Increasing trust in official statistics in the Republic of North Macedonia

Elena Ginovska (State Statistical Office, Republic of North Macedonia)

elena.ginovska@stat.gov.mk

Abstract

For decades, official statistics have been perceived as a synonym of trust in our society. They have been trustworthy source of facts and numbers supporting evidence-based policy making. However, in recent years, official statistics have faced many challenges. Society is changing, there is rapid digitalization which leads to having a variety of data and data providers whose quality can (often) be questioned and, usually, these data are provided to the public faster and are more interesting to the public. Producers of official statistics, on the other hand, have to follow strict methodological rules and guidelines thus making official statistics "slower" and abstract (less relatable) compared to the aforementioned data.

The Macedonian official statistics has not been immune to these challenges, as well. There is a general mistrust in state institutions in the country and the State Statistical Office of the Republic of North Macedonia (SSO), as producer of official statistics and coordinator of the National Statistical System (NSS) is faced with the difficult task to maintain the necessary level of trust among the data providers and the public in order to be able to produce official statistics, especially having in mind the inadequate quality of administrative data sources.

The paper is focusing on the activities that the SSO is undertaking to increase the trust in official statistics, especially in terms of increasing statistical literacy, promoting the importance of official statistics, creating the brand of SSO as producer of official statistics and coordinator of the NSS, implementing the communication strategy etc.