

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

For discussion and
recommendations

Meeting of the 2022/2023 Bureau
Cork (Ireland), 12-13 October 2022

Item V (a) of the Provisional
Agenda

**THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF
OFFICIAL STATISTICS – FOLLOW-UP TO CES**

Prepared by the Secretariat

During the 70th plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians in June 2022, a session was devoted to the 30th anniversary of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. The session detailed activities undertaken in the first half of 2022 as part of a secretariat-coordinated international communications campaign.

This note aims to stimulate ideas about how to harness the enthusiasm created by the campaign and continue making use of the materials and investments made by participating countries.

The Bureau is invited to discuss and advise how to build upon the outcomes of the 30th anniversary campaign, and how the international official statistics community can continuously promote the collectively-owned Principles.

I. BACKGROUND

1. 2022 marks 30 years since the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics were first developed and adopted at the policy level by UNECE. In 1994 the United Nations Statistical Commission adopted these principles at the global level. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) endorsed the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics at policy level in 2013; and in January 2014, they were adopted by the UN General Assembly.

2. As a global standard, the Principles underlie everything that the producers of official statistics do: from the methods for collecting, processing and storing data to the ways that statistical offices disseminate statistics and communicate with those who use them. The Principles ensure independence from political influence and the right and duty to publicly correct misuse or misinterpretation of statistics. The Principles safeguard the trustworthiness of official statistics, enabling them to play a unique role as a public good that underpins sustainable development and democracy. Thirty years on, the Principles remain a collective manifesto for serving society with impartial, relevant and accurate information to guide decisions.

II. MARKING THE ANNIVERSARY

3. Wishing to mark this important milestone and to celebrate the origin of the Principles in the region of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Bureau of

the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) called upon the secretariat to coordinate a communications campaign. The aims of the campaign were to focus the attention of the general public, users of statistics and even producers of official statistics on the continued importance of the Principles, showing how and why each of them matters to everyday life. The campaign constituted the following main strands:

(a) ten mini-campaigns corresponding to the ten Principles, each led by one to three countries and open to contributions from all other countries and organizations;

(b) a video produced by Poland combining contributions from many countries, launched on the first day of the 70th CES plenary session in June 2022;

(c) video statements by high-level users and stakeholders, aired at the 70th CES plenary session;

(d) a visual identity including logo, imagery, fonts, colour scheme, PowerPoint slides backgrounds and banners for social media sites (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn etc.) provided by Ireland, designed to bring coherence to the many different contributions;

(e) conventional and social media campaigns anchored in a series of short texts written by the secretariat. These were released

(i) as press releases [when the campaign launched](#);

(ii) as mini-texts and [links in the UNECE newsletter](#) and posts on the UNECE website at the start of each mini campaign;

(iii) as [a blog post from the Executive Secretary of UNECE](#); and

(iv) in a press release [on the occasion of the 70th plenary session of the Conference](#).

These texts were all amplified via social media through the secretariat, the wider UNECE and participating countries, accompanied by multilingual animated gifs using the shared logo and visual identity ([see one example](#), highlighting the multilingual nature of the campaign);

(f) [A microsite](#) bringing together the ten texts, highlights from countries' contributions, and the visual elements (available in English with French, Russian and Spanish versions to follow in due course).

4. Details of the leaders and content of the mini campaigns and other activities can be found in document [ECE/CES/2022/17](#) presented to the Conference at its 70th plenary session in June 2022. During this meeting a session was held to mark the anniversary, showcasing many of the materials produced by countries and giving CES members the opportunity to comment on the role and future of the Principles.

5. Following the 70th plenary session, other activities have included:

(a) a press interview with the CES chair focusing on the Principles as well as other topics covered at the session, leading to [an article in Geneva Solutions](#);

(b) a [peer-reviewed article by the secretariat](#) published in September 2022 issue of the Statistical Journal of the International Association for Official Statistics;

(c) a dedicated session during the 2022 UNECE Expert Meeting on Dissemination and Communication of Statistics, convened by Ireland and including a joint presentation by Poland and the Secretariat;

(d) continued national events dedicated to the anniversary; examples include an [all-staff summit at the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics](#); and a forthcoming online conference on the Principles for staff of the Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas (National Institute of Statistics, INE), [Chile](#).

6. To date the campaign has resulted in

(a) More than 330 original posts with the #FPOS30 hashtag on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn;

(b) Translation of the logo into 15 languages (Armenian, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Hebrew, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, te reo Māori, Polish, Spanish, Romanian, Russian).

III. HARNESSING THE MOMENTUM AND MAKING FULL USE OF THE RESOURCES

7. One noteworthy observation from coordinating the campaign has been the positive spirit and willingness of national statistical offices, international organizations and individual stakeholders to collaborate and collectively lend their support to celebrating and raising the profile of the Principles. This was evidenced in the many contributions to the video produced by Poland, the video statements made for the Conference, and the many contributors to other videos, webinars etc. organized by participating countries.

8. The efforts that went into preparing the various communication materials to mark the anniversary were significant. As a community it behoves us to take as much advantage as possible of these investments. **The resources available now** are the collective property of the international official statistical community and **could be re-used in national and international initiatives to continue drawing attention to the Principles**. This may be particularly important in the lead-up to global initiatives to mark the adoption of the Principles as a worldwide standard. The Bureau may wish to consider how to capitalize upon the enthusiasm for the Principles demonstrated during the campaign. **How can the international statistical community build on the momentum that has been created, and continue to use the Principles, not only as a signpost but also as a shared brand, a communications tool and a symbol of international cooperation in official statistics?**

9. This could include housing the visual materials on a shared platform to give access to all CES members and enable their continued use; adjusting the logo to transition from a '30 years' logo to a visually similar but general, non-time-specific logo which could form part of a permanent, recognizable visual identity for the Principles; or increasing the number of languages in which the logo and mini texts are available.

10. These proposals, as well as other possibilities, would depend upon voluntary in-kind contributions from CES members for design and translation work.

11. The Bureau is welcome to provide other suggestions.

IV. ACTION REQUESTED FROM THE BUREAU

12. The Bureau is invited to discuss and advise how to build upon the outcomes of the Fundamental Principles 30th anniversary campaign, and how the international official statistics community can continuously promote the collectively-owned Principles.

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