

The Norwegian Statistics Act - from review to implementation

EFTA/UNECE WORKSHOP ON THE GENERIC LAW OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS

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Content of talk :

- Background
- Law Committee
- Process of drafting a legal act and formal adoption
- Implementation
- Main results
- Lessons learnt



Background - Review of the Statistics Act

- Previous statistics act from 1989
- The EEA Agreement (1994)
 - More than 300 EU legal acts on statistics are implemented in Norwegian law
 - the European Statistical Law (223/2009 rev 2015)
 - European Statistics Code of Practice (2005 rev 2011 and 2017)
- The peer review 2014 recommended that the statistics legislation should be reviewed regarding:
 - Independence (role of the Board and the responsibilities of the Director General)
 - Coordination (Statistics Norway's role and the Statistics Council)
 - Definition of official statistics
- Technological changes – data collection, sources, dissemination and other producers

The Law Committee – mandate

- scrutinise the European legislation and assess if the current statistics act is in line with the European statistical legislation
- assess the division of labour and coordination between Statistics Norway and other public authorities producing statistics or owners of public registers
- evaluate if common quality criteria should be used in defining «official statistics»
- consider if other public authorities could produce official statistics
- assess if Statistics Norway in a larger extent than today could access confidential information including health data
- consider how personal protection should be respected when more sensitive data are collected, and which limitations should be introduced
- consider if Statistics Norway should be granted more competence (influence) regarding design and content of new registers or changes in existing registers
- assess if Statistics Norway needs further legal authority to access “big data” from public and private sources
- assess if statistical microdata could be utilised by other public authorities for policy planning etc
- evaluate if analysis and research based on statistics should be a task of Statistics Norway regulated by the Statistics Act
- evaluate principles for commissioned work and pricing policy of external assignments
- consider if Statistics Norway may still have a board or a scientific council and which tasks such a body should undertake



The Law Committee - members

The committee consisted of the following members:

- Professor Nils-Henrik von der Fehr (chair), Professor of Economics, University of Oslo
- Mr Øystein Dørum, The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise
- Ms Marta Ebbing, Norwegian Institute of Public Health
- Mr Jørgen Elmeskov, Director General, Statistics Denmark
- Mr Sven Ole Fagernæs, Former Attorney General
- Ms Christine Meyer, Director General, Statistics Norway
- Ms Sigrid Russwurm, Ministry of Finance
- Ms Liv Sannes, The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions
- Ms Astrid Undheim, Telenor

All members were appointed in a personal capacity.

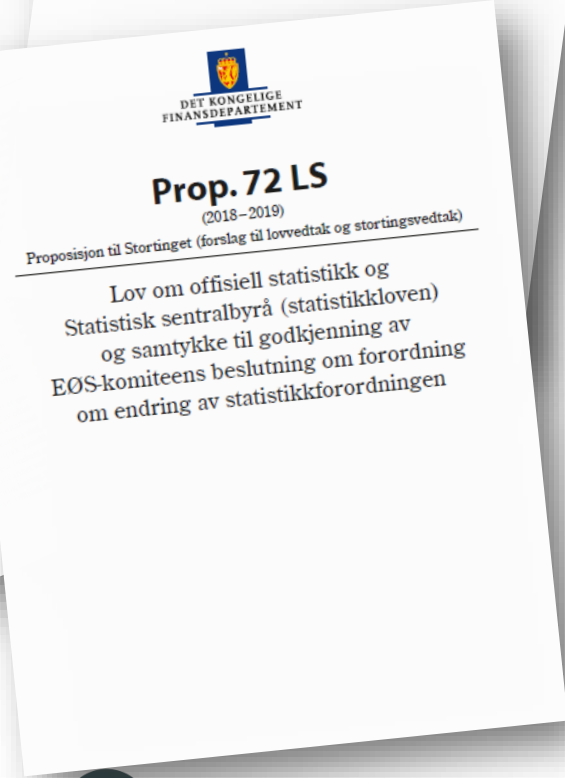
Secretariat:
MoF and SSB

The Law Committee – process

- Monthly meetings for the whole committee (2016-2018)
 - Meetings in subgroups and regular meetings in the secretariat
- Presentations of relevant themes at each meeting
- Invited external speakers from relevant institutions
- Study trip to the Netherlands
- Reference Group
- Close cooperation between the members and the secretariat

New Statistics Act: process

- Law Committee's report 19 March 2018
NOU 2018:7
- Public hearing deadline 30 June 2018
- The Government's proposition 5 March 2019
Prop. 72 LS
- Standing Committee's report 28 May 2019
- Parliamentary treatment 12 June 2019
- Parliamentary treatment 17 June 2019
- Royal assent 21 June 2019



New Statistics Act: implementation

- Adopted by Parliament, stepwise entry into force:
 - 1.11.2019 Committee for official statistics
 - 1.1.2020 Council for Statistics Norway (replaced the Board)
 - 1.1.2021 The main part of the Act
 - Regulations and guidelines
 - 1.1.2021 Programme of official statistics



The Statistics Act

- Act relating to official statistics and Statistics Norway
- First two chapters on official statistics and three chapters on Statistics Norway
- 23 sections (paragraphs)
- Fully implemented 2021



Purpose of the Statistics Act

Section 1 **Purpose**

The purpose of the Act is to promote the development, production and dissemination of **official statistics with a view to increasing public knowledge, and providing a basis for analysis, research, decision-making, and general discussion in society**



The objectives of Statistics Norway

Section 17 Responsibilities of Statistics Norway

- Statistics Norway is the central authority for the development, production and dissemination of official statistics in Norway.
- Statistics Norway shall also conduct research and analysis.
- Statistics Norway may undertake other responsibilities to the extent that these support the activities stipulated in the first and second subsections.

Some of the main aspects of the Statistics Act

- A national programme for official statistics
- A committee for official statistics
- Strengthened mandate for data collection
- More data sharing
- Clarifying governance of Statistics Norway and the professional independence
- Council for Statistics Norway

Lessons learnt: success factors



Solid reasons for change



A clear mandate for review



Credibility and trustworthiness



An unambiguous draft proposal



Thorough processes at all stages and involvement



Challenges during and after



Thank you!

