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## **How can we ensure that good quality statistics will crowd out low quality data?**

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### ***Abstract***

Trustworthy statistics have a welfare-enhancing effects and constitute a knowledge base that is fundamental to credible and sound decision-making – for the collective benefit of citizens. All citizens are confronted with statistics throughout their life cycle, when navigating through an ever fast moving and complex world. Knowledge on statistics is indeed a mandatory and necessary skill for all of us.

Official and independently produced statistics - in line with the fundamental principles established first by the UN in 1994 - is a public good, which cannot be taken for granted and needs to be constantly defended. The value of official and independent statistics may be best illustrated by the increasing use and references to “Alternative facts”. The methodological of alternative facts are often unclear, opaque and are typically deliberately obscured. Even the attempt to transparently debate the methodology seems to be unwelcomed by those who bring them up. It even seems to be a free riding model with a deliberate attempt to misrepresent the reality without any accountability with the collective detriment effect for citizens and societies. By contrast, official statistics explains the measurement objectives, the underlying sources and the methodology applied and invites comments to continuously enhance the final outcome. Official statistics is about measuring the reality! It follows wherever possible international statistical standards - which are available as a public good, transparently, objectively and impartial. Who has the legitimate responsibility to safeguard the facts and figures and facilitating the use of good quality statistics for evidence based policy making? And thereby crowd out the use of low quality data by sentiment based policies.

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