



# Does the UN need a Chief Statistician?

9<sup>th</sup> HLG-PCCB meeting

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## Audit report by Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)

- Conducted from October 2015 to January 2016;
- Published on 22 April 2016 as Report 2016/032;
- Recommendation #3: A UN chief statistician: "DESA should, in consultation with the Statistical Commission, explore the possibility of designating a senior official as United Nations Chief Statistician to coordinate statistical matters across United Nations entities.”;
- UNSD (Stefan) presentend the recommendation to the UNSC in March 2017 in an oral report.



## Four existing coordination mechanisms

1. Coordination among the **five regional commissions and UNSD** has been facilitated through regular bi-monthly conference calls.;
2. coordination takes place on the level called “**cluster**”, which includes UNSD, the regional commissions as well as other secretariat entities, namely UNODC, UNCTAD, UNEP and UN Habitat;
3. Meeting of the **Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System** which includes all secretariat entities and all other United Nations funds and programmes;
4. Coordination takes place in the **Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA)** and includes all United Nations entities and other international and regional organizations (e.g OECD, Eurostat or PARIS21);



## A UN Chief Statistician? - Opportunities

- Increased **visibility of statistics in the whole UN System**. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires a high volume of data and statistics. A higher degree of communication amongst the producers of data as well as between users and producers of data and statistics is crucial;
- A **higher accountability** could strengthen the statistics produced by the UN system;
- A deeper coordination can lead to a **more efficient global statistical system** that will reduce on the long-term the costs.



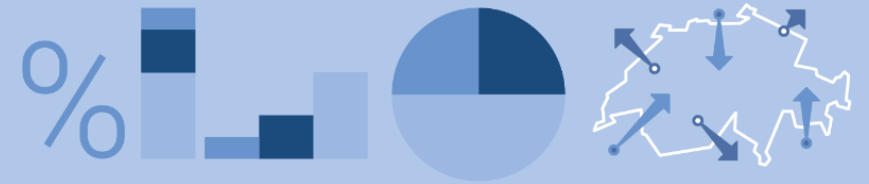
## A UN Chief Statistician? - Challenges

- Which **rights (powers)** should a UN Chief Statistician have regarding the UN statistics producers inside the UN Secretariat, within the UN System or even outside the UN System?;
- Review of existing **legal frameworks** – does the political situation allow for this type of overarching chief statistician role?;
- Discussion on the **budgetary implications**;
- Exploration of **tools and mechanisms** a Chief Statistician could use that would allow him/her to coordinate with other UN statistics producers.



## Possible questions in a study

- a) What are the expected benefits of creating the position of a UN Chief Statistician?;
- b) Which organizations should be covered under the umbrella of the coordination of an UN Chief Statistician?;
- c) Is there a legal framework or precedent that allows for the creation of a UN Chief Statistician?;
- d) How can the installation of a Chief Statistician respond to different elements raised during the discussion on the repositioning the UN development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda?;
- e) What costs would occur and how could they be covered?;
- f) What is the best institutional setting to install an UN Chief Statistician?;
- g) What experiences have been made by other organisations when they installed a Chief Statistician?;



## Proposal for next steps

- I. October 2017: UN Statistical Commission Bureau comments on this report – Done already!
- II. November 2017: HLG-PCCB considers the topic, report and establishes a subgroup to look into the questions raised above and provide its results in a background document to the Commission in 2018;
- III. November/December 2017: The HLG-PCCB (and the Bureau) will report on this topic in their document to the UN Statistical Commission;
- IV. February 2018: The finalized report will be distributed as background documents to members and observers of the UN Statistical Commission;
- V. March 2018: Committee of the Chief Statisticians of the United Nations system considers the topic;
- VI. March 2018: As included in the HLG-PCCB report and as a background document, the topic (and points for decision) will be considered by the UN Statistical Commission and decisions on the next steps will be taken.