

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

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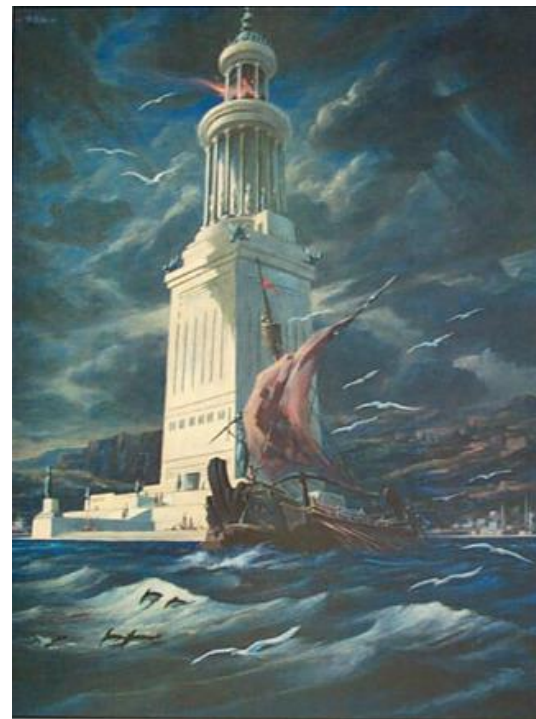
What is official statistics?



- 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,^[1] living conditions,^[2] [health](#),^[3] [education](#),^[4] and the environment.^[5]
- 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

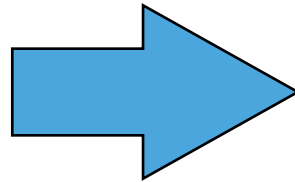
Estimation

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
 - 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