

## Defining a brand for a statistical institute – from theory to practice

Defining a brand is important for a statistical office because the brand helps to clarify the identity, expertise and value of the organisation in society. The brand serves as a summary of the organisation's identity and provides a clear understanding why the organisation exists and what it works for. It also helps people to identify the statistical institute and its products and services.

### Why does a public organisation need a brand?

Statistics Finland defined its brand for the first time during the strategy process in spring 2022. There were several reasons for us to do that at that time. The Finnish information ecosystem was and is still evolving, and we wanted to communicate our expertise and value to society clearly so that our stakeholders would see our potential in the changing environment, too (i.e. roles connected with data stewardship).

In addition, the flood of information challenges us as a data producer. A unified and clear brand can help us to stand out from the information flood so that users recognise and trust the content we produce. In recent years at Statistics Finland – as well as in our sister organisations – we have tried to address the problem of declining response rates and have considered whether a stronger brand and a better-known organisation and understanding of its role in society could help us to address this problem.

Competition for skilled employees is constant and a timely challenge to statistical institutes, too. With a clear and consistent brand we can genuinely showcase our workplace for potential job seekers. For us it was very important to make all the good things happening inside the organisation to be visible outside the organisation as well and that was also one of the main reasons for us to start building our brand systemically.

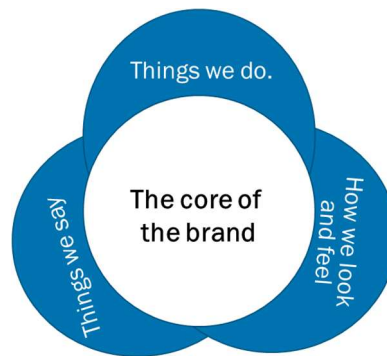
### Where did we end up?

Organisational identity is a multifaceted phenomenon, with both internal and external perspectives. External perspectives include the services and products we offer and our relationship with stakeholders. Internal perspectives include our core competencies and organisational culture. The synthesis of these perspectives are summarised in our brand.

A sustainable brand is a genuine summary of the real everyday life of an organisation. In a statistical organisation it should reflect the values and the code of the practice behind the production of statistics and data. Although statistical offices are renewing, and their roles are expanding, the identity is still based on particular expertise, knowledge of society's data resources, and high-quality as well as ethical and reliable production of data.

In our brand work we found four different roles with which Statistics Finland operates in society. Firstly, we are a defender of reliable information and secondly, the best expert in society's information sources. Thirdly, we have unique competence in the field of data science and finally our task is to produce timely and useful information for society. During the brand process we also defined the concrete proof points connected to these roles and specified what kind of relationships we want to nurture and what is our position and value in society.

**The brand is visible in everything we say and do**



The brand comes to life in the daily life of an organisation. It is visible in what and how we communicate in different communication channels and other meeting points. It is communicated through our visual identity and our actions.

After the definition of our brand, we went through our brand touchpoints with stakeholders including customer service points and communication channels. We also renewed and clarified our visual identity so that the visual identity including the logo would communicate our brand clearly and consistently.

The new visual identity was released at the end of February 2023 at the same time as our new social media concept. After that, we have made the new brand visible step by step, for example in other communication channels, customer service and presentations.

**Lessons learned**

The creation of a brand is an interesting learning process for the whole organisation. During the process the most important stakeholders are inside the organisation. That is why it is essential to engage colleagues, listen to their opinions and thoughts and be ready for changes when the suggestions are valid.

Branding is not just a matter for the communication department. Make sure that the leaders of the organisation have strong support for the brand and that they understand and share its importance.

As you change the visual identity and the logo of an organisation you change the symbol of the organisation's identity. It raises feelings and opinions. Carefully think through the solutions you make and be prepared to tell the story behind the new visual identity. Visual identity makes the brand live and it must be tightly connected to the brand and its intentions.

The change needs time and discussions inside the organisation. Otherwise, the brand cannot be consistent and visible to the stakeholders. Fortunately, we are not a consumer brand and we can make the change slowly if needed.