

Building trust culture in the office – examples of ethics-driven proactive internal communication at Statistics Poland

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS
The Workshop on Ethics in Modern Statistical Organisations

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Purpose of the presentation

- To apprehend ethics from the international angle, to embed it in the international statistical context
- To present fundamental rules and values for ethics, both in the layer of data ethics but also in the layer of culture organisation, especially in the area of internal communication
- To present examples of staff surveys in various areas, not from the point of view of their results but from the point of view their response rate, awareness and engagement of our employees on their role in this process

Ethics. Contextualised.

- Definitions

What is ethics? ^

The term *ethics* may refer to the philosophical study of the concepts of moral right and wrong and moral good and bad, to any philosophical theory of what is morally right and wrong or morally good and bad, and to any system or code of moral rules, principles, or values. The last may be associated with particular [religions](#), [cultures](#), [professions](#), or virtually any other group that is at least partly characterized by its moral outlook.

Why does ethics matter? ^

Ethics matters because (1) it is part of how many groups define themselves and thus part of the identity of their individual members, (2) other-regarding values in most ethical systems both reflect and foster close human relationships and mutual respect and trust, and (3) it could be “rational” for a self-interested person to be moral, because his or her self-interest is arguably best served in the long run by reciprocating the moral behaviour of others.

users

Although ethics has always been viewed as a branch of philosophy, its all-embracing practical nature links it with many other areas of study, including [anthropology](#), [biology](#), [economics](#), [history](#), [politics](#), [sociology](#), and [theology](#). Yet, ethics remains distinct from such [disciplines](#) because it is not a matter of factual knowledge in the way that the sciences and other branches of inquiry are. Rather, it has to do with determining the nature of normative theories and applying these sets of principles to practical moral problems.

Source: Britannica

Is ethics a new concept of the international debate? Certainly not.

- [UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics](#)
 - New Advisory Board to be created
- [The European Statistics Code of Practice](#) (quality lens)
- [OECD Recommendation on Good Statistical Practice](#)
- [ISI Declaration on Professional Ethics](#)
- [IAOS Krakow Group](#)



**Empowering Official Statistics:
Upholding the FPOS to Stay Relevant**

2024 Celebration of the FPOS

30th Anniversary of Adoption by the UN Statistical Commission

10th Anniversary of Adoption by the UN General Assembly

Times of redefinition – statistics in a changing environment

- Proliferating Data Ecosystems
- Skyrocketing number of Actors
- Insatiable demand for insight
- New roles, new skills & competencies, resources

Growing importance of ethics in the international context

- **Trust debate**

*„Our value/worth conversation is more about **'why'** do we do what we do. What does it add to our society?*

*Whereas the trust conversation is about **'how'** we do what we do”*

Giles Sullivan

- **Value debate**

- **User-centric approach**



Ethics – derivatives and dimensions

- [„Data ethics - a key enabler of the social acceptability”](#)
 - Social acceptability - a strategic communication topic
 - ESS Strategic Communication Expert Group
 - *„Social acceptability: roadmap for communicating the ethical approach taken to data collection, processing, storage, dissemination and retention”*
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- Why do we need to keep providing evidence of our trustworthiness?

Ethics underlying official statistics/ e.g. 1

New data sources

- FPOS and Big Data - [Mapping the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics against new and big data sources](#)
- Europe's Ethical Guidelines [7] related to the use of Big Data in European statistics.
 - A reference point in considering the 6 challenges of an ethical use of new and big data sources
 - The guidelines draw the attention of NSOs to possible issues of professional ethics that can appear with the use of big data in the production of official statistics and examine at three main stages of the statistical production process – acquisition, processing and dissemination – questions of an ethical nature concerning the cornerstone values of official statistics

UN Principle 5 – through an ethical lens

"Data for statistical purposes may be drawn from all types of sources, be they statistical surveys or administrative records.

Statistical agencies are to choose the source with regard to quality, timeliness, costs and the burden on respondents."

- Social media data
 - an area to explore for the official statistics.
 - In several countries research is conducted to use social media in order to measure the level of well-being of societies
 - **Social media are a vulnerable source of data when it comes to manipulation.** While disseminating statistics based on social media, it is important to accompany them with proper metadata and to describe them in an understandable way.
- EXAMPLE of juxtaposing official statistics to fake news
 - **existence of fake accounts which manipulate the truth, so called "bots". They may affect the factual image, hindering the quality of social media data to be used for statistical purposes.**
 - On this background, the ethical reference provided by the UNFPOS seems to be one of the most effective remedies, as they oppose official statistics to raw social media data, thereby valuing more highly the production of reliable, comparable and high-quality data – those which meet international standards .



Ethics underlying official statistics/ e.g. 2 Data stewardship



TA 3. Building trust, protection and ethics in data

Developing the principles of stewardship within the data ecosystem to balance the full value from data use with the protection of privacy and data rights

Thematic Area 3 covers efforts to apply ethical and professional principles to all data holdings and the data value chain within the data ecosystem. The sessions under this Thematic Area will demonstrate open data and interoperability practices, the application of quality assurance as a defense against disinformation and misinformation, interlinkages between data protection policies and statistics legislation (including the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics), promotion of cybersecurity, and confidentiality methods for the preservation of trust in data and statistics. The sessions will include procedures allowing microdata access to ensure that small population groups are not left behind while preserving privacy and confidentiality; provide good practices on data stewardship; ethical guidance for data use and sharing; and how the practical use and development of legal frameworks and regulations can unlock the full benefits of data.



Data stewardship – from the [UNECE TF Report „Data Stewardship and the Role of National Statistical Offices in the New Data Ecosystem”](#) is ensuring the ethical and responsible creation, collection, management, use, and reuse of data. It is expressed through long-term, inter-generational curation of data assets so that they benefit the full community of data users and are used for public good.

Ethics underlying official statistics/ e.g. 2

Data stewardship/ global perspective

- „An emerging definition of data stewardship outlines it as a collection of practices that ensure data and statistics from across national systems are accessible, useable, **safe, and trusted**. The priorities of a data steward are context-dependent and cannot be universally defined. However, data stewards are responsible for data across the value chain, from production, analysis, and use.
- These functions aim to:
 - increase collaboration and interoperability across national data systems;
 - promote data sharing and **build trust**;
 - build strong data management and capacity development;
 - safeguard data quality and inclusivity;
 - improve data **privacy, security, and ownership**”.
- Source: [Fitting into the new data-driven reality: results from the global consultation on data stewardship and the role of National Statistical Offices](#)

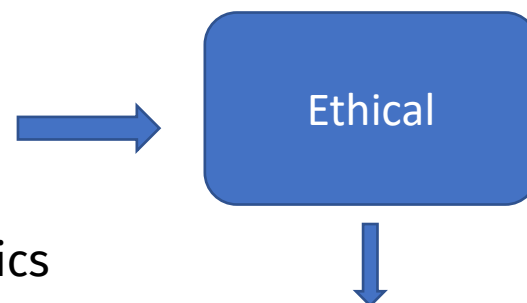
- “[...] The timelessness and relevance of the FPOS make them fit to the new data-driven reality. However, the proliferation of new data sources, new stakeholders and new concepts, such as data stewardship is a good opportunity to reinterpret the Principles, to set directions of their new possible explanations, which seem to be unavoidable in spite of their pertinence and universal character”

[Back to the basics: The concept of data stewardship and its linkages with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics \(FPOS\), COL/PL](#)

Being internationally vocal about ethics

- **Official Statistics as a cornerstone of democracy**

- Statistical data essential for:
 - evidence-based decision-making,
 - political accountability
- Attributes of official statistics:
 - transparent,
 - scientifically robust and
 - politically independent



- UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics
- **Robust legislation, common standards, international comparability**
- **Statistics → right to the truth.**

Ethics through internal lens

Official statistics in numbers



5 309

employment in official
statistics as of 31.12.2023



737

employment in Statistics Poland as of
31.12.2023



71

% of employed women in Statistics Poland
as of 31.12.2023



4,12

% of disabled persons in Statistics Poland as
of 31.12.2023*

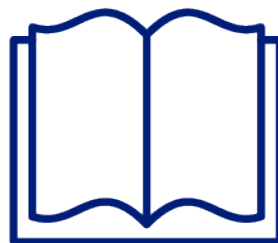
* according to the State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled People methodology

Our publications in 2023



291

publication titles



490

news releases



41

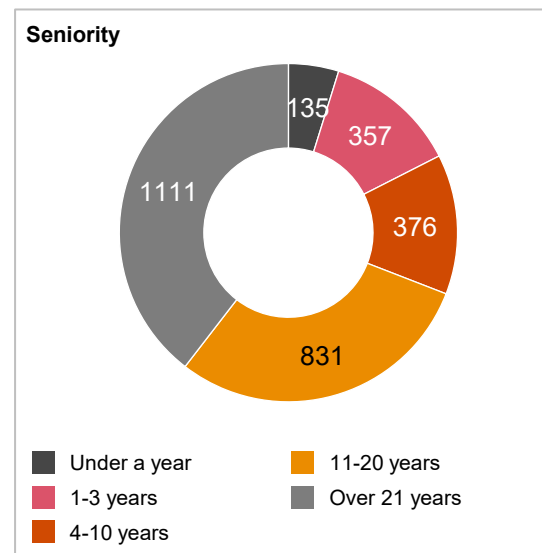
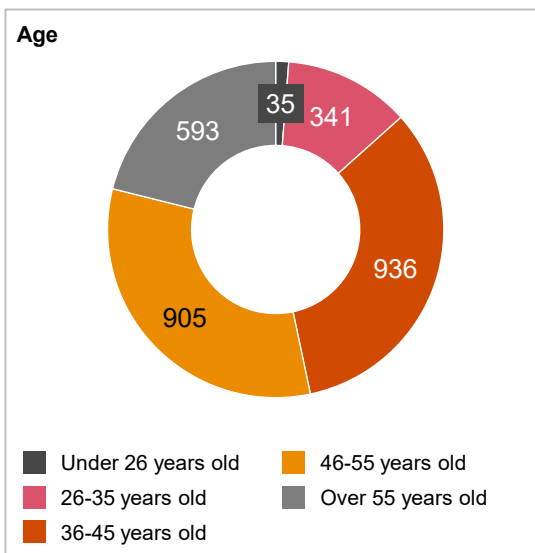
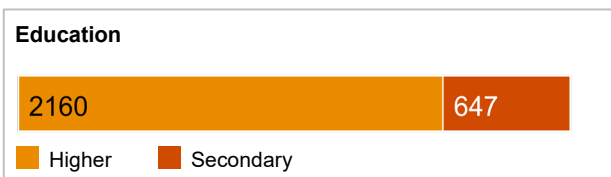
titles of
communications and
announcements

Staff survey conducted within Stat!Up project

A survey among all Statistics Poland's employees to determine:

- organizational culture
- work style of the employees
- eagerness to change in behaviors
- motivation
- communication style.

The survey collected 2 810 responses (~50% of all employees).

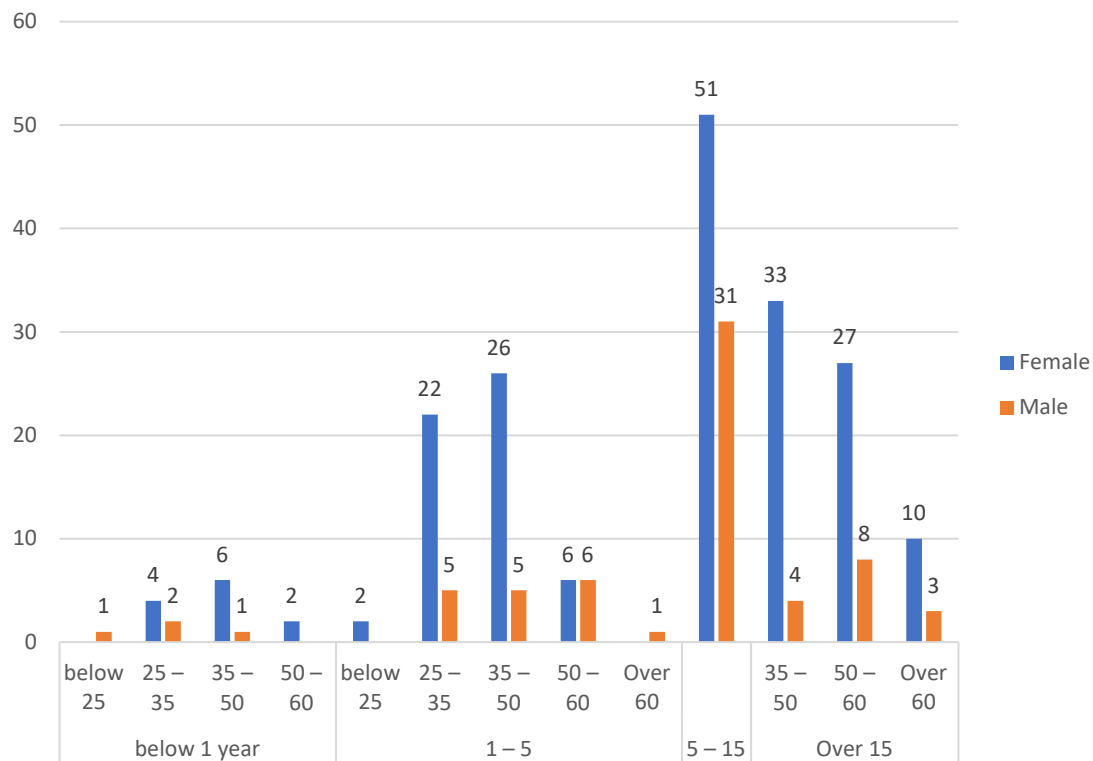


Staff survey on hybrid work conducted by trade unions acting at Statistics Poland – central office

- The purpose of the survey was to check staff opinion about hybrid work
- The survey was conducted:
20th February -17th March 2023
- The survey collected 380 answers (**~50% of all employees**), including:
 - 265 by electronic way
 - 115 by traditional way (paper).
- No statistical data about participants

Staff survey on social activity for the employees of Statistics Poland – central office

- The purpose of the survey was to gain staff opinions about social activities offered to them by Statistics Poland
- The survey was conducted: 19th October – 9th December 2022
- The survey collected 256 responses, (32% of all employees), including:
 - 206 responses by electronic way
 - 50 responses by traditional way



Staff survey on onboarding process at Statistics Poland – central office

The purpose of the survey was to monitor and evaluate onboarding process

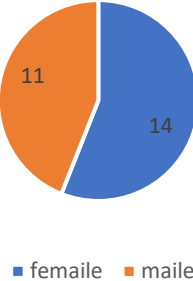
The survey was sent to new employees and was conducted 3 months after their employment in our Office

The survey was sent to 50 persons and collected 25 responses (50% of all new employees)

Participation in survey



Gender



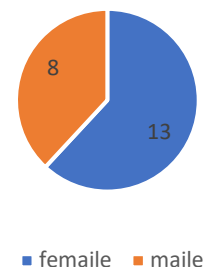
Staff survey on exit interview at Statistics Poland – central office

- The purpose of the survey was to find out reasons of leaving our Office by employees
- The survey was focused on employees leaving us (due to different reasons)
- The survey was sent to 44 persons and collected 21 responses (48% of all new employees)

Participation in survey



Gender



The guidelines for compliance with the rules of the civil service and on the principles of the civil service code of ethics

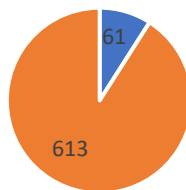
A member of the civil service corps, in the performance of his/her tasks, is guided by the law under civil service rules, which in particular consist of the following:

- 1) the principle of legality, rule of law, and increasing public confidence in public administration;
- 2) the principle of protection of human and civil rights;
- 3) the principle of selflessness;
- 4) the principle of openness and transparency;
- 5) the principle of secrecy protected by law;
- 6) the principle of professionalism;
- 7) the principle of liability for any action or failure to undertake thereof;
- 8) the principle of reasonable public funds management;
- 9) the principle of open and competitive recruitment procedures.

Staff survey on “Diagnosis of the level of integrity culture in the civil service” as an example of **fantastic failure** within internal communication

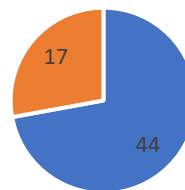
- The purpose of the survey was to know the level of integrity culture in the civil service
- The survey was sent to all employees (674) and was conducted from 16th to 30th May 2023
- The survey collected only 61 responses (**9,6% of all employees**)

Participation in survey



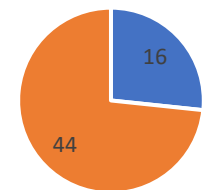
■ answers ■ lack of answers

Gender



■ female ■ male

Level of position



■ managers ■ employees

Staff survey on “Diagnosis of the level of integrity culture in the civil service” as an example of **fantastic failure** within internal communication

As a consequence of this fantastic failure, **a letter was sent to** managers and employees indicating that:

- only 61 persons, which means that only 9,6% of all employees from civil service corps took part in the survey;
- this result is unsatisfactory, having also in mind that the role of Statistics Poland is to conduct statistical surveys, thus our staff should be aware of the importance of response rates;
- we need deeper and deeper engagement of all staff in building our organisational culture, including also taking issues in our own hands to have influence on what is going on around us.

Summary and conclusions

- Ethics is a paramount concept, visible in many aspects of international statistical debate;
- Internally we do not have standardised policy of conducting staff surveys yet;
- It is not easy to compare given examples and draw systemic conclusions but to some extent it is possible;
- It is clear that internal communication including part of getting staff opinions is crucial and may bring benefits for all of us in:
 - ✓ building common trust,
 - ✓ changing our organisational culture,
 - ✓ knowing each other better,
 - ✓ fitting better solutions in i.e. CSR, social activities,
 - ✓ finding expectations of both sides: employees and employers
- Therefore: all the derivatives and examples of the practical handling of ethics are very much welcome to be adjusted/implemented at the internal level.

Thank You for listening! 😊

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