

# Aspects of dissemination

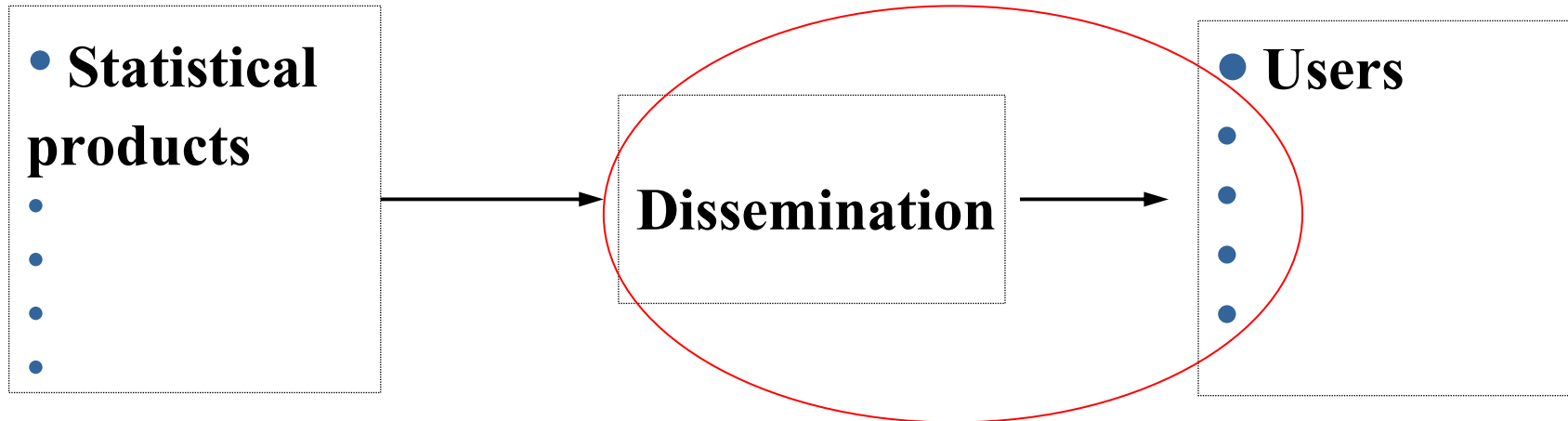
**Some general issues, choices and solutions**

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# What is dissemination?



**But dissemination is more than just bringing statistics to the users...**

# Dissemination is many different things:

- **Press releases (press conferences, seminars...)**
- **Tabular publications; with documentation, definitions, etc.:**
  - **as printed publications**
  - **electronically: Diskettes, CD-ROM**
- **Analytical reports, books, journals**
- **Internet (tables/ charts/ text/ databases....)**
- **Popular presentations: Pamphlets, brochures, posters...**
- **Information service:**
  - **Library**
  - **Answering service (telephone, letters, fax, e-mail)**
- **Lecturing, meetings, seminars....**

# **The value of statistics is proportional to its availability**

**Aspects of availability (in decreasing order of importance?):**

- **Presentation/user-friendliness**
- **Media attention**
- **Distribution (bookshops, libraries/Internet)**
- **Price**
- **Marketing**

# Dissemination: Conflicts/choices

- **Quality vs. quantity**
- **Numbers/tables vs. text/analyses**
- **Paper vs. electronic**
- **Serious vs. popular**
- **User surveys?**

# Quality vs. quantity

- In every statistical agency there seems to be a latent, basic conflict between quality and quantity
- The solutions should always be to give priority to quality

# Often, less is better

- **too many numbers makes it difficult to know what is important**
- **less numbers            better quality**
- **less numbers            more user-friendly (easier to compare)**
- **(less numbers            reduced costs)**

## Two general tendencies:

- The users want the latest numbers now
- What do the numbers really mean?

**These two demands (timeliness and analysis) are *conflicting* and dissemination of statistics will probably become more *differentiated*:**



# Dissemination will probably develop in *two main directions*:

	<b>Electronic:</b>	<b>Paper:</b>
<b>Numbers/ tables:</b>	<b>X</b> (expert user?)	(x)
<b>Text/ analysis:</b>	(x)	<b>X</b> (general public?)

## On the one hand:

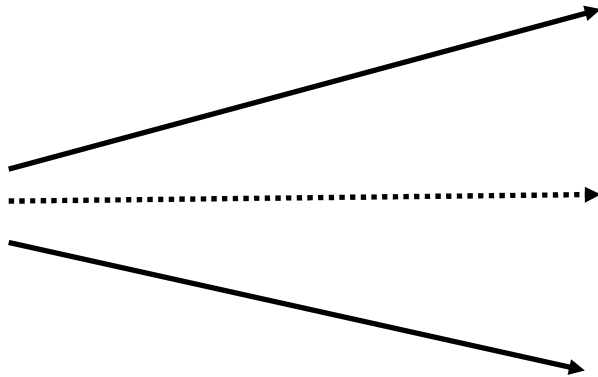
- **Basic (reference) publications will include the most important tables, indicators, concepts and definitions & main findings**
- **Other - more detailed? - tables are put on the Internet and/or “printed on demand”**

## On the other hand:

- **More analytical/popular products with key indicators + commentaries/interpretations directed towards the “general public”.**
- **These presentations will be thematic, bringing together information from different areas**
- **These (shorter) presentations will also be made available on the Internet**

# Printed publications

**Two  
trends**



**Reference publications:**

as quick and cheap as possible

(Yearbooks)

**Presentations:**

“analysis”, graphs, illustrations.  
Colours.

# Three strategies for printed and electronic dissemination:

- Yesterday: **Printed publication first, then electronic/Internet**
- Today: **Parallel publishing: Paper *and* Internet simultaneously**
- Tomorrow: **First on the Internet, then printed version**

# Internet: Some general issues

- While many printed publications are aimed at specific users, ...
- ... Internet is for everybody
- Therefore, the Web-site should have something for everybody
- Internet is not an alternative to printed publications, but a supplement

# Internet: Advantages

- **It's fast**
- **It attracts new users**
- **Its easy to transfer tables/files in a user friendly and inexpensive way**
- **Allows tailor-made information (e-mail subscription by subject)**
- **BUT: Internet-publishing is not free (or even cheap)**

# Internet: Some general principles

- **Update regularly (daily/weekly?!)**
- **Make it easy to find out what's new**
- **HTML-tables are usually printed, so the A4 paper-format is still relevant**
- **Meta data should be available**
- **The web-pages should be regularly checked by the statisticians**
- **Internet dissemination should be free of charge for the user**



# Independence is important

- **A statistical agency should decide**
  - what to publish
  - how to publish and
  - when to publish
- Independence is very important in building trust

# Dissemination policy/strategy?

- Important to have a vision: where are we going?
- But maybe more important to have some concrete, short term goals and ideas about reaching these goals: What do we do tomorrow
- Important that the top management is fully behind the policy

# User surveys?

- The content of statistics is very much influenced by the users (ministries, organizations, etc.)
- When it comes to the presentation of statistics, it is far more difficult to ask for the opinion of the users

# Problems with user surveys – example:

- Question: "Do you prefer internet or printed publications?"

- Answers:

Internet: 24%

Printed: 30%

Both: 21%

It depends: 20%

N.A.: 9%

**Total: 100%**



# So...

- **maybe we just have to do our best – after all, we are the specialists**
- **look at other statistical agencies and how they do it: It is quite OK to copy ideas and solutions from others**