

54th session of the United Nation Statistical Commission
Side event organized by Dr. Misha Belkindas , President of IAOS

United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics
History of creation, relevance today, mission for tomorrow
– a message from the creators

**The role of FPOS in the times of political, social,
and economic transformations and shocks -
advantures of an European official statistician**

Prof. dr. hab. Józef Oleński

Center of Transborder and Euroregional Statistics

Statistical Office in Rzeszow, Poland

Prof.dr.hab. Józef Oleński



„Spiritual father” of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics

From the publication „The United Nations Statistical Commission at 70 years”

- **Lecturer and professor of the Warsaw University 1969 - 2010**
- **2011 – 2018 - High School of Economics and Technology in Jarosław, Lazarski University - professor,**
- **Experience in official statistics:**
 - **1974-1991 Research and Development Center of Statistics, CSO Poland - deputy and director**
 - **1992-1995 – CSO, Poland - President**
 - 1994 chair of the UNSC Session, member of the Bureau of the UN CES
 - **1996-2007 – National Bank of Poland, advisor to the Governor**
 - **2007-2011 – CSO Poland - President**
 - **2018 - now – The Center of Transborder Studies and Euroregional Statistics, Statistical Office in Rzeszów, Poland**

Origins of the FPOS

- **23 February 1990: Consultation of the CES**
 - need of new „statistical convention”
 - J-L Bodin has saved the idea of the FPOS
- 22-23 May 1990: Workshop on transition and its consequences for statistics organised by the statistical division of the UN/ECE
 - Working draft of „statistical conventions – **49 principles**
- 11-15 June 1990 38th session of CES –
 - Expert group for FPOS
- March 1991 – seminar of CES in Budapest –
 - new version of FPOS – **10 principles**
- **June 1991 – adoption of the FPOS by the CES**

FPOS for transition countries and „new” sovereign states

- **Legal basis for new statistical laws** in former „centrally planned economies”
 - coordinating role of national statistical office; one program covering statistical
- **Establishing new relations between statistical offices and other governments**
 - independence of official statistics on administrative information systems – also „inside” the governments
- **Harmonized documenting of official statistical activities for all stakeholders** -
 - Statistical offices, central banks, ministries, other producers of official statistical data

Role of the FPOS universal ?

- **For „old” market – driven economies**
 - The harmonization of national statistical systems based on the FPOS is the prerequisite of international coherence and interchange of statistical data
- **For international organizations**
 - Building global system of official statistics in modern ICT environment – integration of national systems on the basis of the FPOS principles
 - Progress based on the implementation of best practices
 - Deep international harmonization of methods and metadata

Problems of adoption of most sensitive principles

- **Principle 1.**
 - **Relevance: *make data more relevant***
 - The users may not understand properly the sense of statistical data, especially macroeconomic aggregates and composite indicators,
 - Need of teaching the institutional users what data are relevant in their concrete usage situations
 - **Aequal access**
 - Some governments demand the priority service.
 - The „embargo problem” for special users

Problems of adoption of most sensitive principles

- **Principle 3.**
 - **Prevention of misuse**
 - Information on the misuse of data should be given to the public
 - The criticism of misuses should concern also non official statistical data disseminated to the public
 - Need of education of the users of statistical data how to identify the misuses and how to avoid them

Problems of adoption of most sensitive principles

- **Principle 5.**

- Sources of official statistics

- All owners and managers of data should be aware that they are OBLIGED to make their information resources available
 - They should make their data files easily accessible for statistical surveys: especially big data
 - In modern ICT official statistics should switch from statistical questionnaires to administrative and primary registers, especially „big data”

Problems of adoption of most sensitive principles

- **Principle 6.**
 - **Confidentiality**
 - Statistical confidentiality should be respected as unconditional by all governments and other institutions
 - The violation of the confidentiality means the destruction of respective domains of statistics
 - Governments, officials and scientists often do not understand the sense and importance of statistical confidentiality
 - The principle of statistical confidentiality needs more detailed interpretation for micro and small economies, local and regional statistics and for specific branches of economy

Conclusions

1. Official statisticians and statistical offices – as a rule - know the FPOS and accept them as obligatory foundations of their activities
2. However other producers of official statistics often do not know it or they assume that the FPOS do not apply to them
3. The producers and disseminators of crypto-official data and other producers of statistical data often are ignoring the ISI Code of Conduct and the SFPO

Conclusions

4. All stakeholders of production, dissemination and use of official and pseudo-official statistical data should know, understand and obey the SFPO and ISI Code principles
5. International organizations and their statistical divisions should actively help national statistical offices and services to implement the FPOS and to mobilize the governments to respect them. Special help may be needed to microeconomies.

Thank you

