

Statistics Bureau News Bulletin

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Full enforcement of the New Statistics Act

New Statistics Act

The New Statistics Act enacted in May 2007 came into full effect on April 1, 2009. The Act aims to promote more systematic and efficient development of official statistics and to enable wider and more effective use of official statistics. The former Statistics Act enacted in 1947 had provided the framework of the statistical administration of the government for nearly sixty years, and contributed to the development of official statistics for a long period. In response to the recent changes in social and economic environment, the Act was fully revised in 2007.

Main Features of the Stat. Act

① To develop official stat. more systematically

The Basic Plan is to be regularly adopted to promote more systematic and coordinated development of official statistics by the government as a whole.

② To enable more effective use of official statistics

New provisions are made to enable tailor-made tabulation services and scientific use of anonymized microdata.

③ To strengthen confidentiality protection

Penalties are strengthened for breach of confidentiality of individual data collected in censuses and surveys.

④ To establish the Statistics Commission

The Statistics Commission consisting of 13 members is newly established in the Cabinet Office as an advisory body to maintain quality and neutrality of official statistics.

Basic Plan concerning development of official statistics

Pursuant to the provision of the New Statistics Act, the Basic Plan is established to develop official statistics in a comprehensive and systematic manner. Its draft was deliberated upon by the Statistics Commission and underwent a public comment procedure. On March 13, 2009, the Cabinet adopted the first Basic Plan which stated the fundamental principles and concrete action plans over the next five years.

Main Features of the Basic Plan

- To develop "Fundamental Statistics" as statistical framework
(e.g. Develop economic statistics more systematically with the new Economic Census as the core of the framework.)
- To meet better the needs of policy-makers and society at large
(e.g. Develop and improve new fields such as environment and tourism statistics.)
- To enable more effective use of statistics
(e.g. Provide tailor-made tabulation services and anonymized microdata for research and scientific purposes.)
- To improve efficiency in producing statistics
(e.g. Use administrative records to improve the accuracy and efficiency of statistics and reduce reporting burdens.)