Transparency, Open Data and the National Statistics Code of Practice

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Code of Practice

• The code was written in 2009, prior to the transparency agenda
• Compliments rather than contrasts with transparency
• Transparency should be seen as an opportunity for statisticians to promote good practice
Principle 1: Meeting user needs
The production, management and dissemination of official statistics should meet the requirements of informed decision-making by government, public services, business, researchers and the public.

Practices
2. Investigate and document the needs of users of official statistics, the use made of existing statistics and the types of decision they inform.
4. Publish statistical reports according to a published timetable that takes account of user needs.
5. Publish information about users’ experiences of statistical services, data quality, and the format and timing of reports.
 Transparency in the code of practice

Principle 2: Impartiality and objectivity

Official statistics, and information about statistical processes, should be managed impartially and objectively.

Practices

3. Make official statistics equally available to all, subject to statutory provisions for pre-release access.

8. Release all regular statistical reports on the internet without charge to the user.

9. For any supplementary statistical services for which a charge is made, adopt clear pricing policies that comply with legislation and relevant policy.
Principle 8: Frankness and accessibility

Official statistics, accompanied by full and frank commentary, should be readily accessible to all users.

Practices

1. Provide information on the quality and reliability of statistics in relation to the range of potential uses, and on methods, procedures, and classifications.

2. ..

3. Make statistics available in as much detail as is reliable and practicable, subject to legal and confidentiality constraints, offering choice and flexibility in the format according to the level of detail required by the user.

4. Publicise official statistics in ways that enable users to identify and access information relevant to their needs. Make access to official statistics as straightforward as possible by providing easy-to-use entry points.

5. Ensure that official statistics are disseminated in forms that, as far as possible, are accessible to a range of different audiences, including those with disabilities.

6. Ensure that official statistics are disseminated in forms that enable and encourage analysis and re-use. Release datasets and reference databases, supported by documentation, in formats that are convenient to users.

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Types of Transparency

- Methodologies
- Meta data
- Unused information
- Personal information
Personal Information

• Personal information should not be released under the transparency agenda

• Confidentiality rules can still exist – and the law still applies

• But transparency adds a sanity check!