

# *Quality of official statistics - why are we focusing on it?*

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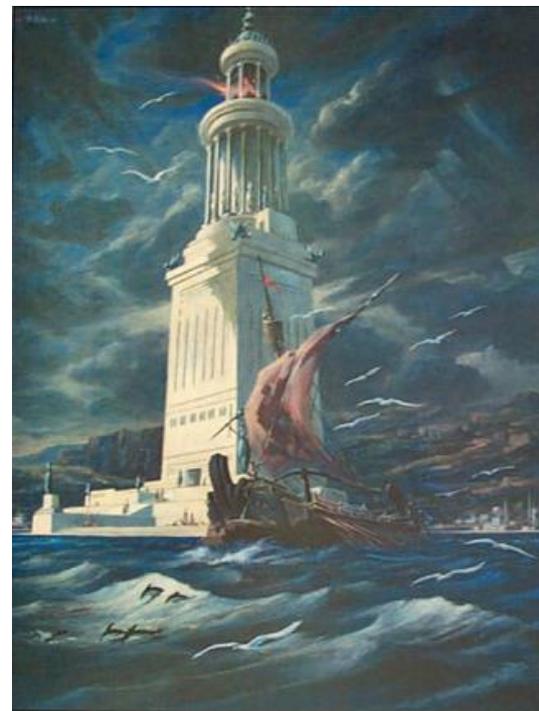
# What is official statistics?



- Provided by public bodies / state
- Describe the demographic, social and economic situation:
  - quantitative or qualitative information on all major areas of citizens' lives, such as economic and social development,<sup>[1]</sup> living conditions,<sup>[2]</sup> [health](#),<sup>[3]</sup> [education](#),<sup>[4]</sup> and the environment.<sup>[5]</sup>
- Common reference frame for discussions
- National Statistical System (NSS)

# Why are we here?

- Because all good decisions rely on facts
- Provide the basic facts on society – a common reference point
- Basis for **democracy** and **economy**
- A lighthouse in the Sea of Information



# Official statistics organisations provide basis for informed decisions by:

- Government
- Research
- Enterprises
- Citizens
- International organisations



# What is **quality** in official statistics?

- Good or bad quality?
- How can statistics be recognised as lighthouse?
- Correctly and appropriately answering questions of users
- **Trust** is the key

# Why Systematic Quality Work?

- Trust doesn't come from nothing
- "Leading" countries in the statistical world invested
  - Australia
  - Canada
  - Netherlands
  - Sweden
- Total Quality Management
- ISO standards
- Something we must have these days!

# The EU Twinning Project

- Israeli authorities twin with EU experts
- Equal partners (like good twins)
- Long term engagement
- Not only ICBS but all partners in the National Statistical System (NSS)
- Discussions and advice on the way to go
  - Workshops
  - Training
- Quality is a key component

# International frameworks

- UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (1993; 2014)
- European Statistics Code of Practice (2005; 2011)
- EU Quality Assurance Framework (2013)
- OECD Quality Framework (2012)

# The quality concept

## Quality of processes:

Statistical concepts

Sources

Contact with respondents/data owners

Sampling

Measurement process

Data collection

Editing

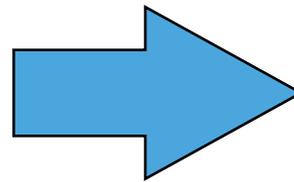
Estimation

Aggregation

Publishing and dissemination

Entering in StatBank

Documentation



## Quality of contents:

*Relevant*

*Accurate & reliable*

*Timely & punctual*

*Coherent & comparable*

*Accessible & clear*

*Cost effective*

**Quality = Fitness for use**

# Countries' obligations to the OECD

- Provide statistical data and metadata
- Comply with OECD standards
- Ideally from one national data provider
- In reality many

# Why coordination of NSS is quality

## OECD and National users could ask:

- Can a user meaningfully divide one figure (e.g. total sick insurance expenditure) by another (e.g. population)?
- And compare between countries?
- Can users find the same OECD figures in National web sites?
- Can we trust contradicting official statistics?

# Possible tools for coordination

1. Total centralisation???
2. Common standards
  - Certain central statistical concepts
  - Standards for metadata
3. Common guidelines (mandatory?)
4. Sharing of (micro) data, without or with ID
5. Common dissemination
  - Users shouldn't need to care
  - E.g. <http://www.statbank.dk/statbank5a/default.asp?w=1440>
6. Common metadata portal
7. Common training and methodological assistance
8. Audits
9. Certification by the NSI
  - Label "Official Statistics"
  - Example [tilastokeskus.fi/meta/svt/index\\_en.html](http://tilastokeskus.fi/meta/svt/index_en.html)
  - Must comply with standards and quality requirements



# Questions

- Who are the most important producers?
- Do they all know what each other does?
  - Reporting to international organisations
- Are they well coordinated?
- Do they comply with the CoP? Standards?
- What can be accomplished in 2016?



The End