

Rebuilding the statistical system for a growing demand

Jorge Todesca FOR LA NACIÓN WEDNESDAY 12 JULY 2017

The National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC) has released the results of a Consumer Price Index (CPI) with national coverage, that will provide price information on the whole country and each of the six statistical regions: Greater Buenos Aires, Cuyo, North-east, North-west, Pampas and Patagonia.

This launch represents a milestone in the road of the current administration: today, no one can argue that a national price indicator is a right and, for this reason, overcoming the previous unsuccessful attempts has been an aspiration that meant the great effort of a large team of professionals, technicians and survey-takers of 24 jurisdictions.

Additionally, it will consolidate the reintegration of the institute in the statistical world: we are on the path to aiding the accession of Argentina as a full member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

This is directly linked to one of the pillars of the work programme proposed by INDEC for the 2017-2020 period, which precisely sets out to deepen the mechanisms of multilateral and bilateral co-operation with the global statistical community, to achieve alignment with the highest international standards in terms of statistics.

[The 2030 agenda](#)

For the last 18 months, the institute has been committed to the goals set forth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and has actively

participated in the annual meetings of the United Nations Statistical Committee, the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) and the Specialised Meeting on Statistics of Mercosur, among other specialised forums.

The 2017-2020 work programme of INDEC includes the strengthening of the statistical capacities of the institute, which stems from the need to perform large statistical operations in the next few years.

We have already programmed the conduction of the 2017/2018 National Survey of Household Income and Expenditure; the mining, agricultural and economic censuses; and the 2020 National Census of Population, Households and Dwellings.

A third line of action is the improvement of the organisational structure and institutional transformation. This involves a modernisation of infrastructure, technological update and the gradual incorporation of qualified professionals in permanent training.

In this aspect, we can also note the setting up of new statistical offices in each region of the country, which are fundamental to reinforce national operations such as the CPI and the Permanent Household Survey (EPH), since they will help drive good practices, training and follow-up of provincial statistics offices, a fundamental part of the National Statistical System.

[New indicators](#)

The fourth pillar is linked to the strengthening of the leadership of INDEC over the Argentine statistical system. In only a few months, we have begun to work based on the demand for new indicators and the update of others in different areas.

Some of these are the survey on child labour, at the request of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security; the National Survey on Victimization, requested by the Ministry of Security and released last week; the incorporation of a module on use of energy in the survey of household expenditure, at the request of the Ministry of Energy and Mining; and the study on disability which is currently being designed for the program promoted by vice president Gabriela Michetti.

In line with the task commissioned by president Mauricio Macri at the beginning of his term, we are shaping the statistical institute envisioned for the new century: a modern, connected and innovative INDEC, harmonised with the best statistical offices in the world and prepared to meet the information needs and requirements of the Argentine people and the global community.

Professional independence, accuracy and reliability, accessibility and clarity, strong methodologies and strict protocols must be the functioning foundation of the public service provided by the official statistical office. This is evidenced by the demand of our growing and challenging community of users.

The author is the director of INDEC.