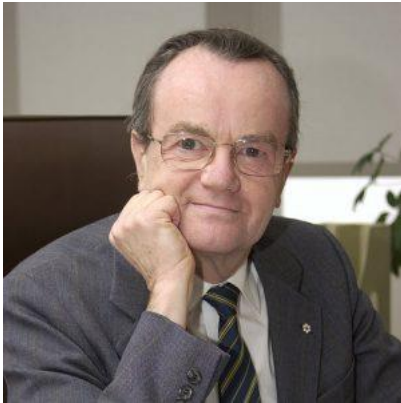


Let's give the floor to Ivan Fellegi ...



An excellent way to illustrate the relevance to day of the FPOS is to quote the introducing remarks made by Ivan Fellegi during a conference on population censuses held in Budapest in 2011.

Ivan Fellegi, Chief Statistician of Canada from 1985 to 2008, attended this conference shortly after an unfortunate decision of the Canadian Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, to get rid of the long questionnaire of the 2010 population census against the opinion of statisticians and economists.

Ivan Fellegi said

Let me start with an anecdote.

Some 20 years ago I was attending a UN conference of heads of statistical agencies. The Soviet block has just recently collapsed and we were all seized by the urgent need to help the so-called “transition countries” to adapt to the standards and values of developed democratic countries. Someone had the brainwave of committing to paper a codification of long held basic values that we all shared. The result came to be known ... as the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics

Ivan Fellegi continued to say

I remember my reactions at the time: first of all, Canada certainly does not need them. More generally I thought that, whatever the country, it is too bad if one has to spell out black on white these basic truths. However, I understood that the “transition countries” did not as yet have the time to develop the broadly shared values that in developed countries have already served as the underpinnings of official statistics for decades. So I went along with the idea.

Little did I guess that twenty years later I will be referring to them as something to which Canada has to re-dedicate itself.