

No : 16

Date : 10 / 05 / 2021

## PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

Apart from official statistics in our country as well as all over the world, there are statistics produced and published by universities, public opinion research companies, non-governmental organizations and professional organizations based on their field studies.

The main purpose of the Official Statistics Program (OSP) that the coordination role has granted to TurkStat in Turkey and formed for five-year periods is to prevent duplications in the production and publication of official statistics, to reduce the burden of respondents, to ensure a disciplined statistical production process by saving human power and resources in the public sector. The program enables official statistics be produced within the framework of international definitions, standards and statistical quality criteria.

Turkish Statistical Law No. 5429 stipulates in Paragraph 1 of Article 6 that **"Official statistics are produced, distributed and published by the Turkish Statistical Institute and the institutions and organizations specified in the Program. The duty and authority of institutions and organizations to compile, evaluate and publish data on official statistics related to their areas of responsibility are clearly stated in the Program"**.

Paragraph 3 of the same article also provides that **"In the event that real or legal persons of private law who carry out research activities involving statistical results publicise the results of their research to the public through the press and media, they are obliged to express the scope of the research, sampling method and sample volume, data collection method and application time together with the results of the research"**.

This article of the law applies to all kinds of statistical data produced and published by real or legal persons, whether or not within the scope of "Official Statistics". Yet the evaluation of the statistics produced and published as a result of various researches is at the discretion of the users in terms of data quality, **it is a legal obligation to clearly and explicitly share the basic information about the method by which the data is produced with the public**. It is also obligatory to present descriptive information on all types of statistical data published with its classification, understandable and complete open metadata to the user, in accordance with 15<sup>th</sup> principle ("Accessibility and Clarity") of the European Statistics Code of Practice which Turkey has adopted and committed itself to implement.

As in all statistics published by TurkStat within the scope of the OSP, latest recommendations of Eurostat are taken into consideration in Consumer Price Index (CPI) calculation methods and these calculations are made in line with international norms and standards. CPI data sent to Eurostat every month regularly by our institution with accompanying metadata and inventory information are subjected to Eurostat's standard analysis processes and

evaluations. **Similar to TurkStat's fulfilment of its obligations to international organizations, researchers in our country are also required to act within the scope of the above-mentioned legislation.**

The group, currently mentioned in the public, have not shared any metadata information for a long time simultaneously with the work they started in September 2020. In the next period, the existing metadata section announced on their website is far from meeting the standards and extremely inadequate. Therefore, users cannot access to information including classifications, scope and methods. In this respect, a criminal complaint was made to the Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office on February 23, 2021 against the group on the grounds that that it violated the relevant articles of the law. **Content of the criminal complaint is limited to the fact that the relevant group does not publish the necessary explanatory information with their news bulletins. It is not related to the results of the published study and it is also not intended to prevent or stop the studies they have performed.** It is only aimed to inform the public fully, completely and accurately by virtue of the legal measure.

Another disturbing issue regarding the mentioned group is that while announcing the results of its studies, it misleadingly announced consumer inflation under the same title in the OSP. For example, an expression like **"The Consumer Price Index (CPI) in Turkey has increased by 2.99% in January 2021"** was published through their tweeter account as an English tweet post on February 3, 2021, in which their so-called January 2021 results were announced. With this statement, the group, which publishes its calculations as if it were the official statistics, misinforms the public, especially in the international arena.

**TurkStat invites researchers to show the necessary sensitivity in matters such as not giving any name to the statistics they produce and publishing in a way that causes them to be confused with official data produced within the scope of the OSP, and not presenting these data in a way that will undermine the trust in official statistics or create a basis for manipulation.**

Turkish Statistical Institute supports sampling-based researches and statistical studies of academicians, researchers and non-governmental organizations in every respect. It provides all kinds of technical support with researchers on such topics as sample selection, questionnaire preparation, classification and so on. **Contrary to the perception attempted to be created in the public, TurkStat, as before, will continue to support all kinds of scientific studies and statistical researches to be performed by fully and accurately informing public about its purpose, scope, metadata and methodology.**

Respectfully announced to the public.