

## **TWINNING CONTRACT**

# **Support to Statistics**

**Kosovo**



## **MISSION REPORT**

**on**

**Dissemination**

**Working with the press/news media**

**Component no 4.3.3**

Mission carried out by

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Statistics Denmark

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## List of Abbreviations

KAS	Kosovo Agency for Statistics
ToR	Terms of Reference
CoP	Code of Practice
SD	Statistics Denmark
DG	Director General

## 1. General comments

This mission report was prepared within the Twinning Project „Support to Statistics”. It was the first mission to be devoted to “Working with the press/news media” within Component 4 of the project. The mission was aimed at discussing press relations in a MS Statistical Agency. The mission introduced a road map for a News Media Policy and guidelines for Kosovo Agency of Statistics.

An assessment mission on Dissemination Policy and Strategy, carried out by MS in May 2015, stated that a new Press Policy and media Strategy was important for KAS.

The concrete objectives of the mission were:

- KAS briefed the MS experts on all press activities and how they are managed at this stage.
- The MS experts briefed KAS staff on Statistics Denmark's News Media Policy and Strategy.
- KAS and the MS experts discussed how to enhance and improve the press relations at KAS.
- A roadmap for developing a News Media Policy and Strategy was outlined. Including description of new activities within KAS.
- The experts recommendations focus on activities that can be launched by KAS to better communicate with the press and to better ensure that statistics generated by KAS is passed on to the citizens of Kosovo in an easy and understandable manner.
- The mission also suggests activities that can help KAS to better understand the press and news media's need for information.

The consultants would like to express our thanks to all officials and individuals met for the kind support and valuable information which we received during our stay in Kosovo, and which highly facilitated our work. We would also like to thank the participants for their engagement and input to our discussions.

**This views and observations stated in this report are those of the consultants and do not necessarily correspond to the views of EU, KAS or Statistics Denmark.**

## 2. Assessment and results

KAS doesn't have a press policy or any written guidelines of how to handle the press.

### **Activities related to the press:**

- About 10 press meetings a year
- About 100 publications a year
- About 15 Press releases a year

### **Channels of distribution**

- Website
- Press releases
- Events
- Official e-mails
- Publications (PDF)
- Print publications e.g. Yearbook
- Facebook (4.000 followers)

**Monitoring the press:**

Two employees monitor the press manually. They collect and distribute press clips to the DG and to the directors. On average the monitoring includes 30 clips a day. Only print media and websites are monitored.

**Handling errors in the press**

KAS thrives to correct errors in the press when they are detected through monitoring. The employees responsible for the figures have to follow up.

**When journalists contact KAS:**

Most contacts go through the press officer, who directs the journalist to the person in charge of the specific statistic. Employees responsible for specific statistics are allowed to answer questions regarding how to understand the numbers and methods. KAS aims to list contacts on all publications. However, from time to time employees are reluctant to talk to journalists, which makes it difficult to service the media.

The DG has to approve all interviews. The DG doesn't make all interviews himself.

Today it is not possible for journalists to reach KAS outside opening hours (weekdays 8 – 16).

**Education of employees and journalists:**

Today, there are no internal activities related to educating the employees on how to handle the press. Also, there are no activities related to educating journalists or to support dialogue with the journalists regarding their wishes and needs.

**Handling errors in publications**

KAS corrects and replaces publications when errors are identified. There is no practice regarding how to report corrections of errors. Sometimes documents are corrected or replaced without further information.

**Handling critical stories**

KAS has experienced critical stories where numbers or methodologies have been questioned. So far critical stories have been handled on an ad hoc basis.

The current way of KAS' handling of the press results in difficulties in meeting the requirements in CoP. The consultants give their input on how to meet these requirements in section 3.

### 3. Conclusions and recommendations

The overall conclusion is that there is a strong need for a press policy and written guidelines on a number of issues related to press work. This will result in a bigger understanding within KAS on the importance of the press, on how to handle the press and on how to meet the requirements in CoP.

The press policy should include a number of sections:

Section 1: Principles, including clarification on why the press is important to KAS.

The principles should address:

- Independence
- Accessibility
- User orientation
- Relevance
- Punctuality
- Trustworthiness
- Timeliness

- Quality
- Equality

For each principle it should be described how it is reflected in the press work of KAS.

Section 2: Most important channels to the reach the press, including:

- Website
- Press releases
- Events
- Official e-mails
- Online publications
- Print publications e.g. Yearbook
- Facebook

For every channel it should be described who is responsible and any formal requirements regarding formats, approval etc.

Section 3: When media contact KAS:

- A description of who is responsible for handling the request of the press
- Deciding the level of service provided to the press
- Deadlines for answering questions asked by the press
- Guideline for how to represent KAS in an objective way
- Clear contact info – also outside office hours

Each of these bullets should be described in writing.

For all stories in the press that involve KAS it is important to monitor penetration and whether the numbers are used in a correct way.

Section 4: Handling critical stories including:

- Who should be informed when?
- Who is responsible?
- Spokes persons?
- How to be proactive, when errors are detected?

Each of these bullets should be described in writing.

Section 5: Education of employees and journalists including:

- Introduction to press work in KAS – what are the guidelines and requirements?
- Media training of management and key experts
- Invite media on a regular basis (eg. once a year) for a general information meeting on how they can use KAS in their everyday work. The information meeting will also support the dialogue with the media on their expectations and requirements regarding KAS
- Offer training of journalism students in how to use KAS and statistics in journalism

Besides the recommendations for a press policy and guidelines the consultants recommend changes on following specific areas in order to underline the independence of KAS:

- All releases of new numbers should be listed in the pre-release calendar – including updates in the statbank. Also, there should be a fixed time for publishing new numbers.
- The principles included in the press policy should be made public on the web site.
- There should be contact info on all publications, including the statbank.
- KAS should consider how to handle press requests outside office hours.

## Annex 1. Terms of Reference



**EU Twinning Project  
KS12 IB ST 01**  
Support to Statistics

**Terms of Reference:****Component 4: Dissemination****Activity 4.3.3: Working with the press / news media****Scheduling:**

Tor –ready date: **4 June 2015**  
 Start / end of activity: **23-26 June 2015**  
 Reporting time: **3 July 2015**

**Mandatory result of the component:**

Mandatory Result	Intervention logic	Benchmarks	Sources of information	Assumptions
<b>Activity 4.2</b>	<b>Developing Web dissemination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>KAS website and its user-friendliness improved by 8<sup>th</sup> project quarter</li> <li>Dissemination database installed and available to the public by 7<sup>th</sup> project quarter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Twinning quarterly reports</li> <li>Mission Reports actuel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sufficient absorption capacity</li> <li>Low turn-over of staff involved in implementation</li> <li>Staff works on project related tasks in between missions</li> <li>A detailed Terms of Reference is developed in a timely manner detailing tasks (input), expected output, participants of the activity and agenda</li> </ul>

**Subject / purpose of activity: 4.3.3 activity**

Discussing press relations in a MS Statistical Agency. Introducing a road map for a News Media Policy and Strategy for Kosovo Agency of Statistics.

**Expected output of the 4.3.3 activity**

- Assessment of present Press Relations at KAS
- Roadmap for developing a News Media Policy and Strategy for Kosovo Agency of Statistics.

KAS program of official statistics 2013-2017 states that a dissemination policy including guidelines for design of tables and graphs and for the improvement of the website should be developed. An assessment mission on Dissemination Policy and Strategy, carried out by Jesper Ellemosse Jensen and Annegrete Wulff in May 2015, stated that a new Press Policy and media Strategy was important for KAS. Currently KAS conducts press conferences on an ad hoc basis.

In this mission KAS will brief the MS experts on all Press activities and how they are managed at this stage. The MS experts will brief KAS staff on Statistics Denmark's News Media Policy and Strategy. KAS and the MS expert's will discuss how to enhance and improve the press relations at KAS.

A roadmap for developing a News Media Policy and Strategy will be outlined. Including description of new activities within KAS and also any new missions needed from the Twinning project. The roadmap should take into account the scarce resources at KAS. The experts recommendations should focus on activities that can be launched by KAS to better communicate with the press and to better ensure that statistics generated by KAS is passed on to the citizens of Kosovo in an easy and understandable manner. The mission should also suggest activities that can help KAS to better understand the press and news media's need for information. Such activities could be focus group meetings with press / news media and briefings on specific surveys of particular interest like the agricultural census.

### **KAS resources:**

1. Mr. Burim Limolli, Head of IT, KAS, [burim.limolli@rks-gov.net](mailto:burim.limolli@rks-gov.net)
2. Hazbije Qeriqi, Communication Officer, KAS, [hazbije.qeriqi@rks-gov.net](mailto:hazbije.qeriqi@rks-gov.net)
3. Ms. Drita Sylejmani, Dissemination Officer, KAS, [drita.sylejmani@rks-gov.net](mailto:drita.sylejmani@rks-gov.net)
4. Ms. Shqipe Gashi, Dissemination Officer, KAS [shqipe.gashi@rks-gov.net](mailto:shqipe.gashi@rks-gov.net)

### **KAS Twinning team:**

Project Leader Mr. Ilir T. Berisha, Director of Economic Statistics and National Accounts, [Ilir.T.Berisha@rks-gov.net](mailto:Ilir.T.Berisha@rks-gov.net)

RTA Counterpart Ms. Teuta Zyberi, International Relations Officer, [teuta.zyberi@rks-gov.net](mailto:teuta.zyberi@rks-gov.net)

### **Member state resources:**

Mr Steen Dahl Pedersen, Head of Communication, Statistics Denmark, [CUZ@dst.dk](mailto:CUZ@dst.dk)

Mr. Helle Harbo Holm, Senior Adviser, Head of Press Relations, Statistics Denmark, [HSO@dst.dk](mailto:HSO@dst.dk)

### **Twinning ressources:**

Mr Per Knudsen, RTA, [pkn@dst.dk](mailto:pkn@dst.dk)

Ms Nora Zogaj, RTA assistant, [nzogaj@yahoo.com](mailto:nzogaj@yahoo.com)

### **Background**

In general the activities in component 4 will address the following issues:

- Improve web dissemination for selected statistics including improvement of KAS website to make it a more user-friendly and flexible dissemination tool;
- Develop guidelines for the design of tables and graphs, also to be applied for dissemination on the web;
- Develop a dissemination database, including more complete metadata covering different aspects related to data quality;
- Improve Direct user communication
- Introduce Dissemination Strategy and Policies according to Code of Practice
- Develop a dissemination strategy
- Introduce improved methods / procedures for working with the press and news media

**Activities to be undertaken in preparation for the mission:**

List of attached documents

- Program of official statistics 2013 -2017
- Mission report: Improvement of Dissemination – Development of Dissemination Strategy (4.9.1 Ellemose Jensen & Wulff)
- Twinning Mission Reports, Component 4 (all available at dst.dk/Kosovo)

**Annex 1. Program, - May 2015**

Day	Place	Time	Event
<b>1</b>	KAS	10:00	Introductory remarks to this part of component 4
		10:15	KAS: will brief the experts on the current state of press relations within KAS.
		11:00	Coffee
		11:15	MS: Will brief KAS participants on Statistics Denmark's Press relations strategy and dissemination activities.
		12:00	Lunch
		13:30	MS: European Requirements and experiences on press relations <u>Keywords for agenda:</u> Code of Practice News to the press Monitoring the press Correcting errors Procedures for press contacts Press guidelines for the statistical divisions Press policy / press strategy
		14:30	Coffee
		15:00 – 16:00	Discussion
<b>2</b>	KAS	09:00-16:00	Keywords for agenda continued

<b>3</b>	KAS	09:00-12:00	Keywords for agenda continued Recommendations
		13:00-14:00	Debriefing
		14:00-1600	Report writing
<b>4</b>	KAS	09:00-11:00	Report writing Debriefing: Experts, KAS Project Leader, Component Leader, and RTA

## Annex 2. Road map for news media policy

Section 1: Principles, including clarification on why the press is important to KAS.

*The press is important to KAS for a number of reasons (eg.): In order to provide the general public with important numbers from KAS; in order to make the public support the work of KAS – when*

*making censuses for example; and in order to promote KAS in general as an important and independent institution supporting democracy in Kosovo.*

The principles addressed:

- Independence
  - *The status and perception of KAS among journalists as being independent. Eg. referring to the legislation on KAS. Pointing out that KAS does not have any specific agendas*
- Accessibility
  - *The possibility for journalists to get in contact with the right person in KAS + to get in contact with KAS outside office hours (guidelines)*
- Relevance and user orientation
  - *That needs and expectations of journalists are being identified and being considered by KAS. Supporting general dialogue with the media.*
- Punctuality
  - *That numbers and publications are published according to the publication calendar.*
- Trustworthiness
  - *Being open and helpful to all journalists. Giving them access to relevant, precise and correct information. Keeping promises to journalists – eg. promise of response before deadline.*
- Timeliness
  - *Quick response to journalists. When that is not possible, journalists are given an explanation and an indication on when to expect an answer.*
- Quality and equality
  - *All journalists are given the same high-quality service. KAS assist journalists, also in cases where a journalist has a news angle different to KAS'.*

Section 2: Most important channels to the reach the press, including:

- Website
- Press releases
- Events
- Official e-mails
- Online publications
- Print publications e.g. Yearbook
- Facebook

For every channel it should be described who is responsible and any formal requirements regarding formats, approval etc.

*Things to consider: What information do you choose to publish where, and why does that make sense from a user perspective? Be aware why you choose one channel before another.*

*Releases should always be handled in the same way and published in the same channels – which one is best suited? Do you have the channels you need available?*

Section 3: When media contact KAS:

- A description of who is responsible for handling the request of the press
  - *Is it the employee who made the numbers? Should the responsibility be placed at a higher level? No matter whom you choose, make sure to have guidelines, so they know exactly what is expected from them, and when they should pass the responsibility to someone else.*
  - *How do you coordinate contacts from the press? Is the press unit always informed?*
- Deciding the level of service provided to the press

- *It is important that the service to all media meets the same standards so no one can accuse you of favorizing some to others. Be realistic and consider the resources you have available.*
- Deadlines for answering questions asked by the press
  - *Be aware of how the media works and set a time for when questions should be answered. Within 2 hours, within the same day?*
- Guideline for how to represent KAS in an objective way
 

*Suggestions:*

  - *Employees never make comments about opinions, but stick to facts*
  - *Don't criticize other institutions, but explain how KAS works and why that makes sense to you*
  - *All media are treated equally even if you don't agree in the agenda of the journalist*
- Clear contact info – also outside office hours
  - *Describe the expectations to the person listed as a contact, e.g. when they should be available and if they need approval to say anything that will be quoted.*
  - *Is there a need for a 24/7 contact for the press? To what extent do you service the press outside office hours? Only if they need interviews or do you help find and explain numbers?*

Each of these bullets should be described in writing.

*Input for a guideline for when journalist call employees:*

- *Interview the journalist: What is the purpose of the interview? Is it background or quotation? What is your role?*
- *Take your time. If you need to gain insight into a question or to have the papers in front of you, ask the journalist if you can return in 10 minutes.*
- *Don't use incomprehensible formulations. The journalist is not an expert.*
- *Comment on and explain the numbers/figures – the journalist is able to make a better story, if the figures are being understood.*
- *Provide additional information.*
- *Get the mail address/phone number of the journalist.*
- *Remember to keep your promises to a journalist.*
- *Trust the journalist. Do only ask to see quotations if the story is critical or conflict-ridden – or if you have had bad experiences with the journalist.*
- *Ask the journalist about the expected outcome of his/her enquiry.*

For all stories in the press that involve KAS it is important to monitor penetration and whether the numbers are used in a correct way.

Section 4: Handling critical stories including:

*Define what is a critical story to KAS? What should the employees be aware of? Should there be different ways of handling different types of crises? Do you always respond to criticism?*

- Who should be informed when?
  - *When must the employees seek advice from his/her Head of Division/Director? At what state should the press unite be involved? In which cases should the GD be involved?*
- Who is responsible?
  - *Who is responsible to make sure the right people are involved at the right time?*
- Spokes persons?
  - *In a critical case do you appoint one spokesperson? Who appoints the spokesperson? Do the directors have a duty to give interviews in critical cases?*
  - *When does the spokesperson need approval and from whom?*
- How to be proactive, when errors are detected?

- *Errors should always be reported to the press unit and all persons responsible to discuss how to react externally. Who's responsible to react and report errors, and who has the last saying when you have to decide whether you should make a statement to the press?*

Each of these bullets should be described in writing.

Section 5: Education of employees and journalists including:

- Introduction to press work in KAS – what are the guidelines and requirements?
  - *A short introduction (in writing) to employees on how press work is conducted in KAS. An overview of principles and guidelines to make sure that employees have a basic understanding of the press policy.*
- Media training of management and key experts
  - *Training to help management and key experts to prepare for interviews and to stay on message when interviewed by journalists. Included should also be training in how to communicate in critical situations.*
- Invite media on a regular basis (once a year) for a general information meeting on how they can use KAS in their everyday work.
  - *The information meeting is an opportunity to tell the journalists about new developments within KAS – e.g. how to use the stat bank (ASK Data). The meeting will support the dialogue with the media on their general expectations and requirements regarding KAS*
- Training of journalism students in how to use KAS and statistics in journalism
  - *KAS can offer the journalism school to conduct a seminar in how to use KAS and statistics in journalism. The seminar could develop into being a regular part of the education of journalists in Kosovo – and could in general support the understanding of KAS among journalists.*

## Annex 3. Press policy and guidelines, Statistics Denmark

### Media Policy of Statistics Denmark

#### Basic principles

Statistics Denmark is a user-friendly, open, accessible and communicative institution, and the news media is one of our most important interested parties.

The news media is instrumental in forming the picture of Statistics Denmark as seen by most citizens and the news media participates in disseminating the knowledge and contents of the great variety of statistics published by Statistics Denmark. In this way, the news media contributes to presenting the statistics as an important basis of democracy and social and economic conditions.

Against this background, we want to create and maintain good relations with the news media by providing professional service of high quality, adapted to the needs of the individual type of media. This applies to both when new statistics are disseminated, when we deal, for other reasons, with the news media, and when we are contacted by the news media

#### Trustworthiness

We want to maintain and enhance our trustworthiness by providing journalists with easy access to relevant, precise and correct information. Explanations will be given, if we are, for some unknown reasons, unable to provide journalists with information.

#### Competence

It is a general rule that the employee who has specialist competence in a subject-area deals with the news media. The statistical divisions of Statistics Denmark have the basic responsibility for cooperating with the news media in their own field of statistics. It should not be assumed that journalists have any special insight into our knowledge of our subject-area. We are therefore responsible for disseminating our knowledge to the news media in a comprehensible manner.

#### Timeliness

Supporting the news media as quickly as possible is essential. During office hours we aim at providing easy and rapid answers to enquiries and not later than on the same day. In cases, where we are unable to provide answers on the same day, this must be clearly stated in our dealing with enquiries.

#### Accessible

It is our aim that it is possible to get in contact with the right employee during office hours. Outside office hours it is possible for the news media to contact the Head of Dissemination Centre or the journalist, who considers the need for further assistance.

#### Quality

We provide all journalists with the same high-quality service, irrespective of the type of media and we are aware of the journalists' varying working conditions – including deadlines. We aim

at detecting the news items of the matters that we are working with. We assist the news media on their own conditions, also in cases where a journalist's news angle is different to ours.

## Dealing with the news media – where Statistics Denmark is the sender

### News from Statistics Denmark

The rapid release service *News from Statistics Denmark* is intended for the news media as the most important target group – primarily web-based news media – but also for other users, e.g. experts. This is part of the preparation of both the text and figures. Consequently, the design of *News from Statistics Denmark* enhances the usefulness for the news media, i.e. concise, clear and the most important items are indicated first. For other target groups, this also enhances the usefulness of *News from Statistics Denmark*. The statistical division concerned prepares the manuscript to *News from Statistics Denmark* and the final editing is conducted in dialogue with the Dissemination Centre. The newsletter *News from Statistics Denmark* is used for publishing summary results only.

If the contents of an issue of *News from Statistics Denmark* are of current interest to journalists, other than our regular readers, they are briefed by the Dissemination Centre. The contact person stated in *News from Statistics Denmark* is made available to the news media on the day when the newsletter is published. If a contact person is prevented from assisting the news media, the Dissemination Centre is immediately informed of this and the contact person's Head of Division concerned ensures that all enquiries are answered.

*News from Statistics Denmark* is published at 9.00 on the release date announced in advance – neither before nor after this time. Nobody outside Statistics Denmark gain access to the contents of *News from Statistics Denmark* before publication of the results.

Publication of *News from Statistics Denmark* is announced in advance at: [www.dst.dk/nytkalender](http://www.dst.dk/nytkalender). It is possible to be informed of each publication of statistics and of each new pre-announcement via RSS-service.

### Net-based magazine Behind the Figures

The net-based magazine Behind the Figures is the journalistic cornerstone on our website, [www.dst.dk/bagtallene](http://www.dst.dk/bagtallene). Here, stories with a journalistic angle are published, emphasizing timeliness.

It is intended that the news media can make active use of our net-based magazine Behind the Figures as springboard or inspiration for own stories. Everyone can, on our website, register for receiving the net-based magazine Behind the Figure. An automatic e-mail will then be sent, when a new issue is published.

Behind the Figures is edited by a journalist employed with the Dissemination Centre. All employees at Statistics Denmark are encouraged to contribute with ideas for articles in the net-based magazine Behind the Figures, also text sections. This is made in agreement with the journalist.

### Press releases

Press releases are particularly intended for briefing the news media:

- Publication of theme or annual publications
- Publication of a completely new issue or a particularly interesting issue of *News from Statistics Denmark*

- Publication of articles in the net-based magazine Behind the Figures, on which special attention is to be focused
- Other news items than figures, e.g. changes in the organization, new statistics or changes to existing, particularly interesting results, new or forthcoming possibilities of services and publications.

The initiative to issue a press release may originate from, both the statistical divisions and from the Dissemination Centre. The text is written by the Dissemination Centre and the final editing of the text is conducted in dialogue with the relevant employees.

The press release contains the name of the contact person available to the news media on the day when the press release is sent out. If the contact person is prevented from assisting the news media, the Dissemination Centre is immediately informed of this and the contact person's Head of Division concerned ensures that all enquiries are answered.

Press releases are accessible at: [www.dst.dk/presse](http://www.dst.dk/presse). It is possible for journalists and other persons to be informed of new press releases by registering for the relevant RSS-service at: ([rss.dst.dk/pressemeldelser](http://rss.dst.dk/pressemeldelser)).

#### RSS-service

Everyone can register for receiving, free of charge, the news service from Statistics Denmark through RSS-feeds. It is possible to receive an automatic message with regard to any new release of statistics by Statistics Denmark. There is a guide at: [rss.dst.dk/overskrifter](http://rss.dst.dk/overskrifter) outlining how to register for this service.

## Dealing with the news media – the news media as the initiator

#### Press contact

It is our aim that all employees are able to make comments to the news media on the statistics for which they are responsible. Employees, who are in contact with the news media, should be able to consider when an enquiry has to be passed on to other employees at Statistics Denmark.

Employees at Statistics Denmark never make any comments as to their personal opinions, we only contribute with facts. Neither do we, generally, have any personal opinions as to the figures published by other institutions, only the figures published by Statistics Denmark. We are ready to provide explanatory causes, but only when we are sure that they are in a given context.

In concrete cases, a Head of Division may decide that only designated employees are allowed to make comments on behalf of Statistics Denmark. (See the section on "Handling critical/political cases")

If for some unknown reasons it is impossible to direct a journalist to the relevant statistical division, the Dissemination Centre then considers how to assist the news media in the best possible manner. Outside office hours the Head of Dissemination Centre deal with media enquiries.

#### Publications

Publications are free of charge for all journalists, who are using the publications for quotations in a medium. In most cases, we send or refer the journalists a pdf-version, but we also, if required, send a printed copy free of charge.

Supplementary figures are also sent, free of charge, to the news media, if they are already available in the statistical division or can be provided within a reasonable period of time, and the task can be adapted to the daily workload. Journalists must be provided with a particularly high degree of service, taking into consideration that they present to the general public the figures produced by Statistics Denmark

### **Reporting of press contacts**

Immediately after receiving an enquiry from the news media, the employee concerned must brief the Dissemination Centre and his/her own Head of Division of the enquiry, for the purpose of enabling us to keep up with and not least to follow up on the press contacts. This is done via the intranet (link is given on the front page).

The feedback consists in a standard message with name of the medium, name of the journalist, the subject and the expected publication (e.g. “article tomorrow” or “news coverage” in the TV News in the evening). It is essential that enquiries from the news media are never “stranded” at Statistics Denmark. Any employee dealing with an enquiry from a journalist is responsible for:

- Either answering the enquiry
- Or passing it on to the right person at Statistics Denmark
- Or ensuring that the journalist is immediately in contact with the Dissemination Centre.

When in doubt, the Dissemination Centre is the safety net guide for journalists who do not know to whom their enquiry is to be directed. Enquiries spanning several statistical areas are primarily handled by the Information Service (Library).

### **Overseeing the news media – including errors, criticism and source reference**

The aim of overseeing the news media by Statistics Denmark is to follow up on the news media's mention of figures published by Statistics Denmark. If we become aware of erroneous or misconstrued interpretation of our figures by the news media and by others (e.g. weblogs), we respond in a prompt and consistent manner by directing enquiries to the medium concerned. This is always carried out in cooperation with the Dissemination Centre.

It is therefore essential that employees at Statistics Denmark, who become aware of erroneous or misconstrued mention of our figures in the news media, immediately contact the Dissemination Centre.

If any criticism appearing in the news media is subject to errors or misunderstandings or is totally unfounded, we will react promptly to this criticism. The initiative to respond may originate from the Dissemination Centre or the statistical divisions, but the Dissemination Centre will always be involved in responding to the criticism put forward by the news media. If we respond by means of a discussion paper, it is formulated by the Dissemination Centre in collaboration with the relevant employees.

We respond in similar manner, when our figures are used in contexts, where Statistics Denmark is not indicated as source. The initiative may originate from the Dissemination Centre of the statistical divisions. The Dissemination Centre is always responsible for deciding whether to respond and assist the relevant employees, if a response is needed.

Statistics Denmark is independent of political and other interests and we aim at presenting our figures in a neutral manner. It is frequently seen that the news media select, compose or present our figures in a different manner than we have done, typically for the purpose of underlining a

specific point of view or argument. It is also frequently the case that the news media create their own figures on the basis of Statistics Denmark's figures. As long as it can be said that the use of the figures is not misleading, Statistics Denmark can still be indicated as source. If there are other sources than Statistics Denmark with respect to, e.g. a diagram or table, we also want that the other sources are also indicated.

If Statistics Denmark's figures are processed by the news media by, e.g. composing new concepts or classification that are not used by Statistics Denmark or by changing the weighting, seasonal adjustment or similar, it must appear from the figures that they have been processed, e.g. by writing "Source: Own calculations made on the basis of figures from Statistics Denmark".

The principles with regard to source reference are similar to those applying to publicly available figures as for figures acquired from Statistics Denmark.

The Dissemination Centre assists the remaining part of the institution to keep up with the news media and make briefings not later than 10.00 a.m. via e-mail to all employees with respect to the present press coverage. Any coverage in the news media is registered electronically, and any employee can, consequently, always see the number of press coverage with regard to each release in *News from Statistics Denmark*.

## **Handling critical/political cases in the news media**

### **To be at the cutting edge**

There is nothing odious attached to the circumstance that Statistics Denmark can also make errors, detect defects connected to our product or change our working methods. But in order to maintain our trustworthiness and avoid misunderstandings and a negative focus by the news media, it is essential that we openly admit these circumstances before they are pinpointed by outsiders. This may be the decisive difference in relation to whether or not the news media will present the story and to which extent. If the story is presented, it is easier for us to set the agenda, when we draw attention to any unfortunate presentation made by us, than if the problem is raised by an external authority or person. In other words, we gain trustworthiness by openly admitting that we have made mistakes or created problems, whereas our trustworthiness will suffer if this is instead pointed out by others.

*Therefore:* If you become aware of an error or a problem related to your area of responsibility, it is important that you also inform the Dissemination Centre of this as quickly as possible – also even if you do not have a solution to this problem. This could also be prior to a release of statistics where there is a risk of the news media will interpret changes or revisions as errors. The Dissemination Centre will in collaboration with the statistics division concerned immediately make an assessment as to whether proactive efforts are necessary.

*How:* The proactive efforts can in many cases consist in a short addition to an article in *News from Statistics Denmark* or in a Quality Declaration. It could also concern footnotes on our subject-pages, e-mails informing the editorial staff prior to the publication of the statistics and in rare cases a proper press release.

### **A case is in the offing**

The first sign that a political/critical case is in the offing could be that:

- our methods or trustworthiness are questioned
- the figures are to be used in a political context, where details and methods are decisive

- we are asked to present figures for the purpose of drawing comparisons with figures produced by others or assessing figures produced by others.

In this context, employees must seek advice from his/her Head of Division/Director before responses are made to any questions. The Dissemination Centre is involved by the Head of Division/Director or reversely, and it is considered in collaboration whether the case can prove to be a critical/political matter. If this is the case, the General Director of Statistics Denmark is also involved.

### **One person as the central spokesperson**

One person is appointed who makes statements in these cases. This implies that there is consistency in all our messages, and that erroneous information is not put forward. As a basic principle, we always put forward comments if we are asked to do so. "No comments" implies that we have no possibility of managing the situation, and at the same time it may seem as if we have something to hide. The statement has to be well prepared and coordinated. The Head of Dissemination Centre/journalist brief the relevant statistical division at an early stage in the process as to which person is to put forward any comments.

*Who is responsible for/has the obligation to make comments on a case?*

- If there is a specific professional problem, it is the Director responsible for the area in question who puts forward any comments. However he/she can decide to designate the Head of Division.
- If the story is about more general, principle problems for Statistics Denmark, it is the Director General who makes a statement. If the Director General is not present, it is the acting director general who makes a statement. The Director General or the acting director general can decide to designate another person (typically a Director) to make a statement.
- The Director General can always decide to be the central spokesperson, irrespective of the substance of the case in question.
- In those cases, where the Head of Dissemination Centre is professionally equipped to do so, he can decide to be the spokesperson.
- It is Statistics Denmark and not the journalist who makes an assessment as to which person is best suited for putting forward any comments.

### **The critical interview**

Before making a statement with respect to cases of a potential/critical character, you are always asked to provide your citations to be reviewed, so that they can be approved. The Dissemination Centre is involved in providing assistance as to assessing whether the citations can give rise to unwanted angles and stories.

Framework for the interview:

- Ask thorough questions with regard to the journalist's facts, before you make any comments, so that we are sure of the basis on which we make comments. It is only reasonable that we have a possibility of checking whether the premises of the story are correct. This should also be in the interest of the journalist.
- Ask, if required, to receive the questions thus enabling you to send the replies by e-mail, if it is possible. This reduces the risk of erroneous citations and whether agreements are not complied with. This also enables us to have time for examining any questions of doubt.
- Enter into clear agreements with regard to the framework of the interview, possibility of checking citations and deadlines for comments.

If we are asked to participate in an interview for radio/Television, it is, of course, not possible, to receive citations for approval, but in this respect it may be a good idea to involve the Dissemination Centre in order to discuss the interview in advance.

**The process is in progress:**

- If possible, inform the news media that replies/comments are imminent, and when they can expect to receive this.
- The first step is to find out whether the story is correct or not. This implies that all facts must be reviewed, so we know whether the basis of the story is durable. When this has been clarified, the team assesses (Director General, Director, Head of Division, the person responsible for the production of the statistics, Head of Dissemination Centre and the journalist) what statement is to be put forward to the news media. What is our main message and how are we getting through with this?
- When this has been ascertained in a joint collaboration, what is true and what is not true with regard to the story, and how are we to present the case with respect to the news media, is it the journalist or the Head of Dissemination Centre who has to write a paper/press release/articles with inputs from the statistical division concerned, as required – this could both be inputs orally or in writing. The draft for a paper is finally approved by the Director General.

*Statements in the news media:*

- The Director General has the last word, but it is generally the Head of Dissemination who assesses to which media we are to put forward a statement and when.

*Overseeing the news media:*

- During the process, developments and propagation of the story in question in the news media are thoroughly overseen by the news media coordinator, who sends current information by e-mail to the team which may appear in connection with overseeing the news media. It is the task of the news media coordinator to draw the team's attention to any new items of information or angles that may appear during the process.

*Dissemination Centre is kept informed and briefs all relevant statistical divisions and persons in the process:*

- The Head of Dissemination Centre and the journalist employed with the Dissemination Centre have the coordinating role during the entire process. They are current kept informed of what is happening in the case. In this way, it is possible for the Dissemination Centre to inform all relevant statistical divisions and persons at Statistics Denmark as to the development of the case and keep a check on who puts forward any statements. This is important in order to avoid that a person, who is contacted directly by a journalist, puts forward comments because he/she is not aware that the case is already in progress in another place at Statistics Denmark.

**Subsequent-phase:**

- A meeting is agreed by the team at which the process is reviewed. Is there anything that is to be follow-up on? What can be learnt from this in the future?

**Other:**

- The Directors and Heads of Division can, if required, ask about participation in media courses, either in-house training or external training.

## Knowledge-sharing and development of competences

### Introductory courses and seminar for journalists

The statistical divisions and the Dissemination Central keep track of who writes about our statistical area. Journalists are regularly invited by the Dissemination Centre to participate in courses about Statistics Denmark. Journalists are also welcome to contact us for participation in an introductory course. With the assistance of employees from the statistical divisions, the Dissemination Centre holds, as required, news media courses at the premises of Statistics Denmark, for the purposes of providing inspiration to journalists.

The statistical divisions and the Dissemination Centre aim at being aware of new angles to already published figures, which could be of interest to the news media or to some journalists. The Dissemination Centre assists in making contact with the right journalist or the news media as a whole.

### Visits to journalistic colleges and news media

We cooperate with various journalistic colleges in the following towns: Odense, Aarhus and Roskilde. Here, we offer to inform them, free of charge, about Statistics Denmark in general and about how, as a journalist, to find a good story behind the figures. It is our aim to visit the journalistic colleges once every year.

We make many efforts to keep in close contact with the news media. We visit, e.g. the editorial staff of the different news media throughout Denmark. This opens up the possibility for following the work carried out by the news media and thus enable us to be fully updated as to the working conditions of the news media. Furthermore, we also briefly inform the editorial staff of the various publications published by Statistics Denmark and we provide them with ideas and show them how journalists can easily browse through, e.g. our database StatBank Denmark and thus find their own good story behind the figures.

### In-house news media course

All employees at Statistics Denmark who are likely to get in contact with the news media – including the managerial staff – participate in an in-house media course in which they are briefed about media policies, working conditions of the news media, proper dissemination in writing, etc.

In Statistics Denmark's introductory courses for newly-appointed employees, participants are briefed about Statistics Denmark and the news media.

All employees who may have to deal with the news media should generally keep themselves informed of Statistics Denmark's outward activities via, e.g. "Today's Release of Statistics" and "Today's Press Releases", so that we can provide the news media with the best possible service.

# When the News Media Calls

## 1. How to deal generally with press contact

Press contact is always a matter of urgency and a precondition of successful contact with the press is consequently rapidness.

It must be easy for the news media to gain access to statistical information from Statistics Denmark. We make efforts to support the news media as quickly as possible.

It is essential that enquiries put forward by the news media are never “stranded” at Statistics Denmark. When an employee at Statistics Denmark receives an enquiry from a journalist, the employee is responsible for:

- either answering the enquiry
- or passing it on to the right person in the statistical division in question
- or passing on the enquiry to Library & Information or the Dissemination Centre

Library & Information provides answers to factual questions which cut across Statistics Denmark’s statistical divisions or which concern foreign statistics.

The Dissemination Centre acts as safety net and guide for those journalists who do not know which persons they should contact.

If you become aware of erroneous or misconstrued mentioned of Statistics Denmark’s statistical figures in the news media, immediately contact the Dissemination Centre which will consider whether any action should be taken.

## 2. Who deals with the news media?

It is a general rule that the employee who has specialist competence in a subject-area deals with the news media. When an employee is contacted by the news media, the employee should be able to consider when an enquiry has to be passed on to other employees at Statistics Denmark. As employees are entitled to make comments to the news media on behalf of Statistics Denmark, employees are also obliged to answer or provide answers when questions are put forward by the news media.

Please remember that employees at Statistics Denmark never make any comments as to their personal opinions, we only contribute with facts. Neither do we, generally, have any personal opinions concerning the figures published by other institutions, only the figures published by Statistics Denmark. We are ready to provide explanatory causes, but only when we are sure that they are in a given context.

A Head of Division may with regard to concrete cases decide that only designated employees are allowed to make comments on behalf of Statistics Denmark. See the section on "Handling critical/political cases in the news media."

### 3. Some good pieces of advice when the news media calls

It is a general rule that you are the expert when a journalist calls Statistics Denmark, and the journalist is calling you because he/she wants to get a story of – or wants to be confirmed or obtain information for an article.

Even if you do not agree with the priorities of the news media, it is nevertheless important that we support the news media on their own terms – also in cases where a journalist's news angle is different to ours.

Use the following pieces of advices in connection with interviews:

- What is the purpose of the interview? Is it background or quotation?
- Journalists take it for granted that they must quote everything said by you. If not, you must inform the journalist of this or in relation to the individual items of background information for which you do not want to be quoted.
- Take your time. If you need to gain insight into a question or to have the papers in front of you, then ask the journalist if you can return in 10 minutes. This is understandable to any journalist who is pressed for time.
- Refrain from making formulations in an incomprehensible manner – remember that neither is the journalist, reader, viewer or listener an expert.
- Think in headlines. It is easy to make brief formulations without treating the question in a manner that is not objective.
- It is important that you comment on and explain the figures – in this way you make sure that the journalist is able to make a better story, because the figures are being understood and put into the right perspective.
- Be ready to provide additional information. If you know any persons who are able to provide new information, then refer the journalist to these persons. Also inform the journalist of conditions that he/she is not asking about, but which you consider could be of interest to the journalist – you possess great knowledge and the journalist would like to be informed of this.
- Get the mail address of the journalist, even if you do not expect that you will need this. The mail address may prove to be useful if you are unable to contact the journalist or you can use the mail address for sending texts/documents forward and backwards.
- Please remember to keep your promises.
- Trust the journalist, if you have no other reasons than to trust him/her. It is rarely necessary to ask the journalist if you may see or hear the quotations for which you are responsible (unless the story is critical or conflict-ridden). It is time-consuming and burdensome to you and the journalist – deadlines are frequently placed after your working time. And at other times it may be useful for the journalist as well as you, if you receive an email with the article
- Remember to ask the journalist about what is the outcome of his/her enquiry. When will a possible article be published?
- Contact the Dissemination Centre's journalist or communications staff prior to larger interviews, in cases of discussion papers, ideas and in general. We can assist you and provide you with good pieces of advice.

#### 4. Rules for free publications and figures for the news media

New figures are published and made available to all at the same time – also the news media – at 9.00 a.m. on date of release. When the main results are published in the rapid release service *News from Statistics Denmark*, the entire survey is, in principle, published.

Publications are free of charge for all journalists, if they are using the information for editorial mention. Supplementary figures are also sent, free of charge, to the news media, if they are already available in the statistical division or can be provided by means of limited efforts. However, proper service tasks for the news media are, however, provided subject to user charges.

If a publication is requested by the news media, a pdf version of the publication may, as a general rule, be sent. If the printed edition is requested by the journalist, contact is made to the person who is responsible for the publication in order to obtain a copy and you must make sure that the journalist receives a copy of the publication.

Yearbooks and theme publications prepared on the basis of already published figures may be sent to the journalists in advance, provided that the journalist have accepted that figures must not be published until an agreed time. This must always be agreed, in advance, with the statistical division concerned and the Dissemination Centre and Statistics Denmark's Director General.

##### When the journalist has called

It is important for Statistics Denmark to coordinate and follow up on a dialogue with the news media. In this way, we make sure that several employees do not make statements about the same question – and thereby maybe sending out different signals. We will thus be able to follow up on the stories of the news media and be at the cutting edge in case of any critical comments.

Consequently, immediately after receiving an enquiry from the news media, the employee concerned must brief the Dissemination Centre. On the front page of the intranet under the item *Reporting of press contacts* there is a link to a page for reporting, where the employee can provide the following information:

- **With whom did you speak?** Name of the medium and journalist.
- **What was the subject?** Did you provide any figures, a reference?
- **What will be the outcome of this (an article or news coverage)?** Where and when, if possible?

#### 5. Follow up on today's publications and news coverage

The employee can follow up on the outcome of his/her press contact. A reference is shown on the front page of Statistics Denmark's homepage to *Statistics Denmark in the news media* – here the employee can see brief summaries of today's news coverage in the national media. The employee can also undertake a search either by applying a guideword, a previous date, name of the medium or journalist.

If the employee sees or hears any mention of Statistics Denmark which is not included in the summaries of the news coverage, please draw our attention to this by sending an email to press coordinator Marianne Sørensen or to@dst.dk. The same applies if the employee considers the reproduction of the summary to be wrong.

Furthermore, Statistics Denmark's employees receive every day an email with information on *Today's publications* – here the employees can keep themselves updated with regard to which new surveys or press releases are published by Statistics Denmark.

## Annex 4. Persons met

### KAS:

1. Mr. Burim Limolli, Head of IT - Division, [burim.limolli@rks-gov.net](mailto:burim.limolli@rks-gov.net) KAS
2. Ms. Drita Sylejmani, Dissemination Officer, [Drita.sylejmani@rks-gov.net](mailto:Drita.sylejmani@rks-gov.net).KAS
3. Ms. Mjellma Krasniqi, [Mjellma.Krasniqi@rks-gov.net](mailto:Mjellma.Krasniqi@rks-gov.net)
4. Ms. Arlinda Kamberja, [arlinda.kamberaj@rks-gov.net](mailto:arlinda.kamberaj@rks-gov.net), KAS
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### RTA Team:

Per Knudsen, RTA  
Nora Zogaj, RTA Assistant  
Agim Aliu, Interpreter

