

Strategy 2022

Revised



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PREFACE

The strategy is an important management tool for Statistics Denmark. The usual continuous strategy process implies that we present a new updated strategy for 2025 before the end of 2020. Progress in the implementation of the present strategy 2022 and the development in Statistics Denmark's framework condition also suggest that we follow the usual process.

However, we live in unusual times. On the one hand, COVID-19 has delayed the usual process, and on the other hand, it has enhanced the need for an updated strategy. This is especially due to the real progress – triggered by the crisis – in the production of statistics as well as the access to new data sources. At the same time, a new Director General took over in Statistics Denmark on 1 October 2020, which is why it could be argued that we should postpone the strategy update for a while.

Against this background, we decided to make a limited, technical update of Strategy 2022. Within a year or two, with the new Director General in place, we will give the strategy a major overhaul. The technical update is highly focused on background, goals and initiatives within the main areas of the strategy, whereas we have not revisited the strategy framework in terms of mission, vision, values and main areas, and it is summarised in the introduction.

So far, the main strategy has been supported by sub-strategies in the fields of HR, IT, Communication, Big Data and Externally funded activities. Among these areas, we urgently need to revise the IT strategy and have initiated this. As for the other areas, we intend to update the sub-strategies in the wake of the future revision of the main strategy.

All that remains is for us to wish you happy reading of the technical update of Statistics Denmark's main strategy.

INTRODUCTION

The technical nature of this strategy update will inherently not involve an update of the framework. We will revisit it when making a major revision of the strategy. The technical update in the subsequent sections includes background, goals and initiatives within each of the five main areas identified in Strategy 2022.

Mission Statistics Denmark's *mission* is presented in Strategy 2022 as elucidating the development of society with relevant facts and figures for the purpose of providing knowledge to create a basis for debate, research and analysis, so that decisions can be made on the basis of trustworthy and objective information at all levels of Danish society. Or briefly put:

Statistics Denmark provides knowledge to underpin decisions, debate and research

Vision The *vision* for the strategy period is that:

Statistics Denmark is developing its position as a central generator of data and knowledge enhancing the understanding of social conditions

The emphasis on knowledge, and not just figures, has existed since Strategy 2020, and it reflects the bilateral relationship between figures and knowledge: To make relevant statistics, it is necessary to have knowledge and understanding of social conditions, while producing statistics provides considerable knowledge. Accordingly, it is important that Statistics Denmark does not only make its figures available, but equally important its knowledge.

Challenges To develop its position as a central generator of data and knowledge, Statistics Denmark must address a number of *challenges* that require continued changes within all of the five main areas of the strategy:

- The changing and increasingly digital media picture with a heightened threat from misinformation and 'alternative facts'.
- Changed requirements to the statistics from changes in the economy caused by digitisation and other technological development as well as globalisation, the development of which is now uncertain in various respects.
- Development in the possibilities of statistics production and data collaboration created by the extensive digitisation of society.
- Increased demand for new statistics and knowledge as a reflection of the public debate, changed political prioritisations and the development in market-driven demand.

Values and management The realisation of the vision in an environment characterised by these challenges call for dynamic adjustments in Statistics Denmark. In Strategy 2022, it was emphasised that a number of new values, such as adaptive capacity, a holistic approach and openness, were critical in this environment. In 2020, Statistics Denmark established a common management framework. The new values should be seen as a supplement to - not a replacement of - the classic values built by the institution throughout its 170 years of service: independence, credibility, data security, and user orientation.

Based on the above mission, vision, challenges and values, the following sections present an updated description of the background for each main area of the strategy that gave grounds for updated goals and initiatives.

1. SERVICES

The core task of Statistics Denmark is to produce and disseminate statistics documenting social and economic conditions. The statistics must be of high quality, meet the user needs, be as smooth as possible for the reporting parties, and be published as quickly as possible.

Some of the most important conditions of achieving our vision are improved awareness of the needs for factual knowledge in society and a stronger ability to meet these needs. This implies that we strengthen our constant dialogue and cooperation with users and that we are able to identify their needs and respond to changes in these. We must participate in forums frequented by users, and contribute to public debates where and when it is of relevance.

We have developed comprehensive statistical knowledge and data, which we must bring into play to the greatest extent possible. We will do so e.g. through our dissemination, which explains and puts the statistics into perspective and pinpoints the correlations across the statistics, thereby adding value to the statistics.

An important task is also to accommodate special statistical needs against payment. In this respect, we must persistently improve our efforts to identify and cover these new needs in contact and dialogue with our customers.

The research community is one of the most important groups of users of our statistics. This is also where a significant part of the innovation in social and health sciences takes place, from which Statistics Denmark can benefit. As the central statistics producer, we do not only have an obligation to society, but also in our interest to support the use of our data for research. We are also responsible for ensuring that new achievements in the statistical domain are of use to research and analysis.

Our dissemination must make the most of the digital development, e.g. by using visual, interactive and dynamic publishing formats. We must convert our publishing formats so that users with different backgrounds can combine the content that is relevant to them and continuously keep themselves up-to-date on the latest statistics. The new formats must allow flexible development to cater for changes in needs and technological potential.

Services

- we add more value to the statistics for our users

a. Adaptation to new and changing user needs

- Stronger focus on statistics on the population's living conditions, e.g. new types of employment in the labour market, conditions for families with children, migration and regional differences, and new sustainable development indicators.
- Stronger focus on documentation of the Danish economy and economic relationships in a globalised world, the relationship between the environment and the economy, including the circular economy, as well as how the digital transition and economy can be reflected in the statistics.
- Earlier publication of selected statistics as well as 'quick release' of aggregate key figures from selected statistics.
- Establishment of a business data warehouse, where de-identified information can be linked at the level of businesses across the statistics.
- Improved dissemination of statistical sources, methods, quality, limitations and reservations.

b. Greater contribution to the public debate

- Contributions in the news media, at professional events, on social media and in our own media where we describe and analyse social and economic trends of current interest based on statistics.
- Use of our expert knowledge in the press and in the media, e.g. via spokespersons.
- Experimental statistics, often high-frequency data, to meet sudden needs of facts in support of current public debate.

c. Greater relevance of the statistics published through analyses

- Stronger focus on correlations between statistics, e.g. with combined monitoring of cyclical fluctuations or combined statistics on social, economic and environmental sustainability.
- Stronger focus on not just averages and totals for statistical variables, but the entire distribution across individuals, enterprises or geographic entities.
- Analyses of current social and economic topics across statistics.

d. Expansion of externally funded activities in response to market opportunities and needs

- Raise awareness of the statistical services that are available against payment.
- Dialogue with existing and potential customers about new services.

e. Enhanced relationship with the research community

- Cooperation on developing and optimising the data infrastructure of social and health sciences.
- Collaborative project work with Danish and foreign research environments and greater involvement in higher education.

f. Take full advantage of digital communication potential

- Better use of our knowledge about users in the development of our communication of statistics.
- Examine user needs and the potential for the next generation of the statistics bank.
- Creation of thematic entries on our website with requested subjects and a more intuitive subject-based navigation at dst.dk and Statbank Denmark.

- Increased use of visual and interactive dissemination to give users greater benefit from the use of statistics and other services.

2. PROCESSES

We will focus more attention on optimising our processes based on a systemic prioritisation to deliver more and better statistics using fewer resources. The production system must efficiently support the core task and be resistant against outside influence. At the same time, the system must be a flexible platform for the development of new products and services for our users. An overall management of new projects must ensure efficient use of resources and a well-coordinated development of products, methods, work processes and IT systems.

We prioritise innovation in our work processes to enhance quality and efficiency. We will pay particular attention to maximum use of standard solutions, where we solve kindred tasks, such as quality assurance of received data, consistently across statistical domains. In addition, we will prioritise increased automation and make the most of various modern technologies to optimise our workflows. Finally, we must improve our ability to experiment, i.e. quickly and at low cost translate new ideas into concrete statistics and systems.

To a great extent, the quality of the statistics depends on the data reported by the largest and most complex enterprises. The recently established work process ensures that data for the largest enterprises is correct and consistent across statistical domains. We must develop this process together with enterprises, so that we gain a correct holistic understanding of their global business models. This work process will e.g. contribute to reduce the extent of revisions in the national accounts.

Reports from the municipalities in the social field via changing system suppliers require a special effort to ensure data quality and coverage from all of Denmark's municipalities.

Employees and managers together ensure a stable ongoing high-quality production, efficiency and user satisfaction while realising the strategic development goals. For this reason, it is decisive that we, as a workplace, are able to recruit and retain employees with the right competences and to develop these further. We want the cooperation between employees and management to be characterised by trust, appreciative management, good communication and focus on the core task.

To support the strategy, we have developed a HR strategy that sets milestones for the employee aspects of the strategy. Correspondingly, an IT strategy sets goals for the technological and system-related improvement of efficiency.

Processes

- we invest in efficient processes and employee development

a. Better quality management

- Regular quality assessments of all statistics.
- Incorporation of quality targets for the sub-processes in the production.
- Standardised practice for preparing statistics revisions.
- Systematic use of user feedback in all process stages, where relevant.

b. Innovation in the production processes with focus on standardisation and automation

- Full implementation of a standard system for prioritised troubleshooting in the received data and shutdown of old systems.
- Systematic use of the international Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM), and best practice for business processes.
- Implementation of new technologies to access, store and analyse high-volume data sets.

c. Focus on using resources where the potential for quality improvement is best

- Develop and upgrade IT systems in central statistical domains, e.g. the national accounts, government finances, labour market and price indices as well as business reporting and geodata.
- Improve collaboration with major Danish enterprises with global activities to ensure consistent data.
- Improve collaboration and dialogue with municipalities on social reporting.
- Strengthen the profit taking on major strategic projects and make resource management efficient across the organisation via centrally coordinated project and portfolio management.
- Continuously reassess products and processes for improved efficiency and productivity to meet new user needs.
- Pursue quality improvements in the quarterly and provisional annual national accounts to reduce the adjustments of the interim audits.

d. Innovative employees in an attractive workplace

- Recruitment and retention of employees by means of employment and working conditions that match the public sector and provide good professional and career development opportunities.
- Competence development in support of our strategic goals.
- Ways of working and employee involvement to ensure a high level of responsibility and influence on local execution of tasks and a holistic development.

3. DATA SOURCES

For the past 25 years, Statistics Denmark has made targeted efforts to reduce the reporting workload on businesses, authorities and citizens. Even though the measurable workload for the businesses was more than halved in the period, businesses still consider it significant. For this reason, we will continue to focus on ways to minimise the reporting workload – and on communicating our initiatives in this area.

The reporting workload can be further reduced by developing more user-friendly and efficient data reporting solutions and by promoting solutions that further automates transmission of statistical data to Statistics Denmark from the systems operated by businesses and public authorities. The efficiency enhancement of the data reporting solutions must also increasingly prevent or capture errors in connection with the actual reporting or transmission of data, so that there is no need to inconvenience the reporting parties again for correction of errors. We will also make efforts to develop new data reporting solutions adapted to the various data reporting situations that exist for different businesses and authorities.

New EU legislation for statistics on the trading of goods between EU countries (Intrastat) will give us access to other countries' data on exports to Denmark. It is expected to gradually lead to the exemption of small and medium-sized businesses from reporting their imports from the other EU countries.

Denmark is among the leading countries in terms of reusing public registers and other central sources of structured information as a basis for statistics, and new possible uses are regularly developing, from authorities and from administrators of business data in various industries. We will increase focus on access to these data sources through strategic alliances with data suppliers. We will do so to gain access to new types of information with high coverage, quality and consistency.

The drastic development in the volume of digital data creates new potential for the statistics. It is an important challenge to identify new types of data, including Big Data, suited for official statistics, and to incorporate them subsequently in the ongoing production or in experimental statistics and new products, where they supplement or replace traditional data sources. In cooperation with the new private data suppliers and the research community, we will uncover ways to harness the new data sources in a safe and efficient manner, improving the statistics and – if possible – reducing the reporting workload. Correspondingly, we must work to put into action the recommendations from the project on automatic business reporting under the common public-sector digital strategy.

Data sources

- we are at the forefront of new data reporting solutions and data sources

a. Reduction of the reporting workload

- Obtaining a marked reduction of the reporting workload for the statistics on Denmark's foreign trade in goods within the EU (Intrastat).
- Optimisation of communication with and support of enterprises in the standard form-based data collection in order to reduce the workload experienced and to increase the internal efficiency.
- Periodic review of the reporting requirements for selected statistics based on access to new data sources and production methods for the purpose of reducing sample sizes, frequency, scope of questions, and standards of accuracy.
- Testing of new ways to give reporting businesses easy access to statistical output of relevance to them.

b. Utilisation of new technical potential in the data collection

- Extended use of online troubleshooting in interactive data reporting solutions and automatic correction of errors of minor importance in raw data without contacting the reporting party a second time.
- Development of new user-friendly digital reporting solutions that adapt to mobile digital tools used in the enterprises.
- Development of system-to-system solutions in several areas, including automatic data reception from e.g. the municipalities' financial and case management systems; from standard invoicing and bookkeeping systems of private companies; location data from transport operations etc.

c. Strategic alliances with central data suppliers and register owners

- Concrete agreements and regular follow-up with suppliers of administrative data, e.g. the Danish tax authority, the Danish Health Data Authority, central ministries, other government agencies and municipalities.
- Cooperation with the municipalities on a higher quality of data in the social domain with focus on standardisation of requirements, solutions and procedures.
- Cooperation with central operators on access to new data sources, including Big Data, with potential use in the statistics production (e.g. the energy sector, the transport sector and telecommunications companies).

d. Utilisation of new types of data and data sources

- Implementation of Statistics Denmark's action plan for utilisation of Big Data and other new types of data.
- Use of new public data sources, e.g. fleet management data and geodata for socio-economic cluster analyses.
- Use of new private data sources, e.g. bar code data for the retail trade statistics, credit card information for tourism and balance of payments statistics, telecommunications data for commuting and tourism statistics, data from GPS- and satellite-based technology for agricultural statistics,

and data from ticketing systems for statistics on performing arts and commuting.

- Make more use of data that is publicly available on the Data Distribution Platform or on the internet.

4. DATA SECURITY

Data security is a top priority for Statistics Denmark – our activity depends entirely on the confidence of citizens and businesses in our ability to manage data. Concurrently with the increasing digitalisation of society, there is a growing risk that third parties obtain unauthorised access to confidential data.

To be able to compile statistics, we collect and generate large quantities of confidential information as a basis for the statistics. Consequently, Statistics Denmark is in possession of large quantities of confidential data and accordingly, we are obliged to take all necessary measures to ensure that citizens and businesses can rely on our systems. At the same time, we must ensure that data is made useful for statistics and analyses, e.g. by researchers and by ministries. Statistics Denmark's special expertise in the field of data security together with a number of our other competences can contribute to obtain advantages from public sharing of data without jeopardising data security.

Handling data reported by citizens and businesses in a confidential manner has always been part of Statistics Denmark's DNA. We regularly update our data confidentiality policy and information security policy to respond to new challenges. We secure our data by using high security standards, and independent experts continuously check our technical security and data handling procedures to ensure that we protect ourselves against outside network attacks to the greatest extent possible. We ensure that we can receive confidential data from reporting parties and central data suppliers via secure digital channels.

When we exchange identifiable data within the European statistical system, data confidentiality is an essential prerequisite. EU legal acts dealing with the exchange of identifiable business data will be implemented in the years to come. This is done to ease the reporting workload, increase the quality of statistics and to reduce the resource requirements for producing statistics. Data exchange is carried out in a manner so that the reporting parties can continue to feel safe submitting data to us, and it will only take place in areas where the benefits of data exchange in terms of quality, reporting workload and costs are clear. Statistics Denmark makes a point of documenting its data and IT security, e.g. through independent certifications. Data ethics is a keystone for Statistics Denmark

Data security

- we take good care of data in the digital world

a. Highest data handling standards

- Keen focus on data security by means of courses and other awareness activities for Statistics Denmark's employees and external users of data.
- Security routines defining, securing and controlling access and use of data by our employees and external users.
- Procedures and data security rules in relation to GDPR / the Danish Data Protection Act and guides from e.g. the Danish Data Protection Agency and Eurostat.
- Observance of data ethics principles and attention to the anonymity of citizens and enterprises.

b. Protecting the physical security of our data

- Securing that all data reception happens via secure channels.
- The internal data processing happens to the greatest extent possible based on pseudonymised data.
- Internal supervision of the processing of confidential data via registration of data at the input stage, logging of the data processing and regular spot-checking.
- Clarification of security in connection with the potential use of cloud solutions.
- ISO 27001 certification and renewal of the Eurostat certification.

c. Contribute to improve the efficiency of the public sector

- In cooperation with other authorities, we will examine the legal, administrative, technical and financial framework for engaging the competences of Statistics Denmark, also in the field of data protection, to contribute to the collection, quality assurance and sharing of data for administrative purposes.
- Participation in the cooperation with ministries, government agencies and municipalities on efficient public quality assurance, application and sharing of data as part of the common public-sector digital strategy.
- Clarification of secure use of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) methods in connection with statistical production and analyses.
- Clarification of the opportunities to cooperate across authorities and sectors on capacity for secure storage and processing of high volumes of data e.g. on supercomputers.

5. STATISTICAL COOPERATION

Statistics Denmark is the central authority for producing Danish statistics. We have a special obligation to take a leading role in ensuring that official Danish statistics adhere to established professional standards to constitute a reliable and relevant basis for decision-makers, research and general public debate.

We are legally required to coordinate Denmark's contribution to the European production of statistics, to prepare guidelines that ensure a high quality, and to supervise compliance with these. We are making efforts to introduce procedures for 'official statistics' for the remaining national statistics in order to ensure that these statistics also comply with common standards of e.g. independence, quality and data confidentiality.

We enter into partnerships and make our expertise available to other public authorities and the research community through development and maintenance of registers and databases. We are involved in efforts to set up data warehouses in important statistical domains, most recently in collaboration with the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science, the Danish Ministry of Taxation and the Danish research community. Moreover, we aim to expand our cooperation with ministries and government agencies, which are facing higher standards of evidence-based policy formulation. An important element here is the development and dissemination of the possibility for the analysis departments of public authorities to make analyses based on anonymised data (under a scheme for ministries, government agencies etc. created by Statistics Denmark).

Nearly all official statistics are based on international guidelines for the sake of comparability. We represent Danish views in the EU legislative process, in the most significant development projects and other international decision forums where the subject-related guidelines are determined — to take due account of the needs of Danish users.

The majority of the statistical production is subject to EU legislation. The resources needed to comply with new EU legislation continue to increase. We promote Danish statistical requirements by exerting strong influence on the work performed in the EU system, establishing sustainable and cost-effective solutions, which can be instrumental in ensuring continued production of comprehensive high-quality statistics.

Statistical cooperation

- we cooperate with other producers of statistics

a. Enhanced cooperation within the Danish statistical system

- Participation in the cooperation with stakeholders, including other data and statistics authorities on the follow-up on UN sustainable development goals and the national Danish indicators.
- Cooperation with other institutions of society that wish to draw on the expertise of Statistics Denmark in administration of registers, data management and secure storage of large data volumes.

b. Enhanced coordination in the Danish statistical system

- Implementation of common guidelines agreed with other producers of statistics as a basis for the term “official statistics”.
- Use of “official statistics” on a voluntary basis as a recognized seal of approval for Danish statistics production.
- Contributes to the transparency of Danish-produced EU statistics complying with the quality requirements of the European Statistics Code of Practice.
- Cooperation with other statistical institutions and users to establish a common and user-friendly entry point to the use of microdata for research and analysis purposes.

c. Danish stamps on the EU cooperation

- Aim for European legislation to accommodate European as well as Danish requirements for statistics.
- Contribute to the development of the statistical domain in the EU through participation in working groups and in cooperation with other countries.
- Attention focused on ensuring that tools and methods developed in a European context are also useful in producing Danish statistics.
- Work to ensure that focus in a European context is on harmonising the statistical output across countries, while to the maximum extent possible maintaining flexibility with respect to methods and sources in the member countries.

d. Active participation in global statistical development

- Active presence in selected international forums, including in the UN and OECD, to influence the development of international standards, use of new data sources and areas of analysis, benefit from international experience and best practices and make the competences and knowledge of Statistics Denmark available.
- Strengthened cooperation in the Nordic countries and globally on the development of data and capacity in support of the statistical basis for the UN sustainable development goals.
- Uncovering new ways to finance and participate in the creation of statistical capacity in other countries in areas where Statistics Denmark has vast knowledge and where we can acquire new experience.

