



The High-level Forum on Official Statistics

Empowering Official Statistics: Upholding the Fundamental Principles to Stay Relevant

Monday, 26 February

3 – 6 pm

Venue: Conference Room 4, UNHQ

The High-level Forum on Official Statistics, an annual event of the Statistical Commission, is a pivotal event commemorating the 30th and 10th anniversaries of the adoption of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (FPOS) by the UN Statistical Commission and the General Assembly, respectively. This forum, more than just a seminar, is a tribute to the significant milestones achieved and a proactive step towards shaping the future of official statistics, guided by the FPOS.

Titled "Empowering Official Statistics - Upholding the Fundamental Principles to Stay Relevant," this High-level Forum represents the culmination of a series of global initiatives, including expert consultations, collaborations with statistical associations, webinars, workshops, and international conferences. These efforts have been crucial in enhancing the understanding of the FPOS within an ever-evolving data ecosystem, setting the stage for the 55th session of the Statistical Commission to celebrate the global endorsement of these principles.

The event will be structured into two main segments. The first segment, "Celebrating Milestones," will explore the genesis and historical importance of the FPOS in fostering trust and credibility in official statistics. Esteemed speakers will provide thoughtful interventions, tracing the journey of the FPOS and examining their impact on monitoring Sustainable Development Goals and other regional and national development policies, emphasizing how the FPOS have been instrumental in shaping national statistical systems and establishing data integrity and public confidence in statistical outputs over the years.

The second segment, "Shaping the Future of Official Statistics," will begin with introductory speeches, followed by a dynamic panel discussion. This segment will embark on an exploratory journey, examining how the FPOS can guide Official Statistics in navigating challenges and seizing opportunities in a rapidly changing data ecosystem, highlighting its role as a reliable and adaptable source of information. The discussion will also consider how the Terms of Reference for the Independent Advisory Board and the commented outline of the revitalized FPOS implementation guidelines, submitted for discussion and approval at the 55th session of the Statistical Commission, might contribute to their broad implementation.

The High-level Forum will conclude with an open debate, offering a unique opportunity for attendees to engage with the topics, share insights, and contribute to the dialogue.

Programme

First Segment: Celebrating Milestones [15:00 – 16:00]

Chair:

- **Prof. Georges-Simon Ulrich** (Vice-Chair, UNSC, Switzerland)

Tribute to Katherine Wallman, former Chair of the UNSC and former Chief Statistician of the United States

Speakers:

- **H.E. Paula Narváez** (President, ECOSOC, Chile)
- **Mr. Jean-Louis Bodin** (France)
- **Dr. Pali Lehohla** (South Africa) [via video broadcast]

Second Segment: FPOS Shaping the Future of Official Statistics [16:00 – 18:00]

Chair/Moderator:

- **Mr. Stephen Penneck** (UK)

Speakers:

- **Ms. Ximena Clark** (Chile)
- **Dr. Dominik Rozkrut** (Poland)
- **Mr. Misha Belkindas** (ISI/IAOS: Krakow Working Group and Friend of Official Statistics Network)

Panelists:

- **Mr. Hallgrimur Snorrason** (Iceland)
- **Mr. Leota Aliielua Salani** (Samoa)
- **Ms. Miosotis Rivas Peña** (Dominican Republic)
- **Ms. Norah Madaya** (Uganda) [via video broadcast]
- **Dr. Hédi Saidi** (AITRS)

Cast

Keynote Speaker



H.E. Paula Narváez is currently the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations in New York. She assumed her duties as Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations on 08 June 2022. Between 2016 and 2018, Ms. Narváez was Minister Secretary General of Government and served as a Presidential Adviser from 2014 to 2016. Since 27 July 2023, she has served as the seventy-ninth President of the Economic and Social Council.

Chairs/Moderators



Prof. Georges-Simon Ulrich was appointed Director-General of the Federal Statistical Office by the Federal Council on 01 October 2013. He is also a strategic management and research methods professor in business administration at Zurich's University of Applied Sciences. From May 2011 to September 2013, he was Director of the LUSTAT statistical office in Lucerne and, from March 2017 to March 2018, Vice Chair of the UN Statistical Commission. He has been Vice-Chair of the UN Statistical Commission again since 2022.



Mr. Stephen Penneck is the immediate past President of the International Statistical Institute. He has also been President of the International Association for Official Statistics and has chaired the ISI's Advisory Board on Ethics. Stephen is from the UK and was Director General at the Office for National Statistics until I retired ten years ago.

Speakers/Panelists in order of intervention



Mr. Jean-Louis Bodin is an independent consultant who retired from INSEE, the French National Statistical Office. He is a former President of the IAOS (from 1989 to 1991) and ISI (1999 to 2001). In 1990 and 1991, he was the committee vice-chair that drafted the "European" version of the FPOS adopted in June 1991 by the Conference of European Statisticians and "globalized" 30 years ago by the UN Statistical Commission.



Dr Pali Lehohla was Statistician-General of South Africa from 2000 to 2017. He was co-chair of PARIS21 and was the Chair of the United Nations Statistics Commission. He was the founding chair of the Statistics Commission of Africa (StatCom Africa) and chaired the African Symposium for Statistical Development (ASSD). Dr Lehohla has been a forceful advocate for improving the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics systems in Africa. Dr Lehohla is the co-director of the Economic Modelling Academy (EMA) and is a professor of practice at the University of Johannesburg.



Ms. Ximena Clark is an economist with experience in the public and private sectors, autonomous institutions, and academia. She is a former Director General of the Chilean NSI, has led a Population and Housing Census, a comprehensive modernization process, and introduced a new Statistical Law. Since 2018, she has been an independent consultant, advising on statistical matters for the IADB, Latin America NSOs, UNSD, and PARIS21.



Dr. Dominik Rozkrut is the President of Statistics Poland. Recently he was involved in the EU Task Force on the revision of the European statistical law. He is a member of the OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistics Policy and has served as their Bureau Vice-Chair. He is currently the President of the International Association for Official Statistics. In addition to his work on official statistics, Dominik is also an adjunct professor at the University of Szczecin.



Mr. Misha Belkindas is the founder and Managing Director of ODW Consulting and co-founder and Chairman of the Board of Open Data Watch. He worked for 20 years at the World Bank, managing extensive statistical capacity-building programs. He is an elected ISI member and the immediate past President of IAOS, having helped set up the Krakow Group and the Friends of Official Statistics.



Mr. Hallgrímur Snorrason was Chief Statistician of Iceland for 23 years. He is a former President of the IAOS and former vice-President of the ISI. Since 2007, he has worked as an independent expert in official statistics in many countries in Africa, Asia, and Europe. Recently, Hallgrímur was a consultant to the UNSD on issues related to the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.



Mr. Leota Aliielua Salani is the Government Statistician in the Pacific island of Samoa. With over 30 years of experience in statistics, Leota is Chair of the Pacific Island National Accounts Compilers and Local Experts Committee, a member of the ESCAP Regional Steering Group on Economic Statistics, and of the Pacific Island Statistics Development Group for the South–South initiative helping other Pacific Island Countries in the development of statistics.



Ms. Miosotis Rivas Peña is Director General of the National Statistics Office of the Dominican Republic. She has extensive work experience in the Central American and Caribbean region in regional integration, development and public policies, public equality policies, gender mainstreaming, and trade negotiations. She has worked closely in strengthening the Central American Integration System and was a representative of UN Women in the Dominican Republic.



Dr. Norah Madaya is an expert in strategic leadership, having supported the design and evaluation of National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDSs) in several anglophone countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Previously Director of Statistical Coordination Services at the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, she was responsible for Quality Assurance, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Gender Statistics. Lately, she has been engaged in updating guidelines for implementing the UNFPOS.



Dr. Hédi Saidi is currently the Director General of the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics in Amman – Jordan, where he is working on many training programs and studies in the Arab region in the statistical, economic, and educational fields and is providing technical advice and preparing national strategies for developing statistics. He has held many senior positions in Tunisia, including Director General of the National Institute of Statistics.
