by ELSTAT.

An important step in improving the coordination of the statistical activities in the ELSS was the holding, in February 2017, of the first meeting of the Coordination Committee of ELSS, which consists of the statistical heads and is chaired by the President of ELSTAT.

During the above meeting, the statistical heads had the opportunity to be informed on the main changes that took place in the Regulation on the Statistical Obligations of the ELSS Agencies. These changes concern the addition of:

- definitions for the European Statistical System and the European statistics;
- the obligation of the ELSS agencies to appoint a Statistical Head, with the characteristics and responsibilities provided for in Principle 1 of the CoP;
- the obligation of ELSTAT to develop national guidelines, where necessary, for ensuring the quality in the development, production and dissemination of all statistics produced within the ELSS and to monitor their implementation;
- a new Article 5A on the establishment, composition and responsibilities of the Coordination Committee of ELSS.

It was also discussed the progress of implementation of the basic steps in the framework of the certification process of statistics of ELSS agencies, as well as the recommendations of the expert on the initiatives and actions that ELSTAT will have to undertake to assist the work of the statistical heads.

4. Certification as "official" of the statistics produced by the ELSS agencies

The certification by ELSTAT of statistics produced by the other ELSS agencies is an important factor and tool for improving the quality and reliability of the ELSS statistics. In this framework, during the two-year period 2015 – 2016, ELSTAT completed the basic stage of certification of the above statistics for all ELSS agencies, with the exception of the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Bank of Greece, pending the completion of the written evidence questionnaire for certification by the Ministry of Health, the appointment of a statistical head by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the establishment of a cooperation framework between the Bank of Greece and ELSTAT.

The ELSS agencies in which the basic certification stage was conducted have been informed by ELSTAT about the basic steps they have to take for the continuation of the certification process of their statistics. These steps concern horizontal actions to be undertaken by each agency as a whole, and, more or less, are common to all agencies. For the implementation of the above actions, ELSTAT provides guidance to the agencies, however, in 2017, none of the agencies has completed the basic steps for the continuation of the certification process of statistics by ELSTAT.

In 2017, ELSTAT updated the list of the agencies and the list of the National Authorities of the ELSS. The following agencies were defined as new ELSS agencies: a) the National Hellenic Research Foundation (NHRF) – National Documentation Centre (EKT), b) the Hellenic Civil Aviation Authority (HCAA) and c) the Hellenic Telecommunications and Post Commission (HTPC). The first two (2) agencies are also National Authorities, as they produce European statistics. The inclusion of the EKT and the HCAA in the list of National Authorities, as separate agencies of the ELSS and not under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, and the Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport and Networks, of which are supervised entities, respectively, provides the possibility for the EKT and the HCAA to directly submit applications for funding to Eurostat, for participation in projects related to their produced statistics.

The compilation of the "List of Statistics of ELSS Agencies other than ELSTAT"⁽³⁾, in cooperation with the competent ELSS agencies, as appropriate, is considered as an important work in the framework of the certification of their statistics. It is a first attempt to record the statistics of ELSS agencies other than ELSTAT, with reference year 2017, that are candidates for certification, and is expected to contribute to accelerating the completion of the certification process of statistics of the ELSS agencies. The List is divided into thematic sections and each statistical product has a unique code. In addition, the legislative framework governing the production of each statistical product and the links referring to the data and the metadata of the relevant surveys/works are provided, if available. The List was compiled taking into account the definition of official statistics in the Greek Statistical Law and the corresponding catalogue of the 2017 Statistical Work Programme of the European Statistical System (ESS)⁽⁴⁾. For those statistics of the ELSS agencies that are included in the catalogue of the 2017 ESS Statistical Work Programme there is a relevant indication.

5. Internal assessment of ELSTAT

The self-assessment of ELSTAT's Divisions in terms of compliance with the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice was put in place in 2014. The above process initiated for the seven (7) Divisions of the General Directorate of Statistical Surveys. In this framework, seven (7) assessment teams were formed –one assessment team for each Division– consisting of ELSTAT' employees. Each assessment team compiled a report with the findings of its assessment. The findings came from the answers of the Divisions in a relevant self-assessment questionnaire, which had been distributed to them, as well as from the clarifications provided by the Divisions to the assessment teams on the above answers. These reports were presented and discussed in the meetings of the Committee for Monitoring and Managing the Quality of Statistical Works of ELSTAT that

(3) The List of the Statistics provided by the ELSS Agencies other than ELSTAT is available at: <http://www.statistics.gr/en/elss-agencies-list>.

(4) Part IV of ESS Statistical Programme 2017: Eurostat Catalogue of Statistical Products 2017 https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/7330775/7339482/Catalogue+of+Products+AWP+2017_v160517.pdf/6d68999f-60bd-4046-9717-fe737e1fd373.

took place with each of the above Divisions, and the improvement actions to be undertaken by each Division were decided.

During the first half of 2017, a second round of the self-assessment of the above Divisions was held, where these Divisions were asked to record the state of implementation of the improvement actions they had undertaken to carry out, in compliance with the CoP principles. The results of the above record were discussed at meetings of the Committee for Monitoring and Managing the Quality of Statistical Works with each Division, where further improvement actions were decided in some cases. The improvement actions which are, more or less, common to all the above Divisions are presented in the following table, by CoP principle:

Principle 2 – Mandate for Data Collection and Access to Data

Continuation and further enhancement of the cooperation with administrative and other data holders, in the context of the production of statistics, by signing relevant memoranda of cooperation.

Principle 3 – Adequacy of Resources

Enhancement of the staff with highly qualified and specialised officials, and at the same time better utilisation of the employees of the Regional Statistical Offices in the statistical production process.

Principle 4 – Commitment to Quality

Compilation and continuous updating of the internal circulars on the methods and procedures followed at all stages of the statistical product cycle, from the data collection to the dissemination of the results.

Principle 6 – Impartiality and Objectivity

Compilation and continuous updating of the quality reports, in accordance with the SIMS format, for all conducted statistical surveys, and posting of the reports on ELSTAT's website.

Principle 7 – Sound Methodology

Greater participation of the staff in training courses on specialised statistical topics, aiming at enriching knowledge and familiarising with the modern methods and tools for the production and dissemination of statistics.

Principle 9 – Non-excessive Burden on Respondents

Constant care to reduce the burden on the surveyed units (households and enterprises), by taking the appropriate measures and undertaking the necessary actions.

Also, in 2017, a first round of self-assessment of the Divisions of the General Directorate of Administration and Organisation of ELSTAT was launched, in analogy with the respective self-assessment round of the Divisions of the General Directorate of Statistical Surveys. More specifically, the self-assessment questionnaire of the Divisions of the General Directorate of Administration and Organisation was drafted, with some changes compared to that of the Divisions of the General Directorate of Statistical Surveys, due to the different nature of the responsibilities of the Divisions of the two (2) General Directorates. Five (5) assessment teams were formed –one team for each Division of the General Directorate of Administration and Organisation– consisting of ELSTAT's employees. Each assessment team compiled a report with the findings of its assessment. The findings came from the answers of the Divisions in the self-assessment questionnaire, which had been distributed to them, as well as from the clarifications provided by the Divisions to the assessment teams on the above answers. These reports are to be presented and discussed in the framework of the meetings of the Committee for Monitoring and Managing the Quality of Statistical Works with each Division, which are expected to take place in 2018.

6. Setting up of a Working Group to improve the quality of primary data

The quality of the primary data of statistical surveys is an important factor for the quality of the survey results. In order to improve the above primary data, a Working Group was set up in ELSTAT

in November 2017, consisting of the Heads of six (6) Regional Statistical Offices.

The mandate of the Working Group is:

- to record the problems that occur, at local level, as regards the collection of primary survey data from the surveyed units (enterprises and households),
- to submit proposals and suggestions to improve the quality of the above data and to reduce the non-response rate of the surveyed units,
- to monitor and record, on a continuous basis, the compliance of enterprises, as regards their response to ELSTAT's statistical surveys,
- to monitor the implementation, at local level, of the improvement actions to be decided by the President of ELSTAT, on the basis of the proposals and suggestions of the Working Group.

The Working Group will have two (2) regular meetings, on annual basis, with the President and the Heads of the two (2) General Directorates of ELSTAT, during which decisions will be taken on the undertaking of improvement actions to enhance the quality of primary survey data, to reduce the non-response rate of the surveyed units and, in general, to address problems related to the collection of primary survey data at local level.

The members of the Working Group will have a two-year term of office. Upon the expiration of their term, the members of the Working Group may be replaced by the Heads of six (6) other Regional Statistical Offices, who will be appointed by decision of the President of ELSTAT.

7. Joint Overall Statistical Greek Action Plan

In 2017, ELSTAT continued the implementation of the actions of the Joint Overall Statistical Greek Action Plan (JOSGAP). During 2010 – 2012, new actions were added to the actions included in the initial version of JOSGAP, when it was first launched in 2010, in order to cover issues that had not been included in the initial version. In 2015, the actions of pillar A of JOSGAP, which aim at strengthening the institutional framework of the ELSS, were complemented by the improvement actions decided in the context of the implementation of the recommendations of the Peer Review Report.

A significant number of the above JOSGAP actions have been completed or are at the stage of completion. The greatest progress has been achieved in the implementation of the actions under pillar C of JOSGAP, which aim at enhancing the quality of Greek government finance statistics. All actions of the above pillar within ELSTAT's competence have been completed, with the exception of two (2) actions concerning the classification of the Legal Entities under Private Law that are supervised by the Local Government and the publication on ELSTAT's website of all the procedures required for the conduct of statistical surveys.

Regarding the actions of pillar A that fall within ELSTAT's competence, as mentioned above, their implementation continued in 2017 and some of them were completed.

As regards the actions of pillar A related to the ongoing support of the operation of ELSTAT and are under the competence of the Government, ELSTAT will continue its efforts to ensure the necessary human resources for the implementation of its statistical work programme. It is noted that in Section 5.4 of the Supplementary Memorandum for the 4th Evaluation of the European Stability Mechanism Programme reference is made to the commitment of the Greek Government to continue implementing the necessary reforms and to explore all the available support capacities for the provision of adequate human and financial resources to ELSTAT and the continuation of its effective access to administrative data. The establishment of the new Organisation of ELSTAT in 2018 is expected to have a significant contribution to the reinforcement of the human resources of ELSTAT.

With regard to the actions of JOSGAP pillar B, which aim at improving the processes and capacity for the production of statistics in Greece through a programme of short and medium-term technical assistance provided to ELSTAT by Eurostat, in 2017, for some of these actions, there was a continuation of the provision of technical advice to ELSTAT by experts of the European Statistical System. It concerns the actions related to the improvement of the quality of the Structural Business Statistics through the use of data from administrative sources, the upgrading of the Sectoral, Quarterly and Regional National Accounts, the improvement of the Price and Volume Measures and the enhancement of the quality of External Trade Statistics. Moreover, during the same period, ELSTAT carried out two (2) training series on specialised statistical topics for the training of both its staff and the staff of the other ELSS agencies.

More specifically, in 2017, significant progress has been made with regard to the actions under pillar B in the following areas:

- As regards the project for **improving the Structural Business Statistics**, in 2017 ELSTAT carried out, for the first time, the statistical processing of tax data of reference year 2015, for the compilation of the relevant Structural Business Statistics (SBS). The above data were transmitted to ELSTAT by the Independent Authority for Public Revenue (IAPR), pursuant to a relevant Agreement between ELSTAT and the former General Secretariat for Public Revenue (GSPR) of the Ministry of Finance, signed in June 2016. At the same time, ELSTAT conducted a survey only on large enterprises to collect data that were not available in the administrative sources. In July 2017, provisional SBS data, for the reference year 2015, were transmitted to Eurostat and the above final data were transmitted in November 2017. On 30 November 2017, ELSTAT issued a Press Release with the SBS results for 2015, using, for the first time, administrative sources.
- With regard to **improving the completeness and timeliness of the ELSTAT Motor Vehicle Register**, which is used as a sampling frame for conducting statistical surveys in the transport sector, the main database was compiled and the process of "cleaning" the relevant administrative data on the make and model of the vehicles, which were transmitted to ELSTAT by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, was completed for about 10,000,000 records. In addition, the data on the company's registered office, in the case of public use vehicles, were corrected. The Motor Vehicle Register was also enriched with entries from the database of the Vehicle Technical Control Centers, which were transmitted to ELSTAT by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport. However, the satisfaction of ELSTAT's request to the IAPR concerning the provision of data on the circulating vehicles in Greece remained pending.
- In the framework of **improving the quality of environmental statistics**, the cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and Energy continued, with the aim of improving waste statistics.
- The work on the **upgrading of Non-Financial Accounts of Institutional Sectors** continued in 2017. An expert of the European Statistical System provided technical assistance to ELSTAT during the months of August and November 2017, on issues pertaining to the accounts of the institutional sector of General Government. In November 2017, ELSTAT published a Press Release on the Non-Financial Accounts of Institutional Sectors, for the reference year 2016.
- As regards the **improvement of the quality of the Quarterly Accounts**, ELSTAT suspended, as of August 2017, the publication of the Press Release on the flash estimates of the Quarterly National Accounts, which used to take place within forty five (45) days after the end of the reference quarter. The suspension was decided in order to further investigate the availability of the sources needed to make the estimation more consistent, in terms of its interpretative power, compared to the provisional data published within sixty (60) days after the end of the reference quarter.
- In the framework of the implementation of the action to **revise and improve the Regional Accounts**, in line with the requirements of the European System of Accounts ESA 2010, two (2) missions of an ESS expert took place at ELSTAT's premises for the provision of relevant technical assistance. In December 2017, ELSTAT transmitted Regional Accounts to Eurostat, in accor-

dance with the transmission programme laid down in Regulation 549/2013 (ESA 2010).

- For the implementation of the action on **improving the Price and Volume Measures** and their alignment with the requirements of ESA 2010, in 2017, ELSTAT continued the necessary work, in order for Eurostat to lift its reservations on the Gross National Income. In this framework, four (4) expert missions on Annual National Accounts took place in the course of 2017, with the aim of providing technical assistance and performing quality control of works and results.
- In 2017, the actions aimed at further **improving the quality of statistics produced in the field of International Trade in Goods** continued. In the framework of the more accurate recording of the trade in ships and the application of the principle of economic ownership, the cooperation between ELSTAT, the Bank of Greece and the Ministry of Shipping and Insular Policy continued in 2017.
- With a view to **training both its staff and the staff of the other ELSS agencies**, ELSTAT carried out, in 2017, at its premises, two (2) training courses on the following thematic areas:
 - Survey Methodology and Sampling Techniques (23/1 – 2/2/2017),
 - Data Visualisation Techniques and Production of Infographics (13/3 – 4/4/2017),

with the assistance of trainers of the European Statistical System, as well as specialised Greek trainers, respectively.

The action of pillar B pertaining to the creation and updating of a Dwellings Register has not made any progress in 2017. The implementation of sub-project 8, of the project for upgrading the existing infrastructure and the services provided by ELSTAT in the area of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), regarding the development of a Human Resource Management System in ELSTAT, has remained outstanding, pending the implementation of a corresponding single human resource management system for the entire public sector.

8. Compliance with the requirements of the Union Statistical Legislation

With a view to fully complying with European Regulations, ELSTAT undertook, in 2017, the following actions per Regulation:

- *Regulation (EU) 2016/792 on Harmonised Indices of Consumer Prices*

The non-compliance with the above Regulation concerns the compilation of Housing Price Indices, for the period 1st quarter 2008 – 1st quarter 2017, and the Owner Occupied Housing Price Index, for the period 1st quarter 2010 – 1st quarter 2017, and is the result of non-compliance with the previous Regulation (EC) 2494/95 and Regulation (EU) 93/2013 that applies from 1/9/2012.

In 2017, ELSTAT continued to cooperate with the Ministry of Finance (MoF) to obtain access to the database of the General Secretariat for Public Property, in which real estate transactions are recorded. In particular, since March 2017 and in the framework of the operation of the Real Estate Prices Databank, the collection of transactions data has initiated in the special application of the Real Estate Transactions Valuation Register.

ELSTAT intensified its efforts to gain access to the Real Estate Prices Databank, by sending a letter, in July 2017, to the MoF, with the proposed terms of cooperation between the two (2) entities regarding the actions to be undertaken for the compilation of Housing Price Indices.

Following the above actions, in November 2017, a letter was sent by the President of ELSTAT to the Minister of Finance on the issue of ELSTAT's access to the Real Estate Prices Databank, highlighting the need for the use of these data in the compilation of the above price indices.

- *Regulation (EC) No 1287/2003 on the harmonisation of Gross National Income at market prices*

As regards the compliance with the Council Regulation (EC) 1287/2003 of 15 July 2003 on the harmonisation of the Gross National Income (GNI) at market prices (GNI Regulation), the GNI reservation No 6, which concerns the use of the balance of payments data for maritime transport and ships in the compilation of National Accounts, remains since 2012. It also remains the reservation on the Financial Intermediation Services Indirectly Measured (FISIM), which was converted, in 2016, into a specific reservation, from a transversal one that was initially (in 2012), to be monitored under the verification cycle of the Gross National Income, in accordance with the Regulation (EU) 549/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European System of National and Regional Accounts of the European Union (ESA 2010), since in the case of Greece the following aspects have not been addressed:

- The sectoral information on loans and deposits and the corresponding accrued interest should be used in the calculation of FISIM per institutional sector.
- The calculation of the internal and external reference rates should be aligned with the requirements of ESA 2010 (paragraphs 14.09 and 14.10) and point 1b of Annex III of Regulation 448/1998.

- *Regulation (EC) 638/2004 on Community statistics relating to the trading of goods between Member States and Regulation (EC) 471/2009 on trade in goods with third countries*

The outstanding issue refers to the recording of ships and aircraft as specific movements in the international trade in goods, on the basis of the principle of economic ownership from 2010 onwards, as provided for in the Regulation (EU) 96/2010 and in the Regulation (EU) 113/2010. In this framework, relevant actions are under way, in cooperation with the Bank of Greece, in accordance with a detailed Action Plan that has been drawn up by the two (2) entities and forwarded to the European Commission. These actions include the participation of ELSTAT in a special Task Force set up by Eurostat to examine the relevant issues.

- *Regulation (EC) 1445/2007 establishing common rules for the provision of basic information on Purchasing Power Parities and for their calculation and dissemination*

ELSTAT transmitted to Eurostat, on 19/10/2017, the updated inventory of sources and methods for purchasing power parities (EL_PPP Inventory version 2016), in full compliance with Regulation (EC) 1445/2007.

- *Regulation (EC) 177/2008 establishing a common framework for Business Registers for statistical purposes and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) 2186/93 and Regulation (EC) 295/2008 on Structural Business Statistics*

In the framework of compliance with the above Regulations, the compilation of the Statistical Business Register (SBR) for the reference years 2011 – 2015 was completed in June 2017, with provisional data. On the basis of these data, provisional Business Demography data for the respective years were transmitted to Eurostat. In September 2017, revised Business Demography data for the years 2014 and 2015 were transmitted to Eurostat, and, in December 2017, the Annual Report on the SBR with reference year 2015, the relevant quality report and the methodological note on the use of the administrative data for the SBR compilation were also transmitted.

- *Regulation (EC) 452/2008 on the production and development of statistics on education and life-long learning*

In order to fully implement Regulation (EC) 452/2008 and its implementing Regulation (EU) 912/2013, which sets the deadlines for the submission/transmission of data to Eurostat and specifies the required variables for each domain, the Education Statistics Section proceeded to the amendment of all questionnaires of surveys conducted in all levels of education for the

school/academic year 2014/2015. In addition, in 2016, it conducted, for the first time, statistical surveys for nurseries (ISCED 01) and post-secondary education (ISCED 4), in order to address coverage and completeness problems, as the data that had been transmitted until then came from administrative sources.

However, in 2017, full compliance with Regulation (EU) 912/2013 had not yet been achieved, as regards compliance with the transmission deadlines of the relevant data to Eurostat. More precisely, the data for the academic year 2014/2015 were transmitted to Eurostat in May 2017, without including the data on higher education. The data on higher education were transmitted in November 2017, mainly due to the delay of response of the surveyed units and the unsatisfactory, in general, quality of the completed questionnaires by the Secretariats of the Departments of educational institutions.

- *Regulation (EU) 549/2013 on the European System of National and Regional Accounts in the European Union*

In 2017, the following actions were taken to comply with Regulation (EU) 549/2013 on Quarterly National Accounts, Quarterly Non-Financial Accounts of Institutional Sectors and Regional Accounts:

- i. For the Quarterly Non-Financial Accounts of Institutional Sectors, the process of producing seasonally adjusted figures was completed.
- ii. For the Regional National Accounts, the time series (2000 – 2015) of the change in the volume of Gross Value Added at regional level was compiled.

C. ENHANCED RESPONSIVENESS TO USER NEEDS AND CLOSER COOPERATION WITH PRODUCERS OF STATISTICAL DATA

One of ELSTAT's main concerns is the production of statistics adapted to the needs and requirements of users at national, European and international level. In this context, ELSTAT collects the comments and interventions made by the participants in the Annual User Conferences that it has established. It also takes into account the results of the User Satisfaction Survey it conducts, as well as the positions and opinions of the members of the Advisory Committee of the Hellenic Statistical System (SYEPELSS), with the aim of improving its statistical products and services provided, as well as identifying new needs and requirements for the production of statistics.

- **Advisory Committee of the Hellenic Statistical System (SYEPELSS)**

In 2017, two (2) meetings of the Advisory Committee of the Hellenic Statistical System (SYEPELSS) were held in April and October. At the April meeting, the draft of the Annual Statistical Work Programme of ELSTAT for 2018 was presented to the members of the Committee and, pursuant to Article 3(8) of the Statistical Law 3832/2010, as in force, the members of the Committee were asked to opine on the above draft, by sending any comments within a timeframe agreed, so that they can be taken into account when finalising it. It was proposed by members of the Committee the creation on ELSTAT's website of a dedicated webpage on the SYEPELSS, through which the Committee will be able to make interventions and post positions and opinions on statistical issues, so as to assist ELSTAT in fulfilling its mission and to contribute to the cultivation of statistical culture and the development of statistical education in Greece. It was recognised the need of ensuring the necessary human resources for ELSTAT, as well as of the development of the cooperation of ELSTAT with administrative data providers, in the framework of the utilisation of these data for the production of statistics.

During the October meeting, the members of the Committee were informed by the President of ELSTAT of the reasons for the suspension of the publication by ELSTAT of the Press Release on the flash estimates of the Gross Domestic Product of the Quarterly National Accounts.

Also, in view of the upcoming 2021 General Buildings and Population – Housing Censuses, issues related to their conduct and the contribution of SYEPELSS to issues concerning the information of the public on the above censuses were discussed.

In the framework of the satisfaction of the request for the creation of a dedicated webpage for SYEPELSS on ELSTAT's website, the possibility of creating a forum for the members of SYEPELSS was explored by ELSTAT and a relevant proposal was submitted to the members. Following a relevant suggestion of a member of SYEPELSS, ELSTAT undertook to investigate the possibility of creating a dedicated webpage for SYEPELSS on ELSTAT's website, by analogy to the website of the European Statistical Advisory Committee (ESAC) on Eurostat's website.

- **Undertaking of actions in 2017, responding to the conclusions of the Annual User Conferences held in the period 2010 – 2016**

On the basis of the comments and suggestions made by users at the seven (7) User Conferences held during the period 2010 – 2016, ELSTAT included, inter alia, in its Annual Work Programme for 2017, the following actions:

- Production of statistics on education expenditure.
- Production of statistics on post-secondary education (Vocational Training Institutes and Colleges).
- Monthly compilation and presentation of indices on average value and volume of international trade statistics.
- Compilation of physical energy flow accounts.
- Redesigning of the Survey on Arrivals through chartered flights and the Survey on Yachts, on the basis of a feasibility study, in order to conduct them in 2018. (This work was not carried out during the previous three-year period (2014 – 2016) as it had been scheduled).
- Investigation, in cooperation with an external expert, of the possibilities of improving the accessibility of researchers to the analytical primary data of ELSTAT's surveys (confidential data for scientific purposes and anonymised survey microdata), while ensuring the observance of statistical confidentiality and statistical ethics. Continuation of the redesigning of the samples of household sample surveys so that they are able to deliver high reliability results, at a more detailed level of administrative division. Further exploitation of the data of administrative sources, as well as of new technologies, aiming at improving the quality and reducing the production time of statistical outputs in various areas, such as business, education and health statistics.
- Addressing the occurrence of divergences between statistics that are produced by different agencies and refer to the same variable, in the framework of the conduct of the certification process of statistics of ELSS agencies by ELSTAT. (This work was not carried out during the previous three-year programming period, 2014 – 2016, as it had been scheduled).
- Provision of methodological guidance to the ELSS agencies to compile, in the framework of their responsibilities, Sustainable Development Indicators and inclusion of these indicators in the certification process of statistics of ELSS agencies, in order to ensure their quality, so that they can be used for mapping out appropriate policies.

As regards the above actions, the following progress was made in 2017:

- *Production of statistics on education expenditure*

The Education Statistics Section of ELSTAT completed the compilation of tables on the education expenditure (public and private) for the years 2012, 2013 and 2014 and these data

were transmitted to Eurostat. The validation of the tables by Eurostat is expected, in order to publish them.

– *Production of statistics on post-secondary education (Vocational Training Institutes and Colleges)*

In the framework of the production of statistics on post-secondary education, the Education Statistics Section is in the process of collecting data for the school years 2014/2015 and 2015/2016. Data that have been produced from administrative sources (Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs) and refer only to public and private Vocational Training Institutes were transmitted to Eurostat.

– *Implementation of an action plan to improve the accessibility to microdata of statistical surveys*

In November 2016, an expert of the European Statistical System provided expertise to ELSTAT on issues of accessibility to microdata of statistical surveys. An action plan to improve accessibility has been developed in cooperation with the expert, with a view to completing this project in 2019. The action plan includes:

- a) Posting on ELSTAT's website of Public Use Files (PUF), i.e., files of anonymised microdata of ELSTAT's statistical surveys, which have been anonymised with anonymisation criteria predefined by ELSTAT, so that the direct or indirect identification of surveyed units is not possible. So far, access to these files has been granted upon a relevant request by users.
- b) Production of standardised Scientific Use Files, i.e. files containing confidential data for scientific purposes, from which the indirect identification of surveyed units is theoretically possible. They include confidential data for scientific purposes, to which statistical disclosure control methods have been applied in order to reduce, to a certain level, the risk of identification of the surveyed unit. The prerequisite for providing the above files is the submission by the researchers of a research proposal based on a specific template and the signing of a contract with ELSTAT to ensure the confidentiality of the data.
- c) Creation, after relevant investigation, of Safe Centres, where authorised researchers will be able to access confidential data for scientific purposes, to which statistical disclosure control methods have not been applied.

With regard to point (a), the competent ELSTAT Sections conducting the relevant statistical surveys undertook, in 2017, under the guidance of the Methodology, Analysis and Research Section, the compilation of files to accompany the Public Use Files on ELSTAT's website. The above accompanying files will include explanatory information about the PUF variables. The posting of the Public Use Files on ELSTAT's website will take place when the compilation of the accompanying files is completed.

With regard to point (b), in 2017, the Methodology, Analysis and Research Section started to develop anonymisation criteria to be applied for the production of standardised Scientific Use Files of microdata of the following surveys: Household Budget Survey, Survey on the Income and Living Conditions of Households, Labour Force Survey, Time Use Survey, National Health Interview Survey, Survey on the Use of Information and Communication Technology by Households, Survey on Energy Consumption by Households and Survey on Road Traffic Accidents.

– *Production of statistics at a level lower than the Whole Country*

In 2017, ELSTAT continued to gradually increase the sample size of the Survey on Income and Living Conditions of Households, with a view to enhancing the reliability of results at a level lower than the Whole Country, while at the same time to further increasing the accuracy of results at Country level (reduction of the statistical error). The total increase of the sample, which will be completed in 2018, will be such that reliable results at Region level are produced.

With a view to producing reliable statistics at the level of Region (NUTS 2), ELSTAT implements a relevant grant agreement for the survey, which is funded by Eurostat. In the framework of the above grant agreement, ELSTAT cooperates with an expert to improve the existing sampling design, as well as the methods for calculating the extrapolation factors and the estimates of key survey variables. According to the timetable for the implementation of the grant agreement, the proposed methodological changes will be applied, for the first time, in the 2019 survey.

- *Improvement of quality and reduction of the production time of statistical results across various areas*

The exploitation of tax data transmitted to ELSTAT since May 2016 has contributed to improving the quality and drastically reducing the cost and production time of Structural Business Statistics, as well as to alleviating the burden on respondents. At the same time, the planned exploitation of administrative data in the field of education is expected to contribute to improving the quality and completeness of the relevant statistics.

- *Addressing the occurrence of divergences between statistics that are produced by different agencies and refer to the same variable*

Addressing the divergences between similar statistics produced by various agencies is a constant concern of ELSTAT. An important development in this area is expected to occur in the framework of the conduct by ELSTAT of the certification process of statistics of ELSS agencies and of the cooperation between ELSTAT and the various producers of statistics, which continued in 2017. At the same time, in 2017 the self-assessment of methodologies of basic ELSTAT's statistics continued. In this framework, in 2017, the work on the revision of the Labour Cost Index methodology was completed, in cooperation with Eurostat, with a view to the full implementation by ELSTAT of the relevant European Regulation (Regulation (EC) 450/2003).

In addition, the following progress was made in 2017, with regard to previous users' requests:

- *Conduct of the Adult Education Survey, in order to assess the participation of adults in education and the impact of education on their employment status, as well as conduct of the ad hoc survey to assess the participation of young people in the labour market and the transition from education to employment*

The data processing of the Adult Education Survey with reference year 2016 was completed and the survey results were transmitted to Eurostat.

Moreover, the ad hoc survey to assess the participation of young people in the labour market was completed and the relevant Press Release⁽⁵⁾ was published in November 2017.

- *Compilation of statistics on nurses by gender, on the basis of the licenses to practice*

The Health, Social Insurance and Protection Statistics Section of ELSTAT continues its actions to improve the completeness of these statistics, by including the gender of nurses. To this end, it has gained access to the data of nurses who are registered in the Hellenic Regulatory Body of Nurses, in which there is a gender distinction.

(5) http://www.statistics.gr/en/statistics?p_p_id=documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_qDQ8fBKKo4IN&p_p_lifecycle=2&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_cacheability=cacheLevelPage&p_p_col_id=column-2&p_p_col_count=4&p_p_col_pos=1&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_qDQ8fBKKo4IN_javax.faces.resource=document&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_qDQ8fBKKo4IN_in=downloadResources&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_qDQ8fBKKo4IN_documentID=289194&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_qDQ8fBKKo4IN_locale=en

– *Production of additional statistics on accidents at work*

The compilation of statistics on accidents at work was completed with the inclusion of three (3) new variables: a) workplace, b) contact – mode of injury and c) material agent of the contact – mode of injury. The results with the inclusion of the new variables are available on ELSTAT's website.

• **Compilation of the 2018 Annual Statistical Work Programme and of the 2016 Annual Report**

In response to its relevant regular obligations provided for in the Greek Statistical Law, ELSTAT compiled its Annual Statistical Work Programme for 2018 and the Annual Report of its Statistical Work Programme for 2016.

• **Creation of a geodatabase**

A geodatabase was created with all the digitised settlements, which will be used in the 2021 Censuses for Buildings and for Population – Housing.

• **Digitisation of new settlements for the 2021 Population – Housing Census**

The digitisation of all the settlements, which during the 2011 Population – Housing Census had a population of over 700 inhabitants and had not been digitised, was completed. The corresponding analogue maps will be produced and the users will be able to link statistical data to the corresponding geospatial entities of the building blocks. The digitisation took place at the level of: a) building blocks with their numbering, b) road axes with their nomenclature, where possible, c) characteristic point and linear entities (churches, stadiums, streams, railways, etc.) of geographic interest. Moreover, it was also completed, in cooperation with the Regional Statistical Offices, the checking of the digitised adjacent settlements, in order to avoid overlaps.

ELSTAT was supplied by the Hellenic Military Geographical Service with a digital terrain model for the calculation of the altitude of the settlements in Greece, in view of the 2021 General Censuses for Buildings and for Population – Housing.

• **Development of an application for printing cartographic maps**

The development of the application for printing the cartographic maps of the 2011 Population – Housing Census and of the cartographic maps that will be used for the conduct of the 2021 Population – Housing Census was completed. The application was developed through the use of Geographical Information Systems (GIS).

• **Cooperation actions of the Library of ELSTAT concerning the dissemination of statistics**

The cooperation of the Library of ELSTAT with the National Documentation Centre (EKT) continued, in the context of ELSTAT's participation in the Greek digital libraries search engine "openarchives" of the National Documentation Centre. In the framework of the above cooperation, ELSTAT submitted proposals for corrections and improvement of the "openarchives" portal.

In 2017, the Library of ELSTAT became a member of the Hellenic Economic Library Network (DIOVI)⁽⁶⁾, which hosts Libraries and Information Centres of Universities, Banking Institutions, Research and Government Entities of the Region of Attiki that have collections, sources and information services related to the economic science, providing specialised and documented information services on statistical and financial issues to the public of all the members of DIOVI.

(6) <http://diovi.lib.unipi.gr/index.php/en/>

- **Organisation of the 8th Annual User Conference**

According to its Annual Statistical Work Programme for 2017, ELSTAT convened, on 20 October 2017, the 8th Annual User Conference on its premises in Piraeus, which was a thematic conference on "Demography – Migration".

The first main reason for choosing the topic of the Conference is practical, in order to draw the attention of users to the fact that the time of conduct of the 2021 General Censuses for Buildings and for Population – Housing is approaching, and that, in this framework, all need to be prepared, both ELSTAT that will conduct the censuses and users, including policy makers. The second reason, equally important, relates to scientific criteria, due to the relevance of demography and migration to very interesting scientific questions and issues, such as the depopulation, the changing of population structure, but also a number of other issues.

Fifty two (52) representatives from the public and private sector, as well as educational and research institutions, participated in the Conference. Furthermore, Mr Michalis Chouliarakis, former Head of the Administration Division had been invited, in order to be honored for his work and offer to the National Statistical Service of Greece. The President of ELSTAT made a brief reference to the curriculum vitae of Mr Chouliarakis, focusing on his extremely extensive and multi-faceted work on the official statistics in Greece and specifically on historical demography, and awarded him an honorary plaque.

During the Conference the following four (4) presentations were made:

1. Population and Migration in Greece: methodological approaches and exploratory possibilities
2. Greece: Demographic Developments and Prospects
3. Mapping and interactive visualisation of the Greek academic migration around the world, for the years 2008 – 2015, with data coming from the National Documentation Centre (EKT)
4. Results of ELSTAT's User Satisfaction Survey, for the year 2016

Subsequently, users commented on the statistical output and the services provided by ELSTAT in relation to the satisfaction of their needs. The users pointed out, inter alia, the need for ELSTAT to:

- i. Include all statistics on births, deaths and marriages under a section on ELSTAT's website, with the proposed heading "Vital Statistics" or "Registrars' Registrations", if this is allowed by the designing of the webpage.
- ii. Develop those mechanisms that will enable users to produce tables from ELSTAT's website with the variables of their interest.
- iii. Upgrade the Press Release on Vital Statistics, taking into account respective Press Releases of other countries and Organisations.
- iv. Re-issue the publication "Vital Statistics of Greece" in electronic form.
- v. Maintain the Annual User Conference, in addition to thematic conferences, so that the users have more time to express comments, remarks and requests on the production and dissemination of statistics.
- vi. Continue its actions for further access to more administrative data, so that more statistics are available to users for their analyses.

Material from the 8th User Conference is available on ELSTAT's website, at the following link: <http://www.statistics.gr/en/user-conference-2017>.

On the basis of the comments and remarks made by users in the 8th User Conference, as well as of the respective comments and remarks in the seven (7) previous User Conferences, ELSTAT recorded and processed the needs of users. The satisfaction of these identified and recorded user needs is already reflected, to a large extent, in ELSTAT's priorities for the three-year period 2017 – 2019, as they have been integrated into the Hellenic Statistical Programme for 2017 – 2019. ELSTAT has prioritised the aforementioned needs on the basis of their importance to users and their criticality for the statistical product, and has begun to explore the possibility of satisfying these needs, taking into account its available resources and its national and international obligations.

- **Coorganisation of an Annual Meeting with UNICEF**

ELSTAT and UNICEF coorganised, for the first time in Athens, on 24 and 25 October 2017, the annual "Network Meeting of National Statistical Offices: Data on Refugee and Migrant Children and Children from Ethnic Minorities", which was attended by representatives from 25 countries from Europe and Central Asia.

The President of ELSTAT opened the meeting, underlining the importance of protecting children's rights and the need for cooperation between national and international organisations, in particular with regard to the adoption of common measurement standards in order to achieve this objective.

The coorganisers of the meeting stressed the crucial importance of statistics on vulnerable children –including children of refugees, migrants and ethnic minorities– to reduce inequality and protect children's rights. For this reason, UNICEF maintains a database on children (Transformative Monitoring for Enhanced Equity – TransMonEE), which is updated on an annual basis with data transmitted for this purpose by National Statistical Institutes.

From the Greek side representatives of the Hellenic Police, the Asylum Service, the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, the National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA) and the Greek Deputy Ombudsman for Children's Rights participated in the meeting. The above representatives stressed the importance of enhancing the collection of analytical data on children, but also the importance of monitoring their access to services to better inform Governmental Authorities and the public about their needs.

- **Technical upgrading of ELSTAT's portal**

ELSTAT aims at continuously improving the various aspects of the layout and content of its portal and of the other dissemination modes of its statistics, with a view to adapting them to users' needs, both in Greece and abroad.

The project for the technical upgrading of the existing infrastructure and services provided by ELSTAT in the area of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and, in particular, the completion of sub-project 2 "Upgrading of the portal services for the dissemination of statistics" has a share in the achievement of the above objective. The new ELSTAT's portal was put into operation in October 2015 and has incorporated new open source tools and technologies, offering functional compatibility to all browsers.

The first page of ELSTAT's website was enriched with new elements, which are the following:

- Tabs depicting the evolution of key economic aggregates (inflation, GDP, unemployment, exports, retail trade, building activity), so as the visitor can, at a glance, see the latest developments in them. Furthermore, the visitor has the option, by choosing the tab of his/her interest, to be redirected to the Press Release of the relevant survey.
- Icons combining text and graphics, which present data from statistical surveys of wider interest, on topical issues or issues of communicative interest. These icons also refer to the Press Re-

leases of the respective surveys, while they are also posted on ELSTAT's accounts in social media, where they gather a significant number of visits.

- Tab redirecting to the address <http://www.statistics.gr/en/elstat-infographics>, where the full collection of infographics, which ELSTAT started to produce, is published. Moreover, each infographic is displayed on the main page of ELSTAT's portal in a banner format that depicts a selected part of it. By selecting the banner, the visitor is redirected to the full illustration of the survey.

In the framework of improving the procedures for the submission of users' requests and the monitoring of their satisfaction, the project "Creation of an Information System for Managing User Requests and Conducting the User Satisfaction Survey" was assigned to an external contactor and implemented in 2017. The project concerned the provision of software development services to modify and extend functions of one of the subsystems that constitute the portal of ELSTAT, in particular of the subsystem "Provision of statistical data", through which the work related to the submission of requests by the public for the provision of statistical information and the handling of these requests by the competent ELSTAT's staff are supported.

The main webpage receives a large number of visitors on a daily basis. In 2017 the main webpage of ELSTAT had 552,282 unique users' visits⁽⁷⁾. In comparison with 2016, the number of unique users' visits recorded an increase of 25%. In 2017, ELSTAT published 692 tweets on twitter (@Statistics.GR), while 3,132 tweets, in total, have been recorded since its creation in 2010. The number of tweets from other twitter users of ELSTAT amounted to 788,500.

Furthermore, in its LinkedIn account (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/hellenic-statistical-authority-elstat->) ELSTAT had 422 posts and the number of posts from other users amounted to 374,653.

It is noted that the Statistical Data Dissemination Section, the Library and the Cartographic Works Section of the Division of Statistical Information and Publications served 3,478 users' requests in 2017. Out of these requests, 177 (about 5%) concerned the provision of confidential data for research purposes and of anonymised microdata of ELSTAT's statistical surveys. More specifically, the following users' requests were submitted:

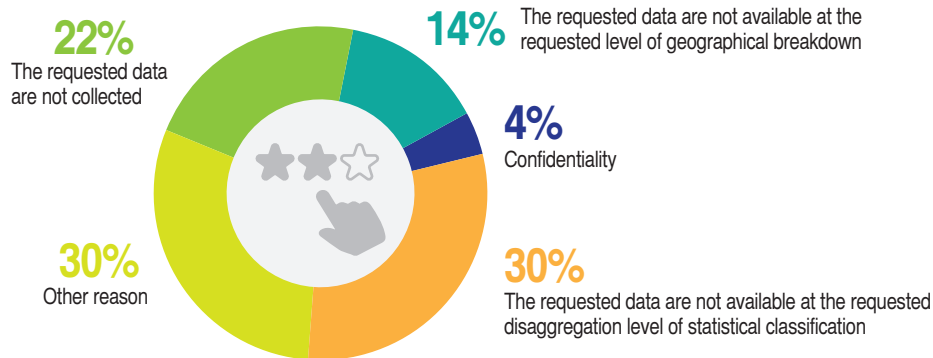
- a) 78 requests for the provision of confidential data for scientific purposes, which were satisfied after the signing of a contract between the users (researchers) and ELSTAT,
- b) 99 requests for access to anonymised microdata of ELSTAT's statistical surveys with predefined anonymisation criteria.

In the framework of the User Satisfaction Survey, conducted by ELSTAT on a continuous basis, 970 user satisfaction questionnaires were filled in, in total, in 2017.

On the basis of the survey results, the categories of statistics with the highest demand in 2017 were Population (15.3%), Agriculture – Livestock – Fisheries (11%), Tourism (9.4%) and Labour market (7.7%). The requests of users were fully satisfied at 92%, partly satisfied at 5%, while 3% of the requests were not satisfied. The users reported being satisfied or very satisfied in terms of the response time to their request at 98.6% and in terms of the services provided at 97.2%. The following graph illustrates the reasons for users not being fully satisfied:

(7) It refers to the number of unique computers that visited the webpage.

Reasons for users not being fully satisfied



In addition, in 2017, the compilation of the new on-line User Satisfaction Questionnaire was completed (Greek and English version), with a view to obtaining more information, from 2018 onwards, on users' confidence in statistics.

In 2017, the following actions were carried out for enriching the website of ELSTAT (both the Greek and English version of the website):

- Posting of ELSTAT's Quality Guidelines in April 2017. The Quality Guidelines outline the guiding principles and best practices for quality assurance at the various stages of the production of statistics by ELSTAT in order to provide users with high quality statistical products and services that meet their needs.
- Continuing the work of filling the gaps in the time series on ELSTAT's website, as well as of enriching the website with the metadata and the quality reports of all statistical surveys and works conducted, in line with the latest version (2.0) of the structure SIMS (Single Integrated Metadata Structure) that has been established in the ESS.
- Continuing the posting on ELSTAT's website of tables on various statistical themes and for a number of years, where there was a lack of information.
- Enriching the website with new Press Releases, which include statistics published by ELSTAT, in order to provide users with more and more results of statistical works of ELSTAT and, in general, broader and more comprehensive statistical information. In 2017, one (1) new Press Release on Statistics on International Trade in Goods by Invoice Currency was published.
- Depicting selected statistical surveys, as well the production processes of their statistics by means of Infographics. The presentation is made in a way on the one hand is easy to understand to the general public and, on the other hand, is suitable for reproduction by the social media, which constitute an important source of information for millions of users. In order to inform the users and the general public, ELSTAT produced a publication, in Greek and English versions, with a selection of the infographics that were produced by the competent Statistical Information and Publications Division, under the due diligence and the executive responsibility of a professional journalist at the President's Office. This publication is available at the following link:
http://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/5346500/elstat_album_infographics_en.pdf/b31fc7ce-a34c-413e-9fef-0b285e3cc2bc?t=1569922936063
- Promoting, on a consistent basis, the produced infographics and relevant information, in the context of the further dissemination of the results of statistical surveys, for their posting on the official webpage "European statistics" of Eurostat, which is available at the following link:
<https://www.facebook.com/EuropeanStatistics/>.

- **Informing the public on the produced statistics**

In the framework of actions for fuller informing journalists and citizens, ELSTAT held, in 2017, two (2) Press Conferences, with the executive responsibility of a professional journalist employed in the President's Office.

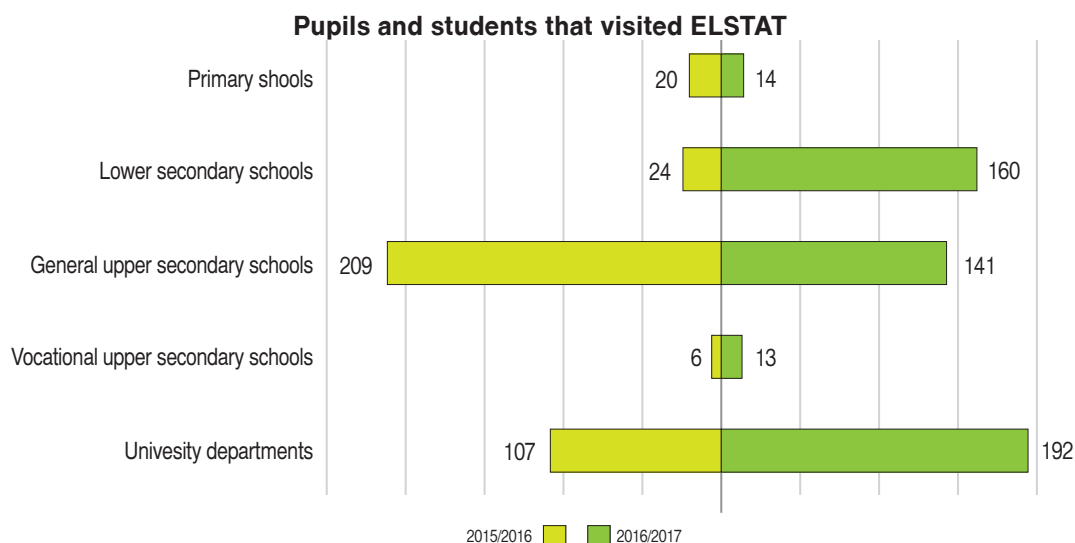
The first Press Conference on "Fiscal Data – Institutional Framework" was held on 21 April 2017 and concerned the publication of the fiscal data for the years 2013 – 2016. These data were prepared in the framework of the first notification of the Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP) in 2017 and transmitted to Eurostat by virtue of the European Regulation (EC) 479/2009, as amended and in force. These data were produced under the new ESA 2010 Regulation (549/2013) for the European System of National and Regional Accounts of the European Union. The participants in the Press Conference had the opportunity to be briefed on the current institutional framework associated with the EDP and, in particular, on the Regulations governing the methodology and notification of statistics relating to this procedure. The material related to the Press Conference is available on ELSTAT's portal (<http://www.statistics.gr/en/press-conference-2017>).

The second Press Conference on "National Accounts – GDP Compilation Method" was held on 17 October 2017 and related to the announcement of the 2nd estimate of the Annual National Accounts for 2016 (provisional data) and of the revised data for the years 2014 – 2015, in line with the European System of National and Regional Accounts ESA 2010. In addition, the participants were informed on the approach for calculating the GDP at market prices (using the three approaches: of production, of expenditure and of income), on the main sources used to compile the National Accounts, as well as on the checking procedures and the revision policy of the source data. The material related to the Press Conference is available on ELSTAT's portal (<http://www.statistics.gr/en/press-conference-oct-2017>).

- **Fostering Statistical Education**

In the context of the project of ELSTAT "Fostering Statistical Education", in 2017, fourteen (14) guided tours of educational institutions (of primary, secondary and tertiary education) took place at ELSTAT's premises. Seven hundred and sixteen (716) pupils/students, accompanied by twenty two (22) teachers visited the premises and the Library of ELSTAT and were informed on the tasks and the work of ELSTAT, the statistical material they can retrieve from its portal, as well as on the services provided to users by the specialised library of ELSTAT (Library's electronic catalogue, Digital Library, European Statistical Data Support Centre – ESDS).

The following bar chart depicts the number of pupils and students from various educational institutions who visited ELSTAT, during the school years 2015/2016 and 2016/2017:



During the above visits, the pupils and students are familiarized, through age-specific training programmes, with the meaning and contents of the Statistical Science and the Official Statistics, as well as with the role and responsibilities of ELSTAT. The pupils undertake the role of a statistician themselves and through a play they follow and participate in the process of collecting, processing and extracting the results of a statistical survey. Subsequently, the pupils working together in groups and using technological tools, explore the website of ELSTAT and learn to locate the requested information and data in the press releases, and the produced tables and infographics. The students are informed on the way of producing official statistics, in line with European and international standards, as well as on the use of statistics in public policy making. It is noted that the training programmes are based on the use of teaching aids and on the continuous and active participation of the visitors. The participants and the accompanying teachers are provided with commemorative material and publications related to surveys and actions of ELSTAT and Eurostat.

In the framework of the 82nd Thessaloniki International Fair (TIF), ELSTAT organised at its stand a variety of recreational and training activities for children. Through these activities the children had the opportunity of a first "contact" with the statistical science and the process of designing and conducting a statistical survey, using technological means and tools (e.g.: tablets with applications of educational statistical content).

Furthermore, ELSTAT, continuing the cooperation with social actors, which was inaugurated during the 81st TIF, hosted at its stand events organised by UNICEF focusing on refugee/migrant children. The events included: discussion on the "Education of Refugee and Migrant Children", as well as presentation of a fairy tale written by Sokratis Mantzouranis.

UNICEF has produced a relevant infographic, which is available at the link:
http://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/5346500/elstat_infographic_unicef.pdf/46a9d0bc-e4dd-467a-8f77-cca6d2d33813

In 2017, ELSTAT continued to enrich the dedicated webpage of statistical content (<http://www.statistics.gr/en/edu-programs>), through which the stakeholders are informed on ELSTAT's actions in the field of educational visits.

"Statistics Explained" programme

ELSTAT, having as one of its main priorities the transmission of statistical information to the Greek society, is actively involved in the programme "Statistics Explained" of Eurostat. This is an innovative, information-rich, electronic platform (available at the link: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Main_Page), which presents all statistical themes in a user-friendly and comprehensible manner. It serves as an encyclopaedia of European statistics, as a portal to further inform users (regular and occasional users) and as a glossary of statistical terms. The platform is gradually enriched with new material and the information is updated with the latest data and metadata.

In 2017, a specific interface was developed on the above platform under the heading "Statistics for beginners" ("Statistics 4 beginners"), where some statistical indicators and key statistical concepts are explained in a simple manner, so that the world of statistics becomes easier to understand not only for pupils and students, but also for all those who are interested in statistics.



Source: (c) European Union

ELSTAT translated into Greek the entire material of this interface, which is available at the link: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Beginners:Statistics_4_beginners/el.

At the same time, twenty five (25) articles published on the "Statistics Explained" platform were translated and/or updated.

Organisation of a "Panhellenic Statistics Competition"

ELSTAT has developed and launched the procedures for organising, for the first time, a "Panhellenic Statistics Competition". The aim of the action, which is carried out with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, is to stimulate pupils' interest for the statistical science, the way of producing official statistics and the use of official statistics in their everyday life, and to highlight the value of official statistics in other areas, such as the economy and the policy-making. At the same time the teachers are also encouraged to use new methods and tools for the teaching of the statistical science.

In 2017, the general rules and relevant information material were developed, information actions were carried out, and the interested teams of secondary education pupils attending public and private educational units of Greece were registered. Altogether, two hundred and thirty six (236) teams of pupils (144 teams of lower secondary education pupils and 92 teams of upper secondary education pupils) from eighty one (81) school units all over Greece were registered. The total number of participating lower and upper secondary education pupils was 394 and 227, respectively.



Image: Logo of the Panhellenic Statistics Competition

The 1st Panhellenic Statistics Competition and the ceremony for awarding the prizes to the first five (5) teams from each category of school units (lower and upper secondary schools) were scheduled to take place in the first half of 2018. The winning team of the national competition from each category of school units participates in the European Statistics Competition. The information concerning the competition is available on a specially designed webpage of ELSTAT's website (relevant link: <http://www.statistics.gr/en/edu-statistics-competition>).

- **Issue of a digital publication on the life of women and men in Europe**

On the occasion of the celebration of the European Statistics Day (20 October), ELSTAT announced, at the same time with all EU Member States, the issue of a new digital publication entitled: "The life of women and men in Europe – a statistical portrait". The publication aims to highlight the contribution of statistics to a better understanding of the diversity and characteristics of European citizens' lives, stressing the similarities, differences and inequalities between women and men.

The publication presents statistical data in an easy to understand way through short texts, graphs and interactive visualisation tools. It enables readers to test their knowledge through a quiz. It was produced by Eurostat, in cooperation with the National Statistical Institutes of the EU Member States and EFTA countries, in twenty four (24) languages. Its issue is the result of close cooperation between the members of the ESS.VIP project: "Digital Communication, User Analytics and Innovative Products (DIGICOM) (Work package 2 "Innovative and shareable products and tools"), in which ELSTAT participates. It is available in Greek at the following link: <http://www.statistics.gr/en/digital-publication-women-and-men>

- **Organisation of a one-day conference on the "Presentation of the Atlas of the Greek Islands"**

During a special one-day conference organised at ELSTAT's premises on 16 February 2017, the "Atlas of the Greek Islands" was presented. It concerns a publication of the University of the Aegean, based on ELSTAT's data, which contains useful information on the nature and evolution of insular Greece, its potentialities and lagging points. The Atlas includes data on geographical characteristics, demographic developments, economy, employment, rural and tourism sector, transport, etc., for the one hundred and fourteen (114) inhabited islands of Greece. The one-day conference took place in the context of the signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation between ELSTAT and the University of the Aegean, concerning the provision of statistical information for

the compilation of Atlases of the Greek Islands and the updating and enrichment of the web mapping application "Webgis".

- **Organisation of a workshop on the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation**

With a view to the continuous training and briefing of its executives, ELSTAT organised on 7 December 2017, at its premises, a workshop on the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation – GDPR (Council Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of 27 April 2016 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data).

The workshop was attended by competent executives of the Personal Data Protection Authority, who presented the basic guidelines and principles of the Regulation, as well as the role and responsibilities of the Data Processing Officer.

In view of the fact that this Regulation should be applied in all the Member States of the European Union as of 25 May 2018, the implications of its implementation on the statistical processing of personal data of individuals and the actions that ELSTAT might have to take to implement the Regulation were discussed during the workshop.

- **Cooperation between Greece and China**

ELSTAT, seeking the development of cooperation with the National Statistical Institutes of other countries, especially non-EU countries, and on the occasion of the 82nd Thessaloniki International Fair in which the People's Republic of China was proclaimed as the honoured country, hosted at its premises in Piraeus representatives of the Statistical Office of Beijing and of the Statistical Office of the Chinese Province of Yunnan, in September and October 2017, respectively. The representatives of the above Statistical Offices had the opportunity to be informed about the mission, the responsibilities and the operation of ELSTAT, while they showed a particular interest in the development, production and dissemination of official statistics of Greece, and in the cooperation of ELSTAT with administrative data owners of the Country and National Statistical Institutes of other countries. The areas of cooperation of the two (2) countries in the field of statistics were also discussed.



- **Participation of ELSTAT in the 82nd Thessaloniki International Fair**

In the framework of its annual presence in the Thessaloniki International Fair (TIF) for the last fifty seven (57) years, ELSTAT participated in the 82nd TIF (9 – 17 September 2017), with its own stand.

Information material and data covering a wide range of statistical surveys conducted by ELSTAT were available at ELSTAT's stand for the visitors. In addition, a printed collection of selected infographics, which were produced in 2017 by the Statistical Information and Publications Division and illustrate the results of some statistical surveys in an understandable way, was distributed to the visitors of the stand. The infographics that decorated the stand of ELSTAT are available in a special section that was created on ELSTAT's website for the 82nd TIF, at the following link: <http://www.statistics.gr/en/elstat-82-tif>

During the 82nd TIF, ELSTAT organised at its stand a series of presentations on the way of producing selected statistics of wider interest. More specifically, the following presentations were made by competent ELSTAT executives:

- "Demographic Developments and Perspectives in Greece"
- "ELSTAT and Infographics"

- "Reducing administrative burden of enterprises for the provision of statistical data"
- "Labour Force Survey"
- "Gross Domestic Product (GDP) according to ESA 2010".

In the framework of its participation in the 82nd TIF, in which China was proclaimed as the honoured country, ELSTAT issued, for the first time, an information leaflet entitled "GREECE – CHINA in figures". This bilingual publication (in Greek and Chinese) contains statistics that outline the relations between the two (2) countries and is available at the following link: http://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/5346500/elstat_greece_china.pdf/3d4d8f69-a87d-4b9f-a082-bf4fb9ca4c22.



Image: The first page of the publication "GREECE – CHINA in figures".

At the same time, ELSTAT organised at its stand, for a fourth consecutive year, a variety of recreational and training activities for primary and secondary education children.

In addition, ELSTAT in cooperation with the National Documentation Centre (EKT) developed and presented for the first time during the TIF an interactive tool for the mapping and interactive visualisation of the Greek academic migration throughout the world, for the years 2008 – 2015. The application, which won visitors' impressions, is available on ELSTAT's website, at the link: <http://code.vlantis.gr/greek-academics-diaspora/>.

Finally, ELSTAT conducted, for the first time, a survey on the visitors of its stand, through a questionnaire filled in with the use of a tablet. The questionnaire was filled in by 876 visitors. Most of them reported that they visited the stand of ELSTAT for recreational reasons and a 25 % for professional reasons. The vast majority of visitors declared extremely satisfied with the layout and operation of the stand. Nine (9) to ten (10) visitors declared themselves aware of the work of ELSTAT and, indeed, users of its statistics, while expressing their positive overall experience from their cooperation with ELSTAT.

tribution in the international statistical fora, continued its active participation in the meetings and workings of international statistical agencies.

In 2017, ELSTAT participated in the following projects of the European Statistical System, which are included in the project portfolio of the ESS Vision 2020:

a) ESSnet BIG DATA, whose main purpose is the integration of Big Data into the production of official statistics, through pilot projects exploring selected Big Data sources for the development of relevant applications. The project consists of ten (10) sub-projects. ELSTAT participates in the following two (2) sub-projects of the project:

- *Sub-project 1 (WP1): Web scraping Job-Vacancies:* the purpose of this sub-project is to identify the most appropriate approaches (technologies, methodology, etc.) for the production of job vacancy statistical estimates, as well as the conditions under which these approaches can be used by the European Statistical System. For the production of these statistical estimates a combination of sources, including job portals, job advertisements on enterprise websites and job vacancy data from third party sources are considered. In addition, text mining techniques are being explored for the automatic codification of the occupations in the on-line advertisements that have been extracted through web-scraping, in line with the International Classification of Occupations – ISCO-08 (at the four-digit code level). ELSTAT undertook to organise a meeting of the members of the WP 1 group. The above meeting was held in Thessaloniki, on 21 and 22 September 2017, in a room provided by the Region of Kentriki Makedonia.
- *Sub-project 4 (WP4): AIS-data:* the purpose of this sub-project is to investigate the Automatic Identification System (AIS) data in order to use them both to improve the quality and comparability of existing relevant statistics and to create new statistics of the European Statistical System. In the framework of the sub-project, European AIS data for a six-month period, which are provided by a Dutch company, are used. At the same time, ELSTAT also processes national AIS data of the same time period, to which it obtained access from the Hellenic Coast Guard. ELSTAT hosted at its premises in Piraeus, on 2 and 3 October 2017, a meeting of the members of the WP4 group, with the participation of representatives of the National Statistical Institutes of the Netherlands, Poland, Denmark and Norway.

The results of the project ESSnet BIG DATA are disseminated through the following link:
https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/essnetbigdata/index.php/ESSnet_Big_Data.

b) DIGICOM, which aims to exploit digital tools for the creation of innovative products for the presentation and dissemination of statistics (see Chapter C, above). The sub-actions of the project concern the following:

- categorisation and analysis of the needs of users, aiming at creating products and services covering their specialised needs,
- development of communication tools (visualisation tools, animation, interactive tools and applications), in the context of upgrading dissemination,
- further development of the infrastructure for access to open data and microdata of statistical surveys in a machine-readable format, and availability of the tailor made statistics, provided that the statistical confidentiality of data is guaranteed.

The results of the actions of the DIGICOM project are disseminated through the following link:
<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/ess/digicom>.

In addition to the aforementioned projects of ESS Vision 2020, ELSTAT continued, in 2017, to actively and effectively participate in the supporting framework QUAL, which refers to the quality issues of the portfolio projects. A key action, in 2017, was the development of a set of core values and principles, as well as of a model to strengthen the common ESS quality framework, including risk

management, with specific features and requirements, as well as common terminology. ELSTAT, represented by its President, participated in the work of the High Level Group on Quality (HLG-Q) and in the work of the Qual Steering Committee, which dealt, inter alia, with the revision of the European Statistics Code of Practice (see Chapter B, above).

E. HUMAN RESOURCES OF ELSTAT

1. ELSTAT personnel

In 2017, the number of ELSTAT personnel remained at around the level of 2016. More specifically, on 31 December 2017, the total number of ELSTAT staff amounted to 729 employees: the permanent staff numbered 688 employees (252 men and 436 women), the staff working under Private Contract of Unlimited Duration numbered 40 employees (13 men and 27 women) and there was one (1) employee under a Private Contract of Limited Duration.

The total number of ELSTAT staff, on 31 December 2016, was 730 employees: the permanent staff numbered 689 employees (251 men and 438 women) and the staff working under Private Contract of Unlimited Duration numbered 41 employees (14 men and 27 women). In 2017, 12 employees retired, 8 employees were hired and 2 employees were deployed to ELSTAT from other public services. Moreover, one (1) revocable employee was appointed to the Independent Office of the President of ELSTAT in the post of Special Advisor, under Private Contract of Limited Duration.

On 31 December 2017, out of the 729 employees of ELSTAT, 535 worked in the Central Office and 194 in the Regional Statistical Offices.

The following table depicts the allocation of ELSTAT staff, by gender and education level, in 2016 and 2017 (31 December):

Table 1. ELSTAT staff, by gender and education level: 2016 and 2017

Education level	Men			Women			Total		
	2016	2017	Change (%)	2016	2017	Change (%)	2016	2017	Change (%)
University	170	170	0.0	216	217	0.5	386	387	0.2
Technical	26	26	0.0	55	56	1.8	81	82	1.2
Secondary	66	67	1.5	190	187	-1.6	256	254	-0.8
Obligatory	3	2	-33.3	4	4	0.0	7	6	-14.2
Total	265	265	0.0	465	464	-0.2	730	729	-0.1

F. ELSTAT BUDGET EXECUTION

ELSTAT's expenses, for 2017, are classified in the following categories:

- a) Labour costs (salaries of ELSTAT staff, including basic salary, allowances (family allowance, position allowance, etc.), social security contributions, overtime pay, etc.).
- b) Expenses related to the staff's travelling within Greece and abroad, i.e., travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses for the employees of ELSTAT travelling:

- in Greece, away of the headquarters or out of the office, for the purpose of conducting statistical surveys in the field,
- abroad, for participating in meetings, seminars, etc. organised by Eurostat or other international organisations.

This category includes also expenses related to the transfer or detachment of ELSTAT employees to other agencies, in Greece or Eurostat.

- c) Other operating expenses, including expenses related to ELSTAT's buildings (Central and Regional Offices), such as rents, electricity, communication, water supply, security and building maintenance costs, expenses related to advertising and public relations, subscriptions, expenses for the provision of consumables (paper, stationery, medical and pharmaceutical supplies, materials for the maintenance and repair of premises and equipment), fuel, etc. In the same category are also included expenses for the provision of capital formation (furniture, PCs, printers, photocopiers and other office equipment), as well as the expenses for the remuneration of external survey workers, who are used by ELSTAT for the collection of data of conducted statistical surveys.
- d) Expenses for projects financed by Eurostat (for the conduct of surveys, studies and other statistical works).

The following table presents the allocation of ELSTAT's expenses in 2017, by type of expenditure, as well as the comparison with the corresponding debriefing expenses in 2016:

Table 2. ELSTAT expenses paid in 2017 in comparison with 2016

Type of expenditure	Amount paid (in euro)	
	2016	2017
Labour cost	20,909,838.43	21,014,307.63
Expenses related to staff travelling within Greece and abroad	498,903.07	504,945.11
Other operating expenses and cost for capital formation	6,967,342.89	6,789,862.01
Projects financed by Eurostat	164,823.95	1,606,733.04
Investment through the Public Investment Programme	—	—
Total	28,540,908.34	29,915,847.79

The observed increase in expenditure between 2017 and 2016, as regards the item "labour cost", is due to the increase in the employer contributions.

The observed increase in expenditure between 2017 and 2016, as regards the item "projects financed by Eurostat", is mainly due to the repayment of external statistical interviewers who worked for the data collection of the Farm Structure Survey of the year 2016, which was financed by a grant agreement of Eurostat.

