

The Challenges to the Independence of Official Statistics

Statistics Canada Case Study

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STATISTICS CANADA
ONE HUNDRED YEARS AND COUNTING

STATISTIQUE CANADA
CENT ANS BIEN COMPTÉS



Statistics
Canada

Statistique
Canada

Canada

Pre-2010 Independence by convention

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*Minister, as government representative, defines the “what”
Chief Statistician defines the “how”*

- **Statistics Canada**
 - reports to a Minister
 - is part of the Innovation, Science and Economic Development portfolio
- The Chief Statistician is the Deputy Minister
- The *Statistics Act*
 - sets the Chief Statistician’s mandate
 - is silent on the established convention



2010

Government decision on the “how”



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Impact

- Continuity and quality of data put into question
- Basis for evidence put at risk

Lesson Learned

- Need to make explicit what had been by convention

2015 Minister's Mandate

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Reinstate the census long-form

Reinforce independence through updated legislation

...“I will expect you to work with your colleagues and through established legislative, regulatory, and Cabinet processes, including our first Budget, to deliver on your top priorities:

- Restore the long-form census and update legislation governing Statistics Canada to reinforce the institution's independence.” ...

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada

4



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2016-2017

Formalizing independence

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Legislating what was previously by convention

Preserving the integrity of the data

Retaining public trust

- **Authorities**
- **Issuing directives**
- **Transparency**
- **Appointment of the Chief Statistician**
- **Canadian Statistics Advisory Council**

5



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Challenges



- Maintaining trust
 - *renewal*
 - *democratizing data*
- Independence and relevance
 - finding the right balance
 - *building partnerships*
 - *transparency and accountability*

THANK YOU!

For more information, please visit
www.statcan.gc.ca

MERCI!

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www.statcan.gc.ca

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