CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Workshop on Statistical Data Dissemination and Communication

25-27 June 2018, Cork, Ireland

REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP

1.   The Workshop on Statistical Data Dissemination and Communication was held in Cork, Ireland, from 25 to 27 June 2018. It was attended by representatives from the statistical offices of Albania, Argentina, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Namibia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, and Uzbekistan as well as by representatives from the European Central Bank, Eurostat, International Labour Organization (ILO), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Statistical Center for the Cooperation Council for the Arab Countries of the Gulf (GCC-Stat), the United Nations Statistics Division, and the University of Cambridge.

2.   The workshop was opened by remarks from Pádraig Dalton, Director General of CSO Ireland. In the afternoon of the first day, Professor David Spiegelhalter from the Winton Centre for Risk and Evidence Communication gave a key note speech on the Trustworthy communication of numbers and evidence.

3.   The workshop consisted of three sessions and covered the following substantive topics:
    (a) Communications Environment
    (b) Strategic Communications
    (c) Broadening the Target Audience

4.   Each session consisted of presentations and concluded with small group discussions about the main lessons learned and suggested topics for future work. The outcomes of these discussions are documented in Annex 1. Extra presentations on the first Hackathon organized in Poland and the European Statistics Competition were given by Łukasz Nowak (Statistics Poland) and Christine Kormann (Eurostat), respectively, on the second day. At the end of the workshop a voting round was organized to identify the most relevant topics for future work. Ellen Dougherty acted as chair of the workshop.

5.   In the afternoon of the second day, participants were divided into groups to work together to complete a task designed by the Disscomm Steering Group. The task was to edit and improve a visualization and talking points and tailor them to match a persona. Groups were given two hours to work on their output. The participants then voted for the best output.

6.   All abstracts, papers and presentations from the workshop are available at
https://statswiki.unece.org/x/RQGSCQ.

7.   Key items identified for future work include (see Annex 1 for more details):
    –   Brand explained – what is it, how do you build and maintain it?
    –   Cases studies on issue management (crises, misuse of data, etc.)
    –   Internal communication, examples of good practice
    –   Building the communications function (skills, training, structure, etc.)
    –   Actively engaging and partnering with different audiences
    –   Understand your audiences and how to evolve your products for them
    –   Making communications a strategy priority in your organization
    –   Showcasing failures
    –   Case studies on complex communication challenges
    –   Measuring success and impact
    –   Personas

Annex 1: Summary of discussions on substantive topics

Session 1: Communications Environment

1.   The session was organized by Terri Mitton (OECD) and included the following presentations:

- OECD: Key takeaways from the OECD conference on "Providing facts where opinions are formed: the role of official statistics in an evolving communication society"
- Statistics Canada: Testing a new approach to reach millennials
- European Central Bank: How can we ensure that good quality statistics will crowd out low quality data?
- Statistics Finland: Role of statistics in the world of alternative facts – lessons to learn and main future steps – Statistics Finland case
- Statistics Canada: The impact of the public environment on survey participation – A case study from the 2016 Census

2.   The following points were raised in the small group discussions as lessons learned and suggestions for future work:

- Good data is no longer enough; we are moving to sound bite statistics, where simple messages are important.
- Finding ways to increase trust in statistics is necessary.
- Many people think that the enemy is fake news, but what if people don't want the truth? How does this affect statistical organisations?
- In addressing data misinterpretation, it is interesting to share experiences from other countries, including reliance on partners to counter incorrect information and mitigation plans.
- Share tips on how to encourage statisticians to become better communicators.
- How to measure our success and impact in times of changing communications and make sure people understand and remember our data? It is interesting to think about what success looks like.
- How to measure policymakers' use of statistics?

Keynote speech:
3.   Professor David Spiegelhalter from the University of Cambridge gave a keynote speech on the trustworthy communication of numbers and evidence. He presented several examples highlighting the challenges in presenting numbers in a clear and precise way. Depending on the context and framing, numbers can be used to mislead or influence the emotions of the audience. Therefore, statistical institutions should aim to demonstrate trustworthiness by producing information that is accessible, useable, and assessable. The key is to provide relevant information at the right time and in the right form, using user-centred designs. When communicating uncertainty, Professor Spiegelhalter explained that communicating with confidence and using visual representations can help increase peoples' trust in the communicator.

Session 2: Strategic Communications

4.   The session was organized by Lukasz Augustyniak (Eurostat) and Kerstin Hänsel (Destatis, Germany) and included the following presentations:

- Statistics Belgium: Towards a new communication strategy for Statistics Belgium

- Statistics Finland: Strategic development of communication at Statistics Finland
- ONS, United Kingdom: Understanding our impact
- Statistical Office of Slovenia: How do we reach the general public without losing our credibility?
- INEGI, Mexico: The way Mexican society perceives INEGI
- Eurostat: Branding of official statistics in the European Statistical System: what do the users tell us?
- CSO Ireland: A brand for the Central Statistics Office; Developing the visual identity and the strategic importance of developing brand awareness across key audiences
- Eurostat: Strategic internal communication
- ISTAT, Italy: Internal Communication as a strategic tool
- Bureau of Labor Statistics, USA: Issue management and crisis communications
- EUSTAT – Basque Statistics Office, Spain: We tried hard, we got little. Things that didn't work, but won't stop us from trying

5.   The following points were raised in the small group discussions as lessons learned and suggestions for future work:

- Share strategies, guidelines, and concrete examples on communications, more specifically about social media and the responsible use of social media.
- Explore partnerships with the media: experiences, pitfalls, contingencies.
- Good communication requires two way engagement with external people, more listening to external conversation/events.
- NSOs could report back on the successes and lessons learnt from their campaigns/strategies.
- How to use and recruit statistics ambassadors? How to choose and train specialists?
- Training session on visualizations by an expert.
- How to manage crisis situations beyond just planning? In future, have exercises on crisis communication and share crisis plans.
- Translating strategy into culture change – how to change internal culture, share ways staff can reinforce the communication message.
- Importance of internal communication for buy-in: statisticians seeing their role as communicators, consistent messaging, image/branding.
- How communication sits in the organization chart and how to design optimal communication teams?

Session 3: Broadening the Target Audience

6.   This session was organized by Gabrielle Beaudoin (Statistics Canada) and included the following presentations:

- Bureau of Labor Statistics, USA: Personas: Their purpose, creation, and use
- ISTAT, Italy: Official statistics and social media: a challenge for NSIs to better communicate with all audience cohorts: Istat case history
- Eurostat: Engaging with users to improve the dissemination of European statistics
- Statistics Lithuania: Realities and Visions of Statistics Dissemination. Numbers for EMOJI Generation
- CSO Ireland: The development of Citizen Focused Products in the Central Statistics Office, Ireland
- Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel: Dissemination and Communication in the Digital Age: The Israeli Case - 70 Years of Official Statistics

7.   The following points were raised in the small group discussions as lessons learned and suggestions for future work:

- Learning about personas and usability tests through case studies. This could include their development and use, selling them internally, practical examples of how they can be used.
- Strategies and techniques to identify and segment audiences.
- How to evolve products to suit new audiences? It is important to match product to audience for maximum impact and effective use of resources.
- Creating specific messages to targeted channels.
- Adopt a proactive approach, communication starts where dissemination ends.

Annex 2: Agenda

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DAY 1 – Monday 25 June

09:00	Registration for the Workshop	
09:30	**Welcome and Opening** Remarks from Pádraig Dalton, Director General of CSO Ireland and UNECE	
	Session 1: Communications Environment Session Organizer: Terri Mitton (OECD)	
10:00	**Key takeaways from the OECD conference on "Providing facts where opinions are formed: the role of official statistics in an evolving communication society"** Martine Zaida (*OECD*)	WP. 1-1
10:20	**Testing a new approach to reach millennials** Lila Turenne (*Statistics Canada*)	WP. 1-2
10:40	**How can we ensure that good quality statistics will crowd out low quality data?** Per Nymand (*European Central Bank*)	WP. 1-3
11:00	Coffee Break	
11:20	**Role of statistics in the world of alternative facts – lessons to learn and main future steps – Statistics Finland case** Hannele Orjala (*Statistics Finland*)	WP. 1-4
11:40	**The impact of the public environment on survey participation – A case study from the 2016 Census** Gabrielle Beaudoin (*Statistics Canada*)	WP. 1-5
12:00	Small group discussions	
12:30	**Lunch Break**	
14:00	**Keynote speech: Trustworthy communication of numbers and evidence** David Spiegelhalter (*Winton Centre for Risk and Evidence Communication*)	
	Session 2: Strategic Communications Session organizers: Kerstin Hänsel (Destatis, Germany) and Lukasz Augustyniak (Eurostat)	
15:00	**Towards a new communication strategy for Statistics Belgium** Wendy Schelfaut (*Statistics Belgium*)	WP. 2-1
15:20	**Strategic development of communication at Statistics Finland** Mervi Ukkonen (*Statistics Finland*)	WP. 2-2
15:40	**Understanding our impact** Martin Nicholls (*ONS, United Kingdom*)	WP. 2-3
16:00	Coffee Break	
16:20	**How do we reach the general public without losing our credibility?** Martin Bajzelj (*Statistical Office of Slovenia*)	WP. 2-4
16:40	**The way Mexican society perceives INEGI** Silvia Marroquin *(INEGI, Mexico)*	WP. 2-5
17:00	Small group discussions	
17:30	**Closing Day 1**	

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DAY 2 – Tuesday 26 June

09:00	**Opening day 2 and recap day 1**	
	Session 2: Strategic Communications cont'd Session organizers: Kerstin Hänsel (Destatis, Germany) and Lukasz Augustyniak (Eurostat)	
09:10	**Branding of official statistics in the European Statistical System: what do the users tell us?** Christine Kormann, Baiba Grandovska (*Eurostat*)	WP. 2-6
09:30	**A brand for the Central Statistics Office; Developing the visual identity and the strategic importance of developing brand awareness across key audiences** Aeidin Sheppard (*CSO Ireland*)	WP. 2-7
09:50	**Strategic internal communication** Fiona Herdman-Smith (*Eurostat*)	WP. 2-8
10:10	Coffee Break	
10:30	**Internal Communication as a strategic tool** Cristiana Conti (*ISTAT, Italy*)	WP. 2-9
10:50	**Issue management and crisis communications** Michael Levi (*Bureau of Labor Statistics, USA*)	WP. 2-10
11:10	**We tried hard, we got little. Things that didn't work, but won't stop us from trying** Mikel Bilbao (*EUSTAT – Basque Statistics Office, Spain*)	WP. 2-11
11:30	Small group discussions	
12:00	**Lunch Break**	
13:30	**ShowMeData – first hackathon in Statistics Poland** Łukasz Nowak (*Statistics Poland*)	
13:50	**European Statistics Competition video presentation** Christine Kormann (*Eurostat*)	
	Special event: Session Organizers: The Disscomm Steering Committee	
14:10	**Introduction**	
14:30	**Team work**	
16:00	Coffee Break	
16:20	**Reporting back and vote for winner**	
16:50	**Announce winner**	
17:00	**Closing Day 2**	

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DAY 3 – Wednesday 27 June

09:00	**Opening day 3 and recap day 2**	
	Session 3: Broadening the Target Audience Session organizer: Gabrielle Beaudoin (Statistics Canada)	
09:10	**The WHO European Health Information Gateway** Omid Fekri (*World Health Organization*)	WP. 3-1
09:30	**Personas: Their purpose, creation, and use** Michael Levi (*Bureau of Labor Statistics, USA*)	WP. 3-2
09:50	**Official statistics and social media: a challenge for NSIs to better communicate with all audience cohorts: Istat case history** Giulia Peci, Anna Tononi and Michela Troia (*ISTAT, Italy*)	WP. 3-3
10:10	**Engaging with users to improve the dissemination of European statistics** Julia Urhausen (*Eurostat*)	WP. 3-4
10:30	Coffee Break	
10:50	**Realities and Visions of Statistics Dissemination. Numbers for EMOJI Generation** Raimonda Keburė (*Statistics Lithuania*)	WP. 3-5
11:10	**The development of Citizen Focused Products in the Central Statistics Office, Ireland** Ken Kennedy (*CSO Ireland*)	WP. 3-6
11:30	**Dissemination and Communication in the Digital Age: The Israeli Case - 70 Years of Official Statistics** Eran Ropalidis (*Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel*)	WP. 3-7
11:40	Small group discussions	
12:10	Summary of group discussions and voting round	
12:30	**Closing of Workshop**	

SOCIAL AGENDA:

Sunday 24 June at 8pm - Ice-breaker drinks at the Old Town Whiskey Bar at the Bodega

Monday 25 June at 8pm - Cork city walking tour

Tuesday 26 June at 7pm - Subscription dinner at Isaac's