

Soviet period

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After the occupation, when Latvia became part of the USSR, statistical office was restructured and included into the statistical system of the USSR under new name "The Statistical Bureau of the Latvian SSR". In 1987 Statistical Office was renamed the State Committee on Statistics. Methodology, collection, processing and dissemination of statistical data were changed to adapt to the needs of the centrally planned economy.

Processing of statistical data was decentralized in 26 District Computing Stations and in Riga Computing Centre. Small amount of electro-mechanical calculators and perforating machines with punch cards for data entry, were used in data processing.

At the end of 70ies Computing Centre of the Republic (CCR) was established in Riga and mainframe was used for data processing which was organized round the clock in three shifts. CCR employed more than 1000 persons. Production of statistics for the State Committee on Statistics comprised approximately 10% of total amount of work at the CCR.

Significant part of aggregated data was classified as "secret" or "restricted use" information during the soviet period. Only in 1957 a limited edition of the first collection of statistical data for dissemination was published: "National Economy of the Latvian SSR" in two languages – Latvian and Russian. However, also in decades following 1957 majority of publications, especially, analytical reports based on short-term statistics – "svodkas" [summaries], as they were called at that time – were classified as secret and therefore published in limited editions – around 20-25 copies. All copies were registered and addressed to certain persons in Council of Ministers, Central Committee and other governmental institutions.

In order to provide officials with timely information, the printing house used to work also at nights, and in the morning, right after the printing of summaries, employees of the printing house and statisticians delivered each copy to its addressee.

In case of top secret data (for example, detailed transport statistics) during the printing of the material staff member of the statistics section was standing next to the printing machine and immediately destroying all the sheet spoilages, if such appeared.

To shape statisticians political opinions and attitudes, political training took place regularly. Lecture "On the implementation of XI five-year plan and tasks for its successful accomplishment" (О ходе выполнения плана XI пятилетки и задачи по ее успешному завершению) is one example of this type of training statisticians were used to listen to during the soviet period.

It was only when M.Gorbachovs became Secretary-General of Central Committee, strict secrecy regime and politicization of statistics started to phase out gradually.

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