

Topic (ii): Users and metadata, statistical information portals

**THE ADVANCE RELEASE CALENDAR IN STATISTICS NORWAY**

Submitted by Statistics Norway<sup>1</sup>

**Contributed paper**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The Advance release calendar is a schedule for Statistics Norway's releases of new statistics the next four months. The calendar is found on our Internet site, at <http://www.ssb.no/english/subjects/calendar/calendar4m.shtml>, and it looks like this:

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the 'Advance release calendar' for November. The page title is 'Statistics Norway - Statistisk sentralbyrå'. The main heading is 'Advance release calendar'. Below the heading, it says 'Coming statistics the next 4 months. Advance release calendar sorted by subject'. The table below lists various statistics releases with columns for the date, subject, release date, previous release date, contacts, and phone number.

	November	Release Internet	Previous Release	Contacts	Phone Number
08.02.10	Harmonized indices of consumer prices EU/EEA, October 2001	16.11.	17.10.01	<a href="mailto:ragnhild.nygaard.johansen@ssb.no">ragnhild.nygaard.johansen@ssb.no</a>	21 09 44 27
03.05	Offences investigated, 2000	16.11.	22.08.00	<a href="mailto:kari.oshus@ssb.no">kari.oshus@ssb.no</a>	21 09 49 81
12.01.20	Church accounts statistics, 2000	16.11.	27.11.00	<a href="mailto:trond.johansen@ssb.no">trond.johansen@ssb.no</a> <a href="mailto:rudi.strand@ssb.no">rudi.strand@ssb.no</a> <a href="mailto:oddveig.riise.hallingstad@ssb.no">oddveig.riise.hallingstad@ssb.no</a>	21 09 44 47 21 09 49 20 21 09 45 25
08.03.10	Statistics on new orders. Manufacturing, 3rd quarter 2001	16.11.	17.08.01	<a href="mailto:robert.skotvold@ssb.no">robert.skotvold@ssb.no</a> <a href="mailto:stem.bakke@ssb.no">stem.bakke@ssb.no</a>	21 09 47 24 21 09 47 45
12.01.30	Tax accounts statistics, January-October 2001	16.11.	16.10.01	<a href="mailto:torve.bryndesen@ssb.no">torve.bryndesen@ssb.no</a> <a href="mailto:elizabeth.almeland@ssb.no">elizabeth.almeland@ssb.no</a> <a href="mailto:bjorn-kato.winther@ssb.no">bjorn-kato.winther@ssb.no</a>	21 09 47 72 21 09 45 21 21 09 45 19
10.09	Building statistics, September 2001	19.11.	18.10.01	<a href="mailto:john.gul.bjorkes@ssb.no">john.gul.bjorkes@ssb.no</a> <a href="mailto:arild.thomassen@ssb.no">arild.thomassen@ssb.no</a>	62 88 54 30 62 88 54 27
02.02	Population statistics. Population 1 October 2001 and population changes in 3rd quarter 2001	20.11.	23.11.00	<a href="mailto:kare.reidar.boiby@ssb.no">kare.reidar.boiby@ssb.no</a> <a href="mailto:osod.meh.stoltrane@ssb.no">osod.meh.stoltrane@ssb.no</a>	62 88 52 97 62 88 54 00
09.05	Salmon exports. Weekly figures	20.11.	13.11.01	<a href="mailto:utcrnikshandel@ssb.no">utcrnikshandel@ssb.no</a>	21 09 47 52 21 09 47 53
10.10.10	Deliveries of petroleum products, October 2001	20.11.	18.10.01	<a href="mailto:bve.tanum@ssb.no">bve.tanum@ssb.no</a>	21 09 49 19
10.08	Reservoir level	21.11.	14.11.01	<a href="mailto:pal.marius.bergh@ssb.no">pal.marius.bergh@ssb.no</a> <a href="mailto:vegard.hansen@ssb.no">vegard.hansen@ssb.no</a>	21 09 44 20 21 09 47 70
06.03	Unemployment among immigrants, 3rd quarter 2001	21.11.	30.08.01	<a href="mailto:bjorn.olzon@ssb.no">bjorn.olzon@ssb.no</a> <a href="mailto:bjorn.mallusren@ssb.no">bjorn.mallusren@ssb.no</a>	21 09 47 91 21 09 48 89
10.12.40	Ferry statistics between Norway and foreign countries, 3rd quarter 2001	22.11.	13.09.01	<a href="mailto:sissel.varli@ssb.no">sissel.varli@ssb.no</a>	62 88 54 18

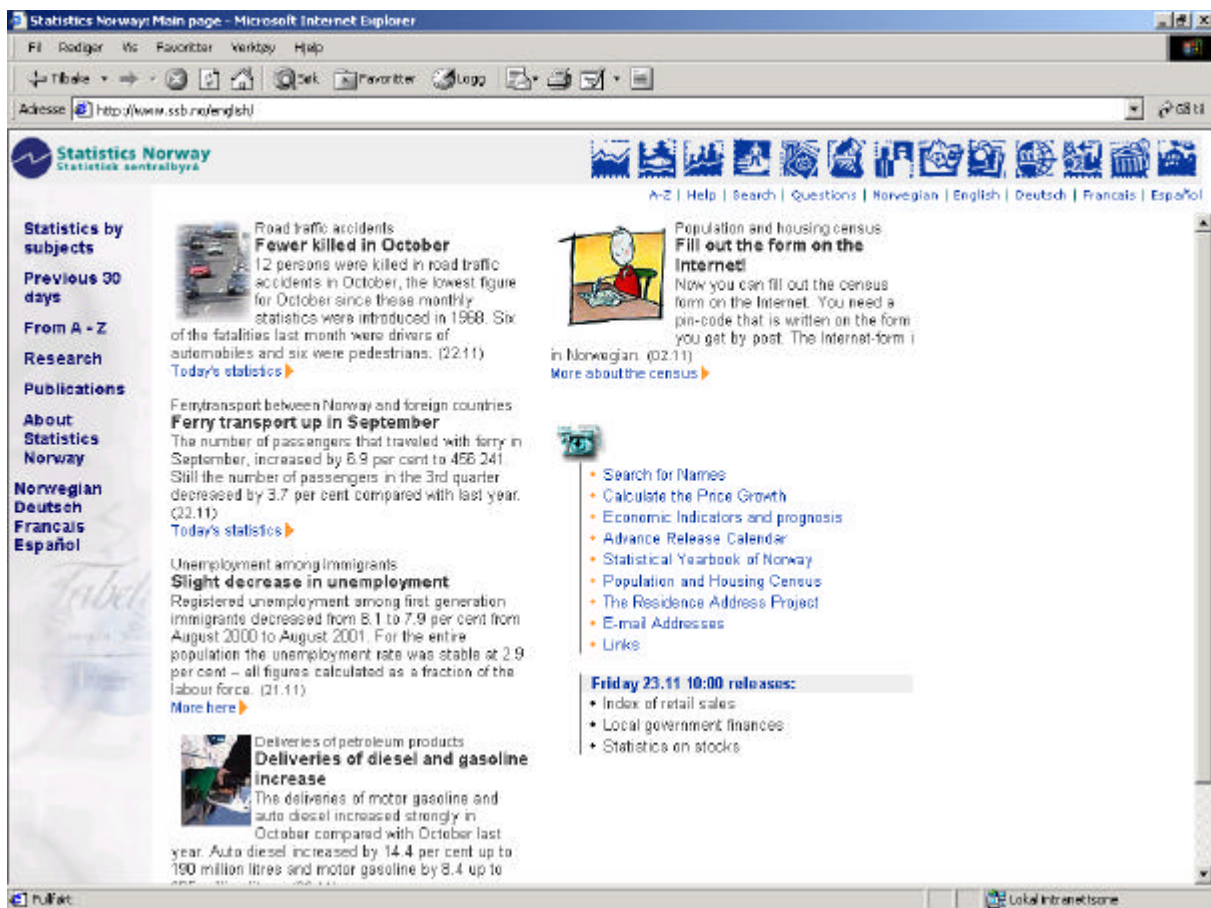
<sup>1</sup> Prepared by Marianne Tonnessen.

There is also a Norwegian Advance release calendar at <http://www.ssb.no/emner/kalender/kalender4m.shtml>)

2. Four months before publishing, the statisticians inform our publishing department about what day or week the new figures will be released, including the Norwegian and English name of the statistics, date of the most recent release and contact persons (with e-mail address and telephone number). This is done electronically, and the Advance release calendar is made up from all these notifications.

3. The Advance release calendar is available to all our web-users, and it is updated every week (sometimes more often). Every week we also make a print-out of the next two weeks' releases, and send it to newspapers, radio stations and TV stations. Some of the media use our Advance release calendar in their own "week calendars".

4. All statistics are published on our main website <http://www.ssb.no/> (or <http://www.ssb.no/english/> for English users). Every workday we publish one or more new statistics, and we also inform our users about the statistics that will be released the next day. Our main (English) website looks like this:



5. As you can see, the next day's releases are found under the links on the right side. Our daily users may thus always be informed about what to find on our main website the next day. And the link to the complete Advance release calendar is found as one of the links under the "eye".

## **II. BACKGROUND FOR THE ADVANCE RELEASE CALENDAR**

### **II.1 Statistics Norway's publishing system**

6. The Internet is Statistics Norway's main publishing channel. All new statistics are released there, and a huge filing system makes it possible to find statistics on most aspects of Norwegian society on our website. Every statistics field has its own home site, where the latest release is displayed and all previous releases are stored.

7. A release normally consists of an article, a couple of graphs, and a varying number of tables. Everything is published in Norwegian and English. The statisticians prepare the tables and graphs for the web, and write articles, which are edited by a journalist.

8. At 10:00 a.m. the publishing day, the title and lead of the article is displayed on our main website, and users can proceed to the rest of the article and the graphs and figures by using the link. All the statistics on our website are free of charge.

9. In addition to our web publishing, we also produce paper publications such as reports, magazines and the Statistical Yearbook. These are not releases of new statistics, but are used for publishing background material, analyses, overviews, etc. Normally, our publications are also available on the Internet.

### **II.2 A service for our users**

10. The Advance release calendar is a service mainly for our users. We have different types of users. Some visit our website regularly, perhaps every day. Many of these are journalists looking for some good ideas for their reporting. Some are looking for information from previously published statistics. Some visit our website only when they know we have some news that's of interest to them. And some just happen to find our website, or they visit it only to fill in the Census form or search for their name in our Name statistics.

11. For our regular users, the list of tomorrow's releases is useful to find out whether they would want to visit our pages the next day. For the ones that use our website only when we publish special statistics, we recommend them to take a look at the complete Advance release calendar, to be informed about when it might be useful to visit us again. And for our occasional users and the ones that just happen to find our website, we hope that the Advance release calendar might tempt them to come back to our website later.

12. The calendar can be sorted by date, i.e. the first publication comes first, or by subject. For persons who are interested in a particular topic, e.g. population or public finances, we recommend the latter option.

13. Contact persons with e-mail and telephone number are also included in the Advance release calendar, so that our users might contact them if they have any questions. However, the contact persons never give out information about the results before 10:00 of the publishing day.

14. For users who are interested in only one - or a few - subjects, Statistics Norway offers a tailor-made subscription service via e-mail (or via a personal "home page" with links to the releases). This service now has approx. 5,300 subscribers.

### **II.3 Emphasizing our professional integrity and independence**

15. The Advance release calendar also has the function of emphasizing our professional integrity. Statistics Norway has a high score in an annual opinion poll about confidence in different institutions in

Norwegian society. In fact, only the consumers' *ombudsman* and the police enjoy the greater confidence of the Norwegian population than Statistics Norway.

16. The population's confidence is tremendously important to us. If people don't trust the statistics we produce, there is no point in producing them. If people are not convinced that the information they give us is treated professionally, we have no guarantee that we will obtain correct answers. If people think that our results are influenced by political or economical pressure, the results are of no value.

17. Therefore, we constantly emphasize our professional integrity. Nobody else is permitted to influence the results of our statistics, or decide the date when they are released - even if they have paid us to produce the statistics. The Advance calendar and the Internet release also ensure that all users obtain access to the statistical releases simultaneously and they imply a policy of non-differential treatment; ministries, the media and the public are all treated equally.

18. The Advance release calendar is a part of this emphasis on integrity. We decide the publishing date months ahead, and people expect us to publish on the promised date, no matter what the results are.

#### **II.4 A basic part of our publishing routines**

19. The Advance release calendar is a natural aspect of Statistics Norway's publishing routines. The calendar tells the publishing department when to expect new statistics, from which part of the organization, and makes it possible to plan the releases a long time ahead so we don't get a lot of new statistics one day and nothing the next day.

20. Technically, the calendar constitutes a part of the generator that makes our main website, so that we are sure to that "Tomorrow's releases" will be correct.

### **III. HOW IT WORKS IN PRACTICE**

#### **III.1 What is announced in the Advance release calendar?**

21. Statistics Norway draws a sharp line between new statistics and the other information that we publish. New statistics are figures that have never been published before, such as the latest Consumer price indices or the most recent population figures. All new statistics are announced in the Advance release calendar, no matter what they concern, which part of our organization produces them or who pays for them.

22. Other information might be analysis, metadata, background information, historical statistics, etc. This information is not regarded as new statistics, and so we don't announce it in the Advance release calendar. Still, it is normally published on the Internet, and often we also present it on our main website, with a title, lead and a link. But the link is always called "More here", and never "Today's statistics". The "Today's statistics" link is reserved for the new statistics that have been published during the last 24 hours only.

#### **III.2 Every month: E-mail reminder**

23. Every month the publication department sends an e-mail to all statistics departments reminding them to fill in new information in the Advance release calendar for the next four months. Each statistics department has its own Advance release calendar Excel-file on a common server, which they maintain themselves. To make sure we have more or less the same number of new statistics every day, most of the statistics are announced by week of publishing, not on a specific day. The exact date is decided a couple of weeks before publishing. Only certain statistics are announced by date when the statistics departments put them in the calendar.

24. A typical calendar Excel-file looks like this (this one belongs to the department of population statistics):

Statistikkalenderen - manus							
Ny statistikk							
Emne	Norsk tittel	Engelsk tittel	Frigivingsfrist/Internett	Artikkel på nynorsk	Følgende frigiving	Kontaktpersoner og e-post-adresser	Telefonnr.
00.01.10	Storingsvalget 2001. Personer med stemmerett	Storting Election 2001. Persons entitled to vote	Uke 17		Uke 20/99	vebjorn.salandslid@ssb.no nelly.kjartstolen@ssb.no	82 88 52 20 82 88 52 98
00.01.10	Storingsvalget 2001	Storting Election 2001	01.11.	X	Uke 49/97	vebjorn.salandslid@ssb.no	82 88 52 20
00.01.10	Storingsvalget 2001. Valgundersøkelse	Storting Election 2001. Election survey	Uke 51	X	Uke 1-2/99	vebjorn.salandslid@ssb.no	82 88 52 20
02.02.10	Befolkningsstatistikk. Fødsle, 2000	Population statistics. Births, 2000	Uke 22		30.05.2000	vebjorn.salandslid@ssb.no oppdragbefolkning@ssb.no	82 88 52 20 82 88 54 00
02.02.10	Befolkningsstatistikk. Adopsjoner, 2000	Population statistics. Adoptions, 2000	Uke 25		06.07.2000	liv.irene.samo@ssb.no oppdragbefolkning@ssb.no	82 88 52 84 82 88 54 00
02.01.10	Befolkningsstatistikk. Flyktninger, 1. januar 2000	Population statistics. Refugees, 1 January 2000	22.05.	X	31.05.2000	minja.tea.dzamaija@ssb.no oppdragbefolkning@ssb.no	82 88 50 36 82 88 54 00
02.02.20	Befolkningsstatistikk. Flyttinger, 2000	Population statistics. Migration, 2000	22.08.		16.08.2000	henning.hartvedt@ssb.no oppdragbefolkning@ssb.no	82 88 52 65 82 88 54 00
02.02	Befolkningsstatistikk. Folkemengde 1. juli 2001 og endringer i 2nd kv. 2001	Population statistics. Population 1 July 2001 and population changes in 2nd quarter 2001	21.08.		24.08.2000	kare.reidar.holby@ssb.no oppdragbefolkning@ssb.no	82 88 52 97 82 88 54 00
02.02.30	Befolkningsstatistikk. Inngåtte ekteskap og registrerte partnerskap, 2000	Population statistics. Marriages and registered partnerships, 2000	13.09.		23.10.2000	ingvild.hauge.byberg@ssb.no kirsten.enger.dybendal@ssb.no oppdragbefolkning@ssb.no	82 88 52 24 82 88 52 96 82 88 54 00
02.02.30	Befolkningsstatistikk. Skillemisser og separasjoner, 2000	Population statistics. Divorces and separations, 2000	12.10.		04.10.2000	ingvild.hauge.byberg@ssb.no kirsten.enger.dybendal@ssb.no oppdragbefolkning@ssb.no	82 88 52 24 82 88 52 96 82 88 54 00
02.01.10	Befolkningsstatistikk. Innvandrebeholdningen, 1. januar 2001	Population statistics. Immigrant population, 1 January 2001	29.10.	X	13.11.2001	oliva.les.dzamaija@ssb.no	82 88 50 36
02.02	Befolkningsstatistikk. Folkemengde 1. januar 2002 og endringene i 4. kv. 2001	Population statistics. Population 1 January 2002 and population changes in 4th quarter 2001	19.02.		17.02.2000	kare.reidar.holby@ssb.no oppdragbefolkning@ssb.no	82 88 52 97 82 88 54 00
02.02	Befolkningsstatistikk. Folkemengde 1. oktober 2001 og endringene i 4. kv. 2001	Population statistics. Population 1 October 2001 and population changes in 4th quarter 2001	20.11.		23.11.2000	kare.reidar.holby@ssb.no oppdragbefolkning@ssb.no	82 88 52 97 82 88 54 00

### III.3 Once a week: Calendar updating

25. Once a week (sometimes even more often) the publishing department collects information from all the Excel-files, and updates the Advance release calendar. At this time, the exact dates are decided for the next two weeks' publishing. This is done in cooperation with the statisticians who prepare the articles and tables.

26. A shorter calendar with the next two weeks' releases is also made, and is sent to all the major medias in Norway.

### III.4 Sometimes less than four months

27. Sometimes it can be difficult for the statisticians to know four months ahead exactly what week their figures are ready to be published. Therefore, the publishing department is flexible and accepts shorter announcement periods when necessary.

28. Sometimes the statistics are not ready at the scheduled publishing time. We have special routines for handling delays. If the delay is evident less than two weeks before the scheduled publishing, we assume that quite a lot of people have noticed the publishing date and expect the new statistics to be ready by then. In such cases, we make a small announcement on our main website on the scheduled publishing date and the day before, giving information about when the statistics can be expected.

29. If the delay is evident more than two weeks before the scheduled publishing, we just move the publishing day without announcement.

### **III.5 Rooted in the organization**

30. The Advance release calendar is deeply engrained in everyone who publishes statistics at Statistics Norway. There is a broad comprehension of its necessity, and since it is quite simple to use and maintain, it's easy for new employees to understand how it works.

31. We have used the Advance release calendar for several years now, and I believe we will continue to do so over the coming years, with small adjustments as time goes by.