

How to Square the Circle of Official Statistics

- towards new partnership of central banks and national statistical institutes in modern IT environment

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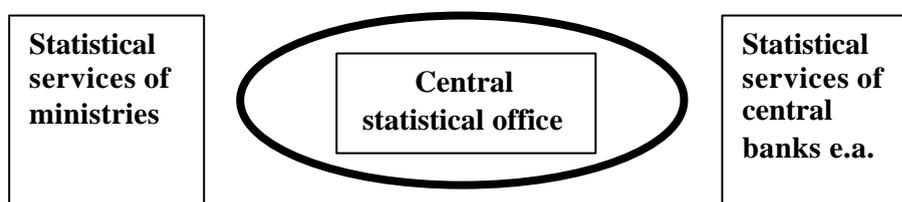
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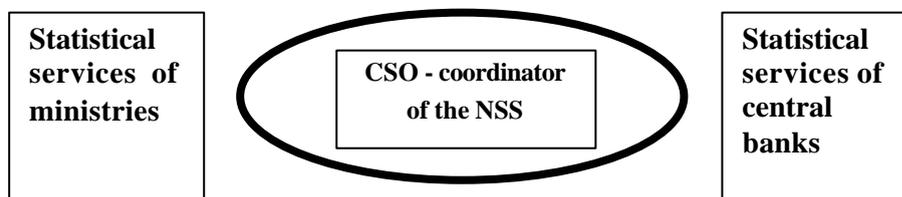
1. Traditional models - the "round circle" of official statistics

Two "traditional models" of organization of official statistics are following:

Model I - one national central statistical office conducting most of surveys and coordination the whole national system of official statistics.



Model II - many statistical departments integrated with ministries and other governmental, producing official statistics for the areas of the competence of relevant ministry, coordinated by administrative unit responsible for the budget for official statistics. The CSO in this model is - as a rule - the coordinator of the national statistical system (NSS).



2. The impact of modern IT and the development of new economy on the organization of official statistics

In modern IT environment the administrative records are main source data for both economic and social statistics. Statistics based on traditional collecting of questionnaires is playing auxiliary role. The only exception up to now are households surveys, some specific surveys on social statistics and business cycle statistics based on opinions and expectations of individuals.

Most advanced countries are producing almost all economic statistics and basic social statistics on the basis of different kinds of administrative records. Ministries and other governmental units managing those administrative registers are able to produce statistics themselves, without intervention of national statistical offices. Statistical divisions of those ministries play more important and rapidly growing role in official statistics. National statistical offices should redefine their functions in this new environment.

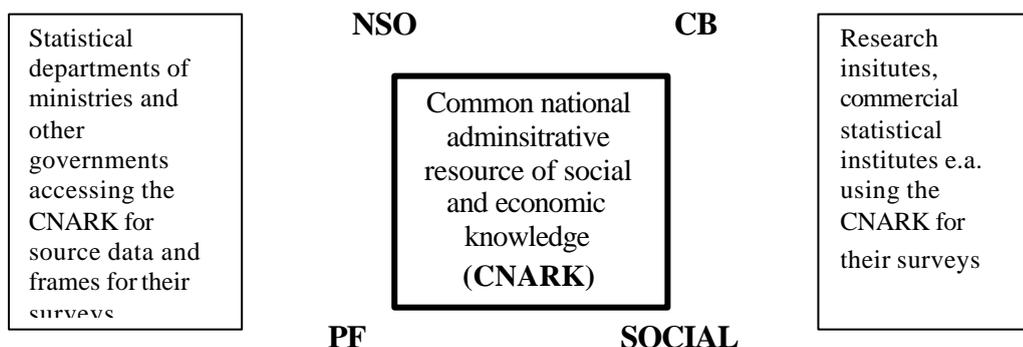
3. New model of official statistics - "squared circle" of partnership of NSOs, central banks, public finances and social security services

Up to now most of administrative records are oriented for the needs of their owners. This must be changed. To utilize administrative records for statistical purposes, their owners should accept the fact, that the information collected by them are - first of all - national resources of social and economic knowledge which should be available for all authorized users within the frames of the law. The development of administrative records should be coordinated as one common resource of knowledge, with minimized redundancy, coherent methodology and uniformed retrieval mechanisms.

Four institutions seem to be predestinated to play leading role in official statistics in modern IT environment:

- A. National statistical offices (NSO) as methodological and programming coordinator of the whole system of official statistics,
- B. Central banks (CB) as managers and/or coordinators of information systems reflecting financial side of the economy (businesses, households, governments),
- C. Ministries of finances (PF) monitoring the economy via the information systems of public finances: taxes, customs and government budgets,
- D. Social security systems, incl. health insurance (SOCIAL) monitoring labour, employment, unemployment, incomes of households etc. via information systems of social security records, pension funds, health insurance and social benefits.

Those four institutions compose the squared circle of modern official statistics:



The coordination of official statistics may be efficient only if it is realized by the "quatumvirat" of NSO, CB, PF and SOCIAL. CB, PF and SOCIAL should develop "their" as the segment of the CNARK. Legal basis for proper development and use of the CNARK as the kernel of official statistics is necessary.