



EU Twinning Project **IS12/ENP-APFI/08**

Support to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics in the development of National Accounts, Education Statistics, Survey Methodology, ICBS Website and Coordination of Israel National Statistical System

Component E **Dissemination and Website**

Activity E.1 **Study Visit on Dissemination**

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List of Abbreviations

BC	Beneficiary Country (Israel)
BoI	Bank of Israel
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics (Israel)
DS	Statistics Denmark
MS	Member State

1 Summary

The study visit to Denmark aimed to expose the Israeli experts to the experience accumulated in Statistics Denmark, in their recent website upgrade process.

The web dissemination strategy was presented and so were the guiding principles for website operation and web-dissemination. Having a systematic and goal oriented development of infrastructures, products and tool, is the road to be taken.

The overall approach of mechanisms and tools to support coherent and consistent website, is shared by CBS. To that end, Statistics Denmark has implemented the principle of a single database for all web-products, along with a centralized management of the metadata by the dissemination unit.

One of the objectives of the web-dissemination derived from the overall strategy of the Danish office; user-oriented production and dissemination. The culture of consulting with users, addressing users' needs and providing them with statistics according to uses, is to be further developed in CBS.

Part 4 of the report details further recommendations and issues to be considered when planning the new website for the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics.

2 Background

This study visit to Statistics Denmark took place as part of the project to upgrade the CBS website through the Twinning Project.

This was the very first activity to be implemented within the Twinning framework, and it took place only three working days into the implementation phase of the Twinning. It was deliberately coordinated with Statistics Denmark at this timing, in order to incorporate the study visit and its results with the work of an external expert that was contracted by the CBS tender for upgrading the CBS website. Since the external expert team has already begun their work within a strict timetable for results delivery, CBS requested to plan this study visit as early as possible, in order to learn and implement the Danish experience.

The activity benefited from the additional participation of the Bank of Israel (BoI). CBS and BoI already have an extensive cooperation, and during the Twinning project this cooperation will be further developed.

2.1 Mandatory results of component E

- (a) Drafting of an ICBS dissemination and communication strategy document
- (b) Establishment of mechanisms for continuous monitoring of user satisfaction with the website
- (c) Establishment of a plan for redesigning of the website, including an improved search function Establishment of rules for
- (d) Updating of the website, including linkage of the data warehouse to the website

2.2 Terms of Reference - purpose and expected output of E.1 activity

Presentation of the Danish system of dissemination; Danish experiences with redesign of www.dst.dk; briefings on implementation and operation of dissemination database according to the common Scandinavian metadata model (PX-family); updating web sites from dissemination database; publications; press releases; Scheduling and calendar systems;

monitoring of web site usage – web metrics; regular user satisfaction surveys; usability studies.

Specific subjects to be elaborated

- (a) Lessons learned during the upgrade process of the Danish site
- (b) The transition process from paper to online publications
- (c) Mode of Presentation of data / reports on the website
- (d) Mode of entering data and publishing data series
- (e) Press Releases produced by Statistics Denmark
- (f) Website content management - organizational and technological aspects
- (g) The technical aspect: information on networks and servers
- (h) The development and the working environments
- (i) Standard and specialized software
- (j) Data Security

Participants briefed on Danish strategy and methodology regarding dissemination.
CBS report on lessons learned from study visit.

3 Activity Results

Statistics Denmark (SD) and ICBS share the same challenges. SD suggests solutions implemented on their website:

3.1 Principles of Dissemination:

- (a) E-dissemination first.
- (b) The Database is the core of all official statistics, and the source for all publications;
- (c) Products produced from the database (StatBank): Tables, Time-series, Annual Abstract, etc.
- (d) The Online database is available and free of charge for all;
- (e) Press Releases are released simultaneously daily at 9 am according to a forecast;
- (f) Dissemination are directed and adapted to specific target population according to the type of use, while the same source of data and metadata is used for the whole range of uses.
- (g) This process ensures user friendliness, consistency and coherence. Moreover, it allows for efficient production and dissemination process and therefore profitability.

3.2 Website Model

- (a) The Norwegian website was presented as another good example using a different approach of addressing the different types of users.
- (c) Web pages are clear, well organized and not too busy.
- (d) Uniformity of presentation of the data, independent of traditional publications formats;

- (e) In each page/ subject, there is a link to the source of the data: the single dissemination database;
- (f) Decentralization of the responsibility for updating the data in the subject units – the name of the responsible person for the data disseminated is presented on every page.

3.3 Website Search engines

- (a) Search engine for the Database – the results are sorted by frequency of demand for the series.
- (b) All-website search engine – similar to our glossary – by keywords as appear in the publications;
- (c) Search of thematic pages and the press releases – by frequency of appearance of the term.
- (d) It is recommended to have *Thesaurus* that includes supplementary terms (milk: cheese, cow, etc.)
- (e) It is also recommended to include *in FAQ* topics that are not included in the website. The search is redirected to external websites (the target website is defined by the Library).

3.4 Database

Description, maintenance and ongoing work processes:

- (a) Statistical data is updated by the subject units.
- (b) Handling metadata – which is everything but the data, is the responsibility of the dissemination unit to ensure coherence.
- (c) All products disseminated are produced by using the same source: the database of all aggregated statistics ;
- (d) Two copies of the database: one is inactive and the other active. The updates for the next day are uploaded to the inactive database. Uploading to the active database he updates is done at a fixed time. There is no update of a "live" database.

3.5 Guiding Principles of Website operation

Guiding Principles of units' operations:

- (a) Update and upload of data to the site is made by the subject unit;
- (b) Update of texts and metadata is made by the content unit in the Communication and Dissemination unit.
- (c) The Communication and Dissemination unit is responsible for monitoring data releases, series updates and timely press releases, according to pre-determined schedule and workplan.

3.6 Additional notes by Bank of Israel

- (a) The Bank of Israel (BoI) had launched a new website a few months before the study visit. Currently it is in the process of improvement/changes/adding and removing. For those reasons BoI did not seek answer for the launching of a new website, but rather looked for learning about the finished product and the underlying processes behind it.
- (b) Some common issues between the Danes and the Israelis were discovered, especially regarding organization of the data on the website and choice of the main target population that should be aimed at.
- (c) The central database, StatBank (Data Warehouse) as the axis for producing/extracting various products seems to be the right concept. BoI works in this direction, but the project has not reached fruition yet.

- (d) The standardization of the presentation of the products (Tables, Graphs and Time-series) was impressive (visual presentation and consistent organization of data).

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

- (a) It is recommended to have one aggregative data source for all needs and the implementation of the principle: Database as the core source to presenting the data, as service to variety of users, as source to composing publications – with all possible consequences that it has for operation of ICBS. The viability of implementation of database work method of Statistics Denmark should be examined at greater depth.
- (b) Search Engine and FAQ: interesting approach. It is worthwhile to weigh the pros and cons.
- (c) Basic structure of data, operationally and data security-wise, looks logical and will be examined as part of the technological thinking for upgrading the CBS website.
- (d) Updating procedure: One database for active internet and the other is not activated at the same time – switched off. The non-operational one is updated with all produce that are intended for the next day. They switch every day at 9:30am.
- (e) Defining principle of data/products advertising - mention in the home page of all updates, including those of time series (not available today at CBS site), tables, charts, publications and press releases
- (f) Definition of users – CBS should go on with the current differentiation between types of users: researchers, regular users, and a wide audience (casual users). We shall consider creating a path for regular dissemination of products to "heavy" customers - such as local authorities, research institutes, etc. and direct distribution to institutions and organizations. For example, the API for distribution to the central Bank in Denmark.
- (g) Metadata (a system to update the metadata was introduced). Today, the management of metadata in the CBS (for data series only) is performed by the subject units. For coherence purposes, it is suggested that it should be managed by the dissemination unit.
- (h) Presenting data revisions – It was lately introduced in CBS website.
- (i) Maintenance is easy and convenient – Should be achieved using technical tools.
- (j) Backup in case of emergency (save and retrieve) – Should be developed.

5 Other Comments

- (a) The study visit was held in a meeting room, in spite the interest to see the 'behind the scene'. It was not possible to see the work done in real time, neither the process of press releases production, nor inserting data into the database. Therefore, a main advantage of a study visit was lost.
- (b) Having the study visit before the review of the current situation was found problematic, as the presentations did not take into account what is already known in CBS.
- (c) Several presentations had parts, mostly examples of web pages, written in Danish, and therefore were less useful. It is worthwhile to have all presentations in English. So was the case with the products presented.
- (d) More informal conversations and formal discussions are needed during the study visit, since many questions remained open.

6 Annexes

Annex E1.1 Programme

May 6

10:00 General introduction to Statistics Denmark (CJH)

10:30 Presentation of the Danish dissemination system and strategy (AWU)

12:00 – 13:30 Lunch

13:30 Publications / Yearbook / Press releases (UAG)

14:15 Working with the Press / Media (HAX)

15:00 New Media / TV (RST)

15:30 End of day

May 7

10:00 DST.DK It structure and history -Infrastructure, data security, technological development, content management (JEJ, LOU)

Release / Calendar, web metrics (JEJ)

12:00 – 13:30 Lunch

13:30: Continued from the morning

14:15: Search leading principles and tools

15:00 End of day

May 8

10:00 Briefing on implementation and operation of metadata model (LAK)

11:00 Visualization (LAK)

11:30 Organizing metadata work (JCS)

12:00 Lunch

13:30 Aob, Debriefing (CJH, AWU)

Annex E1.2 Persons met

Annegrete Wulff (AWU) Head of Division – Dissemination
Ulla Agerskov (UAG) Senior Adviser – Dissemination
Henrik Alexandersen (HAX) – Journalist
Louise Albæk Jensen (LOU) – Head of Section Dissemination/ Webmaster
Sanne Vestergaard Nielsen (SVN)– Head of Section
Charlotte Juul Hansen (CJH) – Senior Advisor -International Consulting
Jesper Ellemose Jensen (JEJ) – Chief Advisor – International Consulting

7 Annexes external to the report: Presentations

Annex E1.3: Danish dissemination strategy and system

Annex E1.4: Release calendar, web metrics

Annex E1.5: PR and New Media

Annex E1.6: Working with the press

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