

## **A wake-up call: Why we have to strengthen awareness about our mission**

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### ***Abstract***

Over the last years we have seen signs of the public's fragile trust in Statistics Norway. Even though Norway is a country with high levels of trust in governmental institutions, we see that limited public knowledge of our social mission and mandate can make trust fragile, and in the end our opportunities limited.

To deliver daily statistics and information to the public we are dependent on trust within society to streamline, develop and carry out our data collection, and in the end improve data and data usage. However, trust is not only built out of great statistical deliverance alone.

In the statistical community it is agreed upon a need to access data held by the private sector for purposes of making official statistics. In 2022 Statistics Norway asked the country's main supermarket chains for their customer transactions and bank transactions from Nets, the Norwegian part of the European PayTech, to improve our Household Budget Survey. The response both from the chains, the Norwegian Data Protection Authority and the media was negative. In the following discussion, we saw several examples of limited knowledge of our social mission and mandate - in comments and feedbacks we received from politicians and authorities, and in the public's general debates.

We will elaborate on two topics:

1. What was our communication strategy, and where did it fail? Why is it difficult to come out with our narrative?
2. We see a need to increase public awareness and build a more stable trust. Therefore, we need to bring more effort into communicating our social mission and mandate to the public, and not only our statistics. We have developed a communication plan with strategic and operative measures to help us achieve our goal.