

2018 IAOS-OECD - Special Meeting

The Challenges to the Independence of Official Statistics: The case of Argentina.

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Situation at the Beginning of the Administration

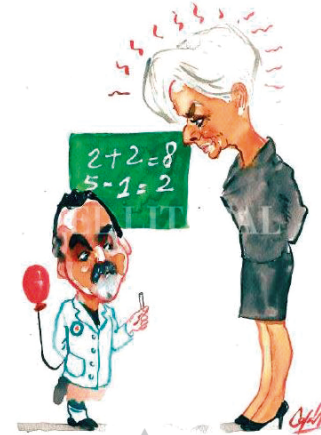
December 2015

- 1 Political intervention in the processes and results of statistical series
- 2 Processes disarticulated and damaged in their methodology and execution
- 3 Arbitrary displacement and replacement of professionals
- 4 Fracture of the statistical infrastructure
- 5 Weak credibility within the NSS (confidentiality affected, unexplained methodological changes)
- 6 Social discredit and loss of reliability of statistical products
- 7 Technological and building structures deteriorated and at risk
- 8 IMF Declaration of Censure (17/09/2012)

≡ **EL LITORAL** 100 años

Edición del Sábado 02 de febrero de 2013
ESTADÍSTICAS CUESTIONADAS

Reacción argentina contra la sanción del FMI por el Indec



'Argentine reaction to the IMF's sanction due to INDEC', February 2013.

FIRST STEPS

December 2015

HOW DO WE FACE A CRISIS?

December 2015

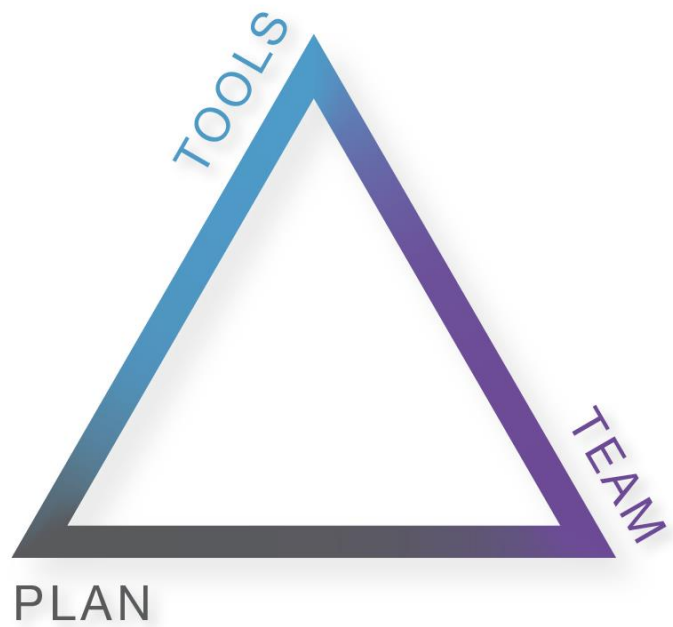
WHAT TO DO

Reestablish legitimate authority
Design and execute a short-term Action Plan

HOW TO DO IT

Tools appropriate for the crisis
Quickly gather a team capable of carrying out the Plan

An inseparable combination



The Economist

Official statistics

Don't lie to me, Argentina

Why we are removing a figure from our indicators page

20 June 2014.



The Economist

Welcome back

Argentina's new, honest inflation statistics

The end of bogus accounting

27 May 2017.



A crisis requires fast decision-making. It is an EMERGENCY

We asked the President for extraordinary powers during a year to appoint and remove staff who had not been hired by public tender (among them, most directors).

The President issued a decree to grant those powers.

We rebuilt the executive staff (42 officials) with a young generation of experienced professionals who had been dismissed or had resigned for being against the political intervention. This process lasted two months. Had the normal administrative procedure been followed, it would have taken two years.

We dismissed a great number of unsuited staff members, which caused a great conflict with the unions.

What to do with regular statistics?

Reliable series cannot be developed in a few weeks.

Releasing data without revision would have meant a great loss of credibility.

We decided to suspend all publications until the methodologies, sources and processes were revised. This caused a great internal anxiety and an enormous external pressure.

Statistics based on records were the first to be restored.

Statistics based on surveys took more time and the previous data could not be rebuilt.

20/12/2016 INDEC

Todesca anunció el fin de la "emergencia estadística" y el lanzamiento de un nuevo IPC a nivel nacional

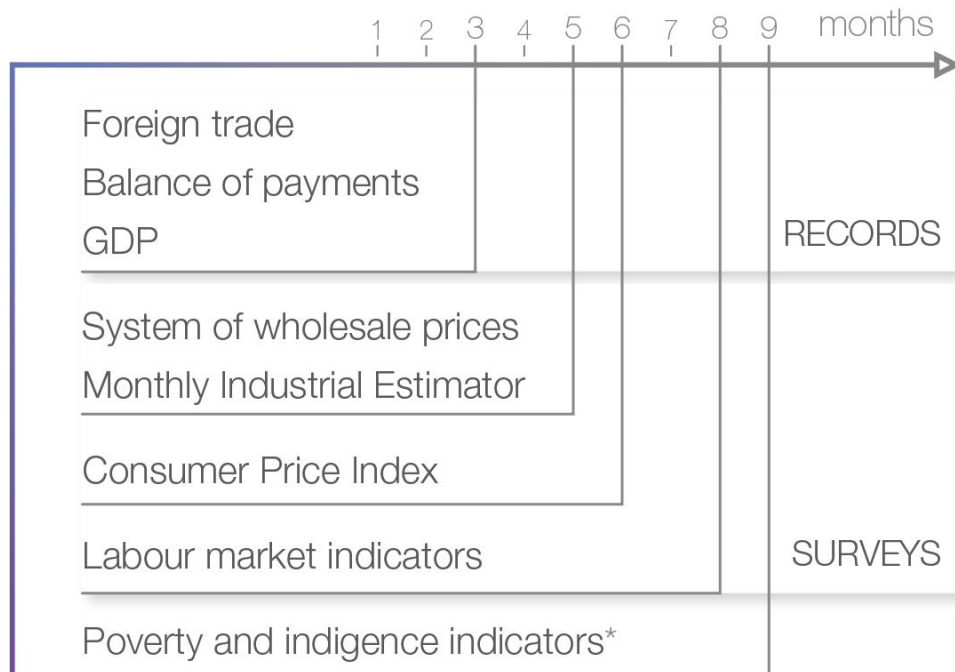
"Hemos hecho un trabajo muy fuerte para poner las estadísticas al día, la toma de datos, su elaboración, y por eso, a fin de este año, se termina con la emergencia estadística", dijo el titular del Indec durante un encuentro con la prensa.



El titular del Indec, Jorge Todesca, anunció hoy el fin de la situación de "emergencia estadística" que rige desde diciembre del año pasado para permitir la regularización de la información que brinda la dependencia oficial y anticipó que en 2017 se pondrá en marcha la elaboración de un nuevo Índice de Precios al Consumidor nacional, que abarcará a todas las regiones del país.

"Todesca announced the end of the "statistical emergency" and the launch of a new CPI with national coverage', December 2016.

Restoration table of the main statistical products



*discontinued in 2013

LA NACION

Las cifras del nuevo Indec, tras ocho años de manipulación de datos: la inflación de mayo fue del 4,2%



infobae ECONOMÍA

Hoy vuelven los datos de la Canasta Básica, suspendidos por el kirchnerismo

La medición a cargo del Indec es clave para calcular los niveles de indigencia y pobreza. No se difundía desde 2013. 22 de septiembre de 2016



‘INDEC’s new figures, after years of data manipulation: Inflation in May was 4.2%’, June 2016.

‘Data on the Basic Basket are back today after being suspended by Kirchnerism’, September 2016.

2016-2018 Development in the medium term

Some highlights

Seek a strategic path that is qualified, prestigious, credible (Unstats, IMF, OECD).

Avoid isolation. Explain, explain, explain!

During 2016, we worked with the IMF on the CPI and GDP, two indicators that had been issued a declaration of censure due to their inadequacy.

During mid 2016 we began to work with the OECD to adapt to their standards, as part of Argentina's intention to follow the accession process, but mainly as a guide to reconstruct INDEC.

EL CRONISTA **El FMI levantó la moción de censura sobre las estadísticas del INDEC**

Lo decidió el Directorio del organismo. Ahora el IPC y el PBI son considerados otra vez "confiables" para el Fondo. Mañana difundirán su informe sobre el estado de la economía argentina.



¡Profesional

ACTUALIDAD

La OCDE aceptó a la Argentina como "adherente" tras la normalización del INDEC



'The IMF lifted the declaration of censure on INDEC's statistics', November 2016.

'The OECD accepted Argentina as an 'adherent' following INDEC's normalisation',

2017-2019 Reconstruction of statistical infrastructure

Selected issues

- 1 Development of a new CPI with national coverage (2017).
- 2 New Household Expenditure Survey (2017-2018). 2012's was deficient and previous was in 2004.
- 3 National Census of Mining Activity (2017).
- 4 National Agricultural Census (2018). Last one was in 2002.
- 5 Specific surveys and studies necessary for the definition and monitoring of government policies (Risk factors, Victimization, Disability, Violence against women, Activities of children and adolescents).
- 6 Census of Economic Units (2019).
- 7 Update and standardisation of base years (national accounts and CPI).
- 8 Return to the International Comparability Program. INDEC did not participate in the 2011 round.

Where we stand

Government commitment to a new statistical law to guarantee full independence (pending).

No political interference in methodologies, processes, etc.

Administrative dependency for appointments, structure, budget and execution, etc. after statistical emergency ended.

Lack of access to administrative records (e.g. tax administration).

20/04/2018 INDICADORES

La OCDE elogió los cambios realizados por el Indec en los últimos dos años

"Nos vamos muy informados de la situación de las estadísticas en la Argentina", evaluaron los técnicos de la organización internacional.

La misión técnica de la Organización para la Cooperación y el Desarrollo Económicos (OCDE) destacó los cambios introducidos en el funcionamiento del Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censo (Indec) en los últimos dos años para corregir las distorsiones en las mediciones que se realizaban hasta fines de 2015.



"Nos vamos muy informados de la situación de las estadísticas en la Argentina. Impresionan las herramientas utilizadas para corregir las mediciones anteriores a 2016", evaluaron los técnicos de la OCDE, informó hoy el Indec a través de un comunicado.

El director del organismo, Jorge Todesca, agradeció las recomendaciones y propuestas que permiten avanzar en uno de los pilares del proceso de acceso de Argentina a la OCDE.

"Los objetivos planteados son muy ambiciosos, pero si consideramos nuestro punto de partida a fines de 2015, creo que estamos en condiciones de lograrlo. Soy muy optimista desde el primer día y lo sigo siendo hoy", dijo Todesca.

'The OECD praised the changes made by INDEC during the last two years',
April 2018.

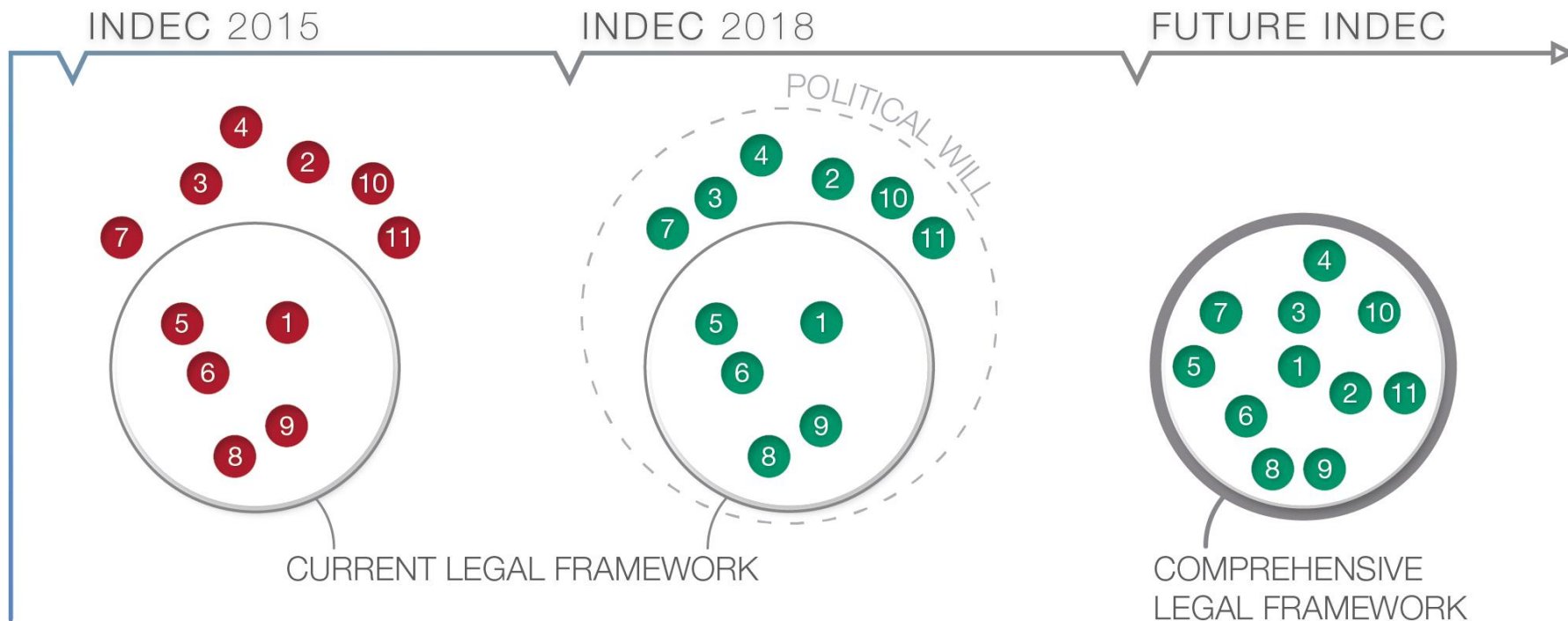
Intervention of political power in a National Statistical Office

William Seltzer (UN, 1994) defined eleven modes of institutionally undermining an NSO. The political intervention in Argentina included all of them.

| Mode of undermining | Examples of the political intervention at INDEC (2007-2015) |
|---|--|
| 1 Mission of the statistical service | Concept of “militant statistics” |
| 2 Financial resources and controls | Lack of funding for statistics |
| 3 Staff | Replacement of staff with political supporters |
| 4 Supression or changes in series | Supression of poverty and indigence statistics (2013). Alteration of the CPI. Unexpected change of GDP base (March 2014) |
| 5 Definitions, concepts and methodology | Ad hoc methodological changes |
| 6 Terms and nomenclature | CPI. Labour market. Foreign trade |
| 7 Altering specific numbers | Alteration of statistical series (CPI, poverty, GDP...) |
| 8 Extent and timing of release data | Unclear dissemination schedule. Bases not published |
| 9 Threats to confidentiality | Political pressure to reveal informants |
| 10 Use of NSO for politics | Defence and promotion of militant statistics |
| 11 Campaigns to discredit | Persecution of former officials and analysts |

Evolution of institutional strengthening at INDEC

Situation of modes of institutional undermining (Seltzer, 1994).





THANK YOU!

indec 50 AÑOS
1968 - 2018



Stefan Schweinfest, Director de la División de Estadística de las Naciones Unidas (UNSD)

Martine Durand, Jefa de Estadística y Directora de la Dirección de Estadística de la OCDE

Louis Marc Ducharme, Director del Departamento de Estadística del FMI

Moderador: Jorge Todesca, Director del INDEC, Argentina

indec 50 años
2018

