

Coordination of the National Statistical System - experience of Denmark

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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,^[1] living conditions,^[2] [health](#),^[3] [education](#),^[4] and the environment.^[5]
- Common reference frame for discussions
- National Statistical System (NSS)

Statistics Denmark is the central authority for Danish statistics

Act on Statistics Denmark

Article 1:

- Statistics Denmark shall be established as the central authority for Danish statistics

Subsection 3.

- If the collection and processing of statistical information is being contemplated by a public authority or institution, Statistics Denmark shall be informed with a view to negotiation on co-ordination.



Official statistics in Denmark

- Act on Statistics Denmark
 - Article 1.1: ..will collect, process and publish **statistical information on social and economic conditions**, possibly in collaboration with municipal authorities and other statistical authorities
- Highly centralised statistical system
 - Independent institution
 - Board decides the work program
 - Ministry of Social and Interior
 - Only one location in Copenhagen
- Data collection
 - Public authorities have to give the information in their possession for items in the work program
 - Private firms have to give information described in the law – when asked. If not, they are fined



Framework for Statistics Denmark

- **The Minister of Social and Internal Affairs**
 - Annual budget and parliamentary responsibility
- **§2: The Board of Directors**
 - 7 members
 - Chairman: the National Statistician
 - 6 members with insight into social and economic conditions
 - Decide on annual work programme
 - Approve the budget
 - Meets four times in a year
- **§2,2: National Statistician (Director General)**
 - Manager of Statistics Denmark
 - Appointed by the Queen upon the recommendation of the Minister after consultation with the board
- **§3,4: Advisory users committees**
 - The Board may establish advisory committees (9 at present)
- **§5: Committee for co-operation**
 - The Minister may establish a committee to assist the co-operation between Statistics Denmark and other public authorities and institutions (has never been used)



The goal for a statistical system: Trust & credibility

- Statistics are valuable when everybody believes in them:
 - Statistics must be **impartial** and **objective**
 - **Independence** of NSI must be specified in law
 - Statistics must be **reliable**. If errors are made, publish corrections as soon as possible
 - Release dates must be **pre-announced**. Political considerations must not be taken into account
 - Statistics must be **available** to all users at the same time
 - Usage of **sound standards, methodology and definitions** based on international standards
 - Information on individual persons and businesses is treated with **confidentiality**

Same goals regardless of statistical system

- Easier to produce integrated statistics in a centralised system
- But also a goal in a decentralised system to coordinate
 - surveys
 - statistical standards and methods
 - dissemination
 - metadata
- Coordination is an important but difficult activity
 - cooperation agreements
 - meeting agreements
 - practical cooperation

Coordination with other producers of statistics in Denmark

- Statistics Denmark is producing statistics on all subjects except in
 - Health
 - Environment
 - Energy
 - Finance
 - Fishery
 - plus other minor areas



Coordination in different subjects (1)

- Financial Statistics:

- Central Bank
- Framework agreement
- Main committee and sub committees
- High contact between employees
- Cooperation concerning
- Concepts, methods etc.
- Exchange of micro data for statistics
- Business register
- Dissemination



- Environment and Energy

- Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Energy & Climate
- Committee for producers and users
- No cooperation agreement
- Contact between heads
- No cooperation concerning statistical production



Coordination in different subjects (2)

■ Health

- Ministry of Health
- No formal coordination
- Contact between heads
- No cooperation concerning statistical production



■ Fishery

- Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries
- Framework agreement
 - Main committee and sub committees
 - High contact between employees
- Cooperation concerning
 - concepts, methods etc.
 - Exchange of micro data for statistics
 - Dissemination



Conclusion on cooperation based on Danish experience

For coordination to be effective:

- Top management of the institutions has to be committed
- Cooperation has to be based of written agreements
 - why
 - what
 - how
- A meeting structure has to be established

Coordination regarding EU-statistics

Council regulation on European Statistics

Article 5:

The national statistical authority

having the responsibility for coordinating all activities at national level
of European statistics shall act as contact point for the Commission on statistical matters.

- Coordination Committee for European Statistics
 - 16 institutions
 - Chair: Statistics Denmark
 - Meeting twice a year
- Tasks concerning European statistics only:
 - to exchange knowledge
 - to cooperate
 - to discuss



European Statistical Law

– under revision

Main topics

1. Professional independence
2. Administrative data
3. Coordinating role of the NSI
4. 'Commitments on Confidence in Statistics'

1. Professional independence

- “Statistics must be developed, produced and disseminated in an independent manner,
- ... the selection of techniques, definitions, methodologies and sources to be used, and the timing and content of all forms of dissemination,
- ... the performance of these tasks is free from any pressures from political or interest groups or from Union or national authorities”

1. Professional independence – means

- Rules for appointment and dismissal of Heads of NSI should be transparent and based on professional criteria only
- The Heads of NSI shall have the sole responsibility for
 - deciding on processes, methods, publications and budget execution
 - coordinating national authorities
 - producing national guidelines to ensure quality

3. Coordinating role of the NSIs

1. The NSIs shall have the responsibility for coordinating all activities at national level for the development, production and dissemination of **European** statistics.
2. The NSI shall act as the sole contact point for Eurostat.
3. Activities to be coordinated by the NSI:
 - Programming and reporting
 - Quality monitoring
 - Methodology
 - Data transmission
 - Communication

3. Coordinating role – a compromise?

The Head of NSI

- should publish an annual report on production of European statistics in MS
- should prepare national guidelines that ensure that the national production is in accordance with the Code of Practice

Member States / Governments

- will ensure that production of European statistics is in accordance with these guidelines

Possible tools

1. Total centralisation
2. Common standards
 - Certain central statistical concepts
 - Standards for output data
 - Standards for metadata
- 3 Guidelines
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. Metadata portal
7. Certification by the NSI
 - Label "Official Statistics"
 - Example tilastokeskus.fi/meta/svt/index_en.html
 - Must comply with standards and quality requirements



Organisation

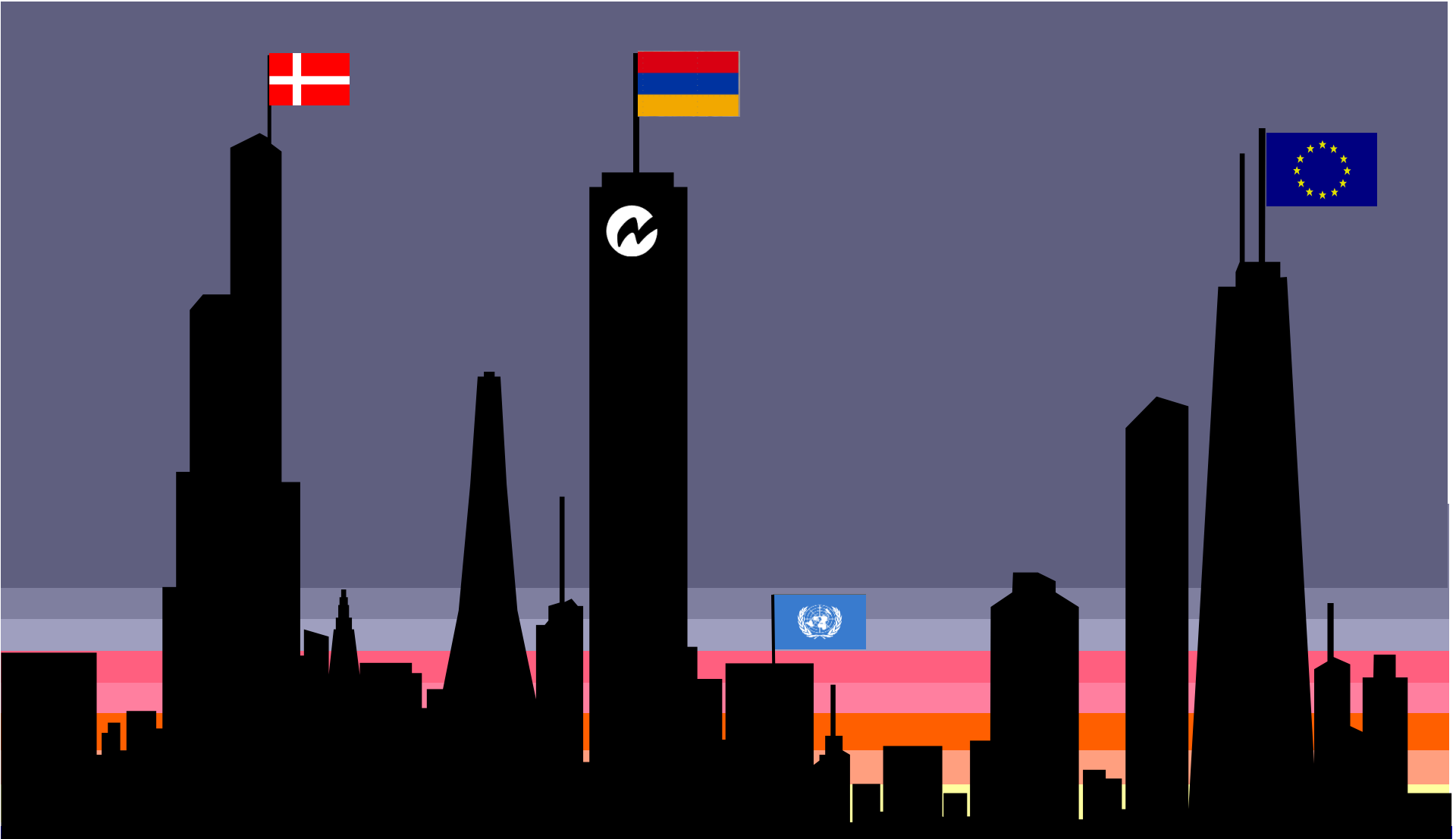
- Bilateral meetings with most important producers
 - Who reports to international organisations?
 - Which ones most important?
- NSS Coordination Committee
 - Chair and secretary: NSSRA
 - 2 or 4 meetings per year
 - Agree on standards and requirements
- Peer Review
 - E.g. by EU
 - Include other producers

Questions

- What are the three most important producers?
- Do you know what they do?
 - Reporting to international organisations
- Are you well coordinated?
- Will they listen to you?
- Do they comply with the CoP? Standards?
- What do you plan to do in 2016?

Wishlist ? (to be filled in)

- One integrated web platform, e.g. based on GIS
- The NSSRA could survey for others
- Fulfil requirements together collectively (e.g. UN, EU)
- More access to data
 - Data have to be for statistics only
 - Data have to be “sufficiently” reliable
- Strong leadership of coordination



The End!