

REPORT OF THE EXPERT MEETING

1. The expert meeting was organized as part of the Conference of European Statisticians' work programme for 2022, within the context of the High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics (HLG-MOS). It was held online from 13 to 15 September 2022, with a total of 156 participants from 36 national statistical organisations of Argentina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kyrgyz Republic, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mongolia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Armenia, Republic of Moldova, Saudi Arabia, Slovak Republic, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Uganda, Ukraine, United States of America (U.S.), as well as international organisations and academia such as Eurostat, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), UN Statistics Division (UNSD), World Trade Organization (WTO), United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and Concordia University.
2. The expert meeting was hosted by UNECE and was organised under the responsibility of the HLG-MOS. The Steering Committee consisted of Aeidín Sheppard (Central Statistics Office Ireland), Kerstin Hänsel (Destatis, Germany), Ellen Dougherty (U.S. Department of Agriculture), Terri Mitton (OECD), Margarida Rosa (Statistics Portugal), Lukasz Augustyniak (Eurostat) and Emily Liddel (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics).
3. The agenda included the following substantive sessions during which a total of 22 presentations were given:
 - Session 1: Brand, Reputation, Trust – Who we are, What we stand for, Our place in society;
 - Session 2: Market Research, Digital Marketing and Communication Strategies;
 - Session 3: Statistics Made Easy.
4. Points raised during the presentations and Q&A included (more details available in Annex I):
 - There is a general trend that we are moving away from promoting our products specifically but promoting ideas of what we do. It is important to raise awareness about our activities and role in society. The public seems to know who we are, but not necessarily what we actually do;
 - Brand and reputation are the foundation for managing a crisis. We also have to keep our values and brands in front of us when dealing with a crisis. Brand is important in particular to achieve the goal of increasing perception about our new roles in data governance;
 - Statistical organisations produce a lot of data, but they are difficult to use and not visible in open data platforms;
 - Disinformation is not new, but it becomes much more influential with social media platforms. We cannot remain just as a number factory but need to position ourselves as a defender of correct information;

- To make connections with data providers, it is important to tell a human story and put a face on the story, and show empathy with users;

5. There was a plenary discussion at the end of the meeting where lessons learned and topics for future work were discussed which included the following points:

- In the past, the discussions and presentations were around how to drive traffic to our websites. These days, the discussion is more around how to build awareness about our work. It is important to make it clear what our objectives are in this regard. We need to re-focus our strategy;
- The question of how to measure success and impact continues to be challenging. Perhaps bringing outside perspectives to the next workshop to give us a pointer would be helpful;
- If we do not react soon to the needs of the young generation and maintain the currency of our communication channels, we might lose a chunk of the generation;
- The trends continuously change, once we adapt to a new platform, it becomes out of the trend in a few years, what we communicate is more important than where we do it;
- We spend a lot of resources to reach the audience across different platforms. However, big tech platforms such as google would always have much more reach than statistical organisations. We should find a way to work together;
- Many social media platforms have to deal with misinformation now, and we can provide a verifiable and reliable source of information. There is an opportunity for collaboration;
- In the past, we meet with users through an occasional focus group, survey, etc. These days, we have thousands of people following our social media platforms. It is a rare but huge opportunity that we have direct contact with users on daily basis;
- The target audience of dissemination has expanded to include non-human entities. It is also important to make the information we disseminate machine-digestible and consumable.

6. Throughout the workshop, a slido poll had been open for collecting ideas for future works. The top 6 ideas are listed in descending order below (see Annex II for the full list):

- How to measure the success and the impact of our communication;
- Identifying the resources and capabilities required in a modern communications team in a National Statistics Office;
- How to communicate official statistics making the most of the new tools used by digital natives (from TikTok to transmedia storytelling);
- Strategies to tackle and anticipate disinformation;
- Dissemination and communication through open data principles;
- The role of metadata on self-explanatory presentation and representation of data.

7. All abstracts, papers and presentations from the workshop are available on the UNECE website (<https://unece.org/statistics/events/DissComm2022>).

Annex I. Summary of proceeding and discussion

Session 1: Brand, Reputation, Trust – Who we are, what we stand for, our place in society

8. This topic was organised by Aeidín Sheppard (Central Statistics Office Ireland) and Kerstin Hänsel (Destatis, Germany). It included the following presentations:

- The role of brand management, marketing and crisis communication for Statistical Organisations - Aeidin Sheppard (CSO Ireland);
- Statistics Sweden’s brand platform revisited: results and next steps - Karin Hansson and Sara Brinkberg (Statistics Sweden);
- Brand Image in the new Data Ecosystem - Jose Jabier Zurikarai (Bask Statistical Institute, Spain);
- Social and Mass Media Engagement to Improve Statistical Business Process Literacy Evidence from Bali, Indonesia - I Gede Heprin Prayasta (BPS Statistics Bali) and Ni Gusti Putu Ayu Sri Lestari (BPS Statistics Indonesia);
- Combating disinformation with statistics - Aki Harju (Statistics Finland);
- 30 Years Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics - Olga Świerkot-Strużewska, Karolina Banaszek (Statistics Poland) and Fiona Willis-Nuñez (UNECE);
- Investigating the use of blockchain to authenticate data from the Statistics Canada website - Lillian Klein (Statistics Canada), Kathryn Fedchun (Carleton University) and Didem Demirag (Concordia University).

9. In addition to several clarification questions, the points raised during the discussions include:

- Brand and reputation are the foundation for managing a crisis. Vice versa, we have to remember to keep our values and brands in front of us when dealing with a crisis;
- Branding is important in particular to achieve the goal of increasing the perception of our new roles in data governance;
- Training on the brand for methodologists and statisticians is useful. Although they may not interact with the general public like communication experts, they also interact with users in various ways;
- Statistical organisations produce a lot of data, but they are difficult to use and not visible in open data platforms (e.g., if we search for “population” in an open data portal, national statistics organisations are not there);
- Social and mass media are very efficient to raise awareness about statistical offices, but there is a limitation in reaching users in rural areas. Routine meetings with key people are useful;
- Disinformation is not new, but it becomes much more influential with social media platforms. We cannot remain just as a number factory but need to position ourselves as a defender of correct information;
- The model of establishing phenomenon experts (selected experts among staff who have been trained to work as a spoken person) is found to be effective. They increase the visibility of the statistical organisations in public debates and provide reliable contact for the media;
- Emerging technology such as blockchain can help statistical offices safeguard the confidentiality and enhance user trust;
- There is a general trend that we are moving away from promoting our products specifically but promoting ideas of what we do.

Session 2: Market Research, Digital Marketing and Communication Strategies

10. This topic was organised by Ellen Dougherty (U.S. Department of Agriculture), Terri Mitton (OECD) and Margarida Rosa (Statistics Portugal). It included the following presentations:

- Feasibility study - How to better promote NASS products and services - Kristen Lenhardt (USDA);
- Statistic Canada's Purpose-Based Engagement - Pamela O'Leary (Statistics Canada) ;
- Case study on the communication strategy for the first combined Census of the Republic of Argentina - Silvina Viazzi and Gonzalo Grandis (INDEC, Argentina) ;
- Media Campaign for the CBS and the Census - Eran Ropalidis (CBS, Israel) Combating disinformation with statistics - Aki Harju (Statistics Finland) ;
- Using Google Maps Review Data for BPS Statistics Indonesia Office Evaluation - Wiwin Srimulyani, Satria Bagus Panuntun, Maulana Faris, Setia Pramana (BPS Statistics Indonesia);
- Usability testing of Eurostat's statistical products: Opportunities & risk mitigation - Julia Urhausen (Eurostat) ;
- Human-centred design and usability analysis for Istat institutional website - Michela Troia (Istat, Italy) ;
- Summarizing Indonesia through Official Statistics News (OSN) and Statistical Yearbook of Indonesia in Infographics - Syarif Adimira, Fransiska Vatma Paramita Esti Utami and Riza Ghaniswati (BPS Statistics Indonesia).

11. In addition to several clarification questions, the points raised during the discussions include:

- To make connections with data providers, it is important to tell a human story and put a face on the story (e.g., showing that the statistical organisations employees do care about agriculture when interacting with farmers);
- On social media, it can be useful sometimes to take more relatable approaches (e.g., pop culture references);
- The awareness about the works of the statistical organisations is insufficient, in one study, it was observed that there was no strong connection between activities of the statistical organisations and census which is one of the biggest programmes;
- When it comes to measuring success, there are some objective measures (e.g., clicks, rating), but we also employ various strategies that are hard to measure directly (e.g., the effect from SMS campaigns or television interviews);
- Google review can be used as evaluation materials for the works of the statistics office (note that visitors comment not only about statistical data, but also about services);
- Showing empathy with users is important, we should try to learn from other areas that have long ago realised the importance of this (design thinking and marketing);
- Usability test provides user point of view, not just our point of view. It should be repeated periodically to work in a continuous improvement cycle.

Session 3: Statistics Made Easy

12. This topic was organised by Lukasz Augustyniak (Eurostat) and Emily Liddel (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). It included the following presentations:

- Increasing Local People Engagement in Statistics in the Era of the COVID-19 Pandemic Through Social Media. Study Case: Statistics of Bone Regency, Indonesia - Andhy Aryutama Kamase, Serra Pungkas Risantika and Maulana Faris (Statistics Indonesia);
- The Insee mobile application – a blast of stats at your fingertips ! - Françoise Auberge-Courtois and Céline Rouquette (Insee, France);
- Data Story Telling - Janice Keenan (Statistics Canada);
- Making statistical information relevant for the young generations - Patrizia Collesi and Daria Squillante (Istat, Italy);
- Staflix: a Banco de Portugal's original series - Mafalda Sousa Trincão, Francisco Conceição, and Ana Francisco (Banco de Portugal);
- Building Big Data Literacy Through Digital Comic - Maulana Faris (BPS, Indonesia), Setia Pramana (BPS, Statistics Indonesia and STIS, Polytechnic of Statistics);
- Data Browser and MetaData Manager: the new dissemination platform for Istat aggregate data - Carlo Boselli (Istat, Italy).

13. In addition to several clarification questions, the points raised during the discussions include:

- The public knows who we are, but they do not know what we really do;
- For measuring the impact of mobile app, the following quantitative and qualitative measures can be used: downloads of app, users, visiting time, screen views and direct reviews from users;
- Continuously supplying fresh content is difficult. For sustainability, it is important to make production staff think the mobile is a part of the dissemination package so that they can start providing content materials;
- For content, it is useful to take advantage of days of notes (e.g., FPOS celebration, international women's day, black history month) and follow big issues (e.g., supply chain disruption);
- Cooperation with other stakeholders and agencies is important (e.g., consulting universities in advance for developing e-learning materials, entering an agreement with the Ministry of Education for disseminating statistical and quantitative literacy);
- Statistics comics have a long history and are an effective tool to increase statistical literacy among young generations;
- The use of a single dissemination platform increases accessibility by providing a homogenous environment. Migrating to a common SDMX standard provides flexibility in comparing aggregated data.

Annex 2. List of future works collected during the workshop

- How to Measure success and the impact of our communication
- Identifying the resources and capabilities required in a modern communications team in a National Statistics Office
- Strategies to tackle and anticipate disinformation
- How to communicate official statistics making the most of the new tools used by digital natives (from TikTok to transmedia storytelling)
- Dissemination (or communication?) through open data principles
- Communication strategies for younger generations (Gen Z, Generation Alpha and new).
- The role of Metadata (terminology - statistical terms/definitions) on self-explanatory presentation and representation of Data
- Good practices and challenges in providing access to microdata
- Statistical literacy and social media - which platforms work best for you and your audiences? Do they attract enough (young) people? If not, what other channels do we have to ensure that our products and services are known and used?
- How to Measure success and the impact of our communication
- Addressing the tension, inherent in our work, between authority and transparency.
- Co-create Comics on Statistics to increase statistical literacy
- Use of data science / machine learning to help detecting / curating topics, matching interests with target groups
- Mapping audiences, products and channels.
- The simplification of languages to explain statistics, regardless of the platforms through then convey them