

## Engaging with hard-to-reach audience: young people and Statistics Finland

Mervi Ukkonen (Statistics Finland)

[mervi.ukkonen@stat.fi](mailto:mervi.ukkonen@stat.fi)

### *Abstract*

Young people are the users and interpreters of future statistics. They are therefore an extremely important target group for all of us statistical institutes. At the same time, young people are also a very challenging target group: they think slightly differently from us middle-aged people, use different channels for daily communication than we who grew up in the paper era and often question messages from the older age group.

Long-term work with young people and schools

Statistics Finland has worked long over the years to inspire young people to use statistics and to promote statistical literacy among young people. We have formed contacts with schools and teachers, we pay visits to educational institutions and schools visit us, we send newsletters to teachers and we involve young people by means of international statistical competitions.

In recent years, we have also made use of social media channels to reach young people. We have worked together with a YouTuber, we meet young adults on Instagram and we have marketed statistical competitions on TikTok together with a TikToker favoured by young people.

How do we get young men to respond to data collections?

The falling respondent rates in data collections is a concern in many countries. In Finland, too, it has become more difficult to get hold of respondents during the mobile phone age. Young men are the target group that is particularly difficult to reach in Finland. To continue to have a sufficient response rate to statistical inquiries and thus reliable statistics, it is important that young people understand the meaning of statistics and the importance of responding to statistical inquiries.

Over the years Statistics Finland has conducted several campaigns to improve the response rate and reach young men. We have made videos starring a young man. We have had #pleaserespond campaigns on social media channels. In addition, we have marketed data collections in TikTok cooperation. This spring, we also remodelled our data collection website.

In the early part of the year, we launched a cooperation project together with our communications agency partner in which it designed in a workshop campaigns for reaching especially the most challenging target groups: young men and persons with immigrant background. We received over 20 ideas, from which we will select the most effective ones for actual application.

In my presentation I will tell you about our experiences of cooperation with young people, the campaigns to reach young people and the results we have reached over the years. My presentation will give ideas that can be applied to other statistical institutes as well.