

FOR PARTICIPANTS ONLY

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Santiago, Chile, 18-20 June 2003

**TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES  
OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS**

**Global review of the implementation of the Fundamental  
Principles of Official Statistics**

This document was prepared by the United Nations Statistical Commission.

03-6-354





## 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics

### *Global review of the implementation of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics*

The United Nations Statistical Commission, at its session in March 2003, asked the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) to conduct a global review of the implementation of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and to prepare a report to be discussed at the Commission's next session in March 2004. This session coincides with the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the Fundamental Principles by the Commission.<sup>1</sup> In this context we ask you to kindly fill out the attached questionnaire<sup>2</sup> as a self-assessment of how the Fundamental Principles are being applied in your country. As most of the questions are straightforward we expect that filling out the questionnaire should not take too much of your time. Please feel free to add any examples, comments or documentation to supplement your answers. Please note that the questionnaire will be kept confidential and that we will not reflect individual responses in the report to the Statistical Commission.

We have provided this questionnaire electronically and we would appreciate it if you could use the electronic form and send it to us by e-mail to Ms. Sabine Warschburger ([Warschburger@un.org](mailto:Warschburger@un.org)) by 30 June 2003. If you wish to fill out the paper form, please fax it to us at +1.212.963.9851 by the same date.

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<sup>1</sup> The UN Statistical Commission adopted the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics in a special session in April 1994. The text of the Fundamental Principles can be found on the UNSD website at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/goodprac/bpabout.asp> together with examples of good practices of their implementation. The Principles are also set out in the body of this questionnaire; the titles given to each of them were developed and added after the adoption of the Principles and are not a part of the Principles.

<sup>2</sup> We gratefully acknowledge the work of the IMF's Data Quality Assessment Framework and the Paris 21 Task Force on Statistical Capacity Building Indicators which have influenced the content of this questionnaire.

**General questions:**

**Country:**

**Name of Institution:**

**Postal Address:**

**Telephone:**

**Fax:**

**E-mail:**

**URL/Web address:**

**The contact person for this questionnaire is:**

**0.1 Have you previously been informed about the Fundamental Principles?**

- Yes*
- No*

**If yes, how have you been informed?**

- Statistical Commission Report 1994*
- UNSD / Regional Commissions Website*
- Presentation(s) at meeting(s)/conference(s)*
- Other ways. Please specify:*

**0.2 Are the directors of statistics of other entities that produce official statistics in your country aware of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics?**

- Yes*
- No*
- I do not know*

**Please provide any details here:**

**0.3 Is the person/office in the government to whom the NSO reports aware of the Fundamental Principles?**

- Yes*
- No*

**Please provide any details here:**

## Principle 1: Relevance, Impartiality and Equal Access

*“Official statistics provide an indispensable element in the information system of a society, serving the government, the economy and the public with data about the economic, demographic, social and environmental situation. To this end, official statistics that meet the test of practical utility are to be compiled and made available on an impartial basis by official statistical agencies to honor citizens’ entitlement to public information.”*

### 1.1 In your country, overall, this principle is:

- Fully implemented
- Largely implemented
- Somewhat implemented
- Not implemented

### 1.2 Has a ‘user council’ or other advisory body been established?

- Yes
- No

**If yes, please provide any details (e.g. on its mandate, on the composition/membership and on the frequency of meetings, etc.):**

**If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

### 1.3 Is regular feedback of user satisfaction with statistical products and services actively sought?

- Yes
- No

**If yes, please provide any details on how it is sought:**

**If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

### 1.4 Does the National Statistical Office have a (multi-) annual work programme?

- Yes
- No

**If yes, please provide any details here:**

**If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

**1.5 Is a systematic dissemination policy being pursued?**

- Yes*
- No*

**If yes, please provide any details here:**

**If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

**1.6 Do you produce catalogues of publications, documents, and other services?**

- Yes*
- No*

**If yes, please provide any details here:**

**If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

**1.7 Is the National Statistical Office free from political interference when preparing the annual and (multi-) annual work plans?**

- Yes*
- No*

**If yes, how is this ensured?**

**If no, please provide any examples/details here:**

**1.8 Does the National Statistical Office need political approval to publish statistical information?**

- Yes, always*
- Yes, in some cases*
- No, never*

**If yes, please provide any details here:**

**1.9 Does the National Statistical Office publish an advance release calendar announcing when the various sets of statistics will be published?**

- Yes*
- No*

**If yes, please provide any details on frequency and coverage here:  
If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

**1.10 Are statistics made available to all users at the same time?**

- Yes, always*
- Yes, in some cases*
- No, never*

**If yes, please provide any details here:  
If no, please provide any details, for example, if any government department receives statistics prior to their release:**

**1.11 If any government departments are given access to statistics prior to their release, is this publicly identified?**

- Yes, always*
- Yes, in some cases*
- No*
- Does not apply*

**If yes, please provide any details here:  
If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

**1.12 Please provide any additional comments on the implementation of principle 1 in general in your country:**

## Principle 2: Professional Standards and Ethics

*“To retain trust in official statistics, the statistical agencies need to decide according to strictly professional considerations, including scientific principles and professional ethics, on the methods and procedures for the collection, processing, storage and presentation of statistical data.”*

### 2.1 In your country, overall, this principle is:

- Fully implemented
- Largely implemented
- Somewhat implemented
- Not implemented

### 2.2 How satisfied are you with the number, skills and experience of your staff?

- Fully satisfied (number, skills and experience of the staff are adequate)
- Satisfied (number, skills and experience of the staff are not quite adequate)
- Not satisfied (number, skills and experience of the staff are inadequate)

**Please provide details on major shortcomings:**

### 2.3 Is the budget of the National Statistical Office for training of staff adequate?

- Yes
- No

### 2.4 Is the National Statistical Office free from political interference in relation to methodology and survey design?

- Yes
- No

**If yes, how is this ensured?**

**If no, please provide any examples/details here:**

### 2.5 Do you have guidelines on professional ethics for staff?

- Yes
- No

**If yes, please provide any details and how do you inform staff:**

**If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

### 2.6 Please provide any additional comments on the implementation of principle 2 in general in your country:



### **Principle 3: Accountability and Transparency**

*“To facilitate a correct interpretation of the data, the statistical agencies are to present information according to scientific standards on the sources, methods and procedures of the statistics.”*

**3.1 In your country, overall, this principle is:**

- Fully implemented*
- Largely implemented*
- Somewhat implemented*
- Not implemented*

**3.2 Do you provide an indication of the quality of data published, e.g. adequacy of the source data, sampling/non-sampling error, biases the data may have, response rates, non-response and its treatment, imputations?**

- Yes*
- No*

**If yes, please provide any details here:**

**If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

**3.3 Does the National Statistical Office routinely provide analytical/explanatory text with published statistics?**

- Yes*
- No*

**If yes, please provide any details here:**

**If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

**3.4 Please provide additional comments on the implementation of principle 3 in general in your country:**

## Principle 4: Prevention of Misuse

*“The statistical agencies are entitled to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics.”*

**4.1 In your country, overall, this principle is:**

- Fully implemented
- Largely implemented
- Somewhat implemented
- Not implemented

**4.2 Is the National Statistical Office entitled to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics?**

- Yes
- No

**If this has been done in the past, please provide examples here:**

**4.3 Does the National Statistical Office carry out activities to educate users, including the media?**

- Yes
- No

**If yes, please provide examples here:**

**If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

**4.4 Please provide additional comments on the implementation of principle 4 in general in your country:**

## Principle 5: Sources for Official Statistics

*“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.”*

**5.1 In your country, overall, this principle is:**

- Fully implemented
- Largely implemented
- Somewhat implemented
- Not implemented

**5.2 Does the National Statistical Office have access to administrative data?**

- Yes
- No

**Please provide any details here:**

**5.3 Does the National Statistical Office systematically work on improving timeliness?**

- Yes
- No

**If yes, please provide examples:**

**If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

**5.4 Does the National Statistical Office systematically work on reducing the reporting burden on respondents?**

- Yes
- No

**If yes, please provide examples:**

**If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles?**

**5.5 Does the National Statistical Office have a quality management programme for its statistical outputs?**

- Yes
- No

**If yes, please provide any details here:**

**If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

**5.6 Please provide additional comments on the implementation of principle 5 in general in your country:**

## Principle 6: Confidentiality

*“Individual data collected by statistical agencies for statistical compilation, whether they refer to natural or legal persons, are to be strictly confidential and used exclusively for statistical purposes.”*

### 6.1 In your country, overall, this principle is:

- Fully implemented
- Largely implemented
- Somewhat implemented
- Not implemented

### 6.2 How well developed are practices to prevent disclosure of individual data?

- Highly developed (no individual data is ever disclosed)
- Developed (usually individual data is not disclosed, but there have been exceptions)
- Undeveloped (individual data is frequently disclosed)

**Please provide examples**

- a) of practices that are in place to prevent disclosure and**
- b) of occasions where individual data have been disclosed or were used for non-statistical purposes:**

### 6.3 What is your practice in granting access to micro data from official statistics for statistical purposes (e.g. to researchers)?

### 6.4 Please provide additional comments on the implementation of principle 6 in general in your country:

## Principle 7: Legislation

*“The laws, regulations and measures under which the statistical systems operate are to be made public.”*

**7.1 In your country, overall, this principle is:**

- Fully implemented
- Largely implemented
- Somewhat implemented
- Not implemented

**7.2 Do you have a general statistics law?**

- Yes
- No

**If yes, what does the law cover?**

**If no, on what basis (e.g. decree, etc.) is the National Statistical Office operating?**

**7.3 Generally, are respondents obliged by law to respond to statistical enquiries from the National Statistical Office?**

- Always
- In many cases
- Sometimes
- Never

**Please provide any details here:**

**7.4 In a statistical survey, are respondents informed about the nature of the survey and their rights?**

- Yes
- No

**If yes, please provide any details here:**

**If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

**7.5 To whom/what office within the government does the head of the National Statistical Office report?**

**7.6 Please provide additional comments on the implementation of principle 7 in general in your country:**

## Principle 8: National Coordination

*“Coordination among statistical agencies within countries is essential to achieve consistency and efficiency in the statistical system.”*

**8.1 In your country, overall, this principle is:**

- Fully implemented
- Largely implemented
- Somewhat implemented
- Not implemented

**8.2 Are there any other producers of official statistics other than the NSO in your country?**

- Yes
- No

**If yes, please provide examples here:**

**8.3 Are there organizational arrangements to coordinate data collection for statistics at the national level?**

- Yes
- No

**If yes, please provide examples of such arrangements here:**

**8.4 Are there organizational arrangements for setting statistical standards (terminology, definitions, classifications, geographical classifications, methods, sampling frames etc.) at the national level?**

- Yes
- No

**If yes, please provide examples for such arrangements here:**

**8.5 Please provide additional comments on the implementation of principle 8 in general in your country:**

## Principle 9: Use of International Standards

*“The use by statistical agencies in each country of international concepts, classifications and methods promotes the consistency and efficiency of statistical systems at all official levels.”*

### 9.1 In your country, overall, this principle is:

- Fully implemented
- Largely implemented
- Somewhat implemented
- Not implemented

### 9.2 Do you apply international standards in national accounting/other economic fields?

- Yes, as they are
- Yes, adapted to national circumstances
- No, not at all

**If yes, please provide any details here:**

**If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

### 9.3 Do you apply international standards in censuses and demographic statistics?

- Yes, as they are
- Yes, partly
- No, not at all

**If yes, please provide any details here:**

**If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

### 9.4 Do you apply international standards in social statistics?

- Yes, fully
- Yes, partly
- No, not at all

**If yes, please provide any details here:**

**If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

### 9.5 Please provide additional comments on the implementation of principle 9 in general in your country:

## Principle 10: International Cooperation

*“Bilateral and multilateral cooperation in statistics contributes to the improvement of systems of official statistics in all countries.”*

**10.1 Has the National Statistical Office been engaged in any international cooperation projects in the last five years?**

**As a receiver?**

- Yes*  
 *No*

**As a donor?**

- Yes*  
 *No*

**If yes, is there a special unit in the National Statistical Office responsible for organizing co-operation activities? Please provide details/examples:**

**If no, please give the main reasons/obstacles:**

**10.2 In your country, has international cooperation in statistics contributed to improving your system of official statistics?**

- Considerably*  
 *Somewhat*  
 *Little*  
 *Not at all*  
 *Not applicable*

**10.3 Please provide additional comments on the implementation of principle 10 in general in your country:**

=====  
**How long did it take you to fill out this questionnaire?**  
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**Please send your responses to Ms. Sabine Warschburger:**

**E-Mail:**      [Warschburger@un.org](mailto:Warschburger@un.org)

**Fax:**          +1.212.963.9851  
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**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION!**