



# THE ODD CASE AGAINST STATISTICIANS

## in Kazakhstan

IAOS Side Meeting, Paris 18 September 2018, Petteri Baer

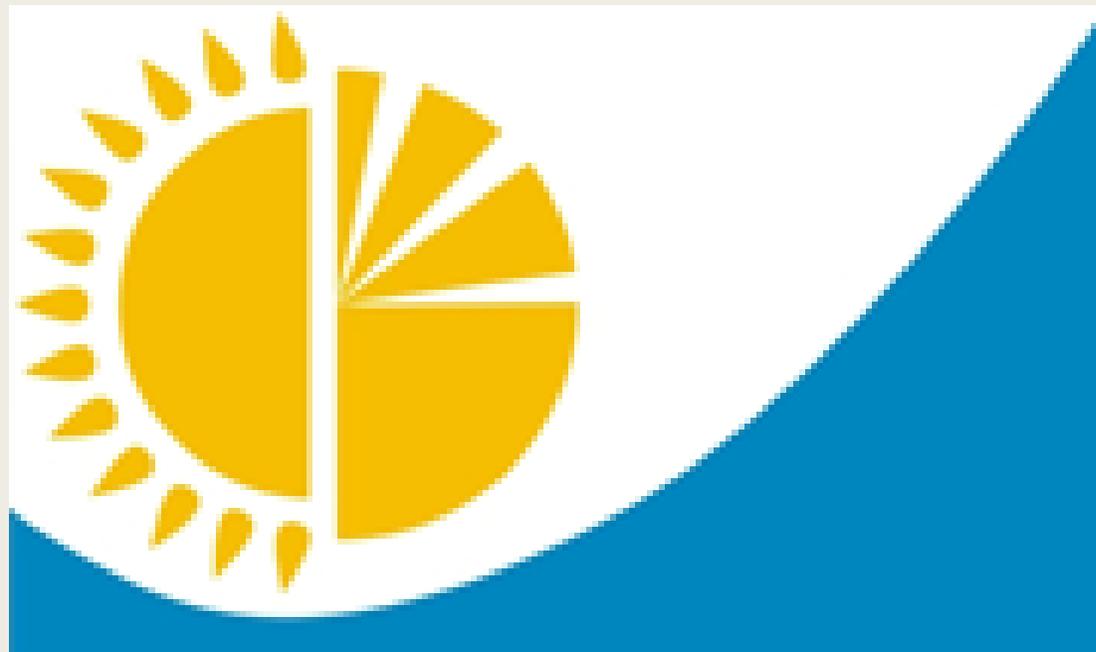
# Work in Statistics Finland 1993-2006 and 2009-2015 as Marketing Manager



Work in the United Nations Economic Commission of Europe in 2006-2009 as Regional Advisor on statistics



15 missions to the Agency of Statistics  
of Kazakhstan (ARKS & CS) in the years  
2007-2015



# Kazakhstan geographically presented

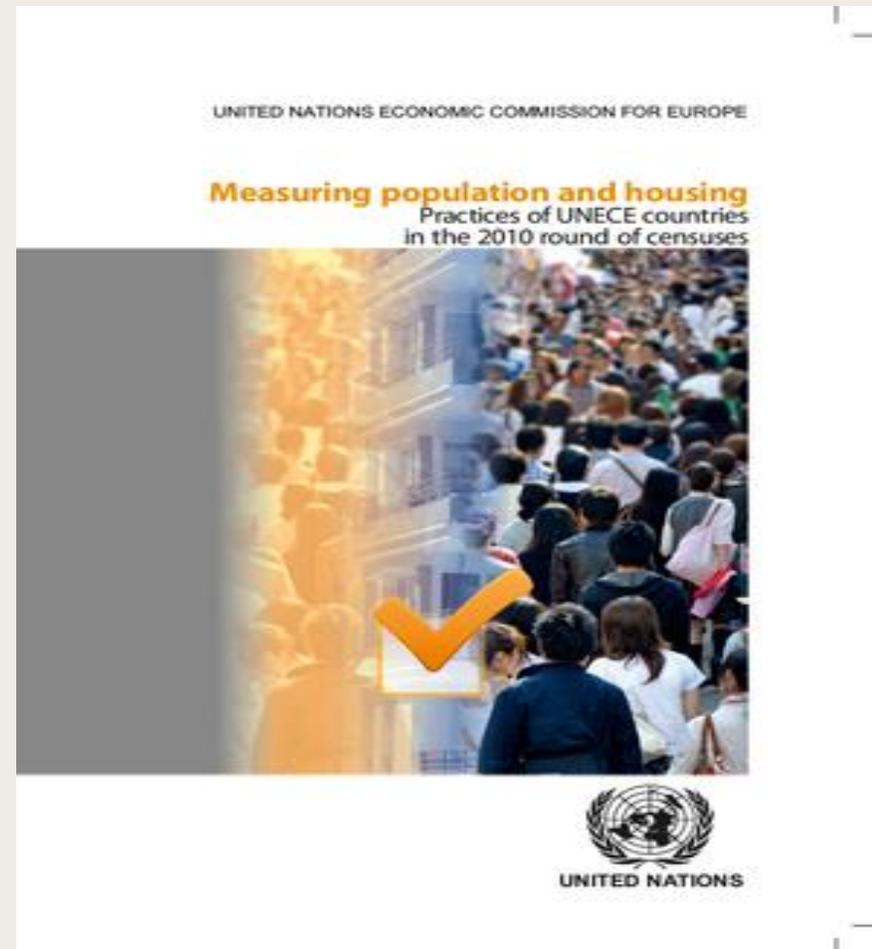


# Two contradictory calculations of Census material costs

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ■ As maintained by the<br>Prosecutor (and FinPol)                                      | ■ According to the<br>Statistical Agency   |
| ■ 7 tenge (Unit cost)  | ■ 17 tenge (Unit cost)   |
| ■ Per capita cost,<br>expressed in US dollars<br>(PPP) of November 2008<br><b>0,20</b> | ■ Per capita cost,<br>expressed in US dollars<br>(PPP) of November 2008<br><b>0,49</b> |

# UNECE Comparison material of the Census Round 2010, traditional census

- Total Census cost median of 26 countries which performed the traditional Census, was per capita in US dollars (PPP) 7,70
- The share of printing costs of the total Census cost median was 6 % on the average
- → The median printing costs in US dollars (PPP) per capita were in US dollars (PPP)  
**0,46**



# Which calculation is more likely to be in line with reality?

- As maintained by the Prosecutor (and FinPol)
  - 7 tenge (Unit cost)
  - Census material printing cost per capita, expressed in US dollars (PPP) of November 2008 **0,20**
  - UNECE comparison material in US dollars (PPP) **0,46**
- According to the Statistical Agency
  - 17 tenge (Unit cost)
  - Census material printing cost per capita, expressed in US dollars (PPP) of November 2008 **0,49**
  - UNECE comparison material in US dollars (PPP) **0,46**

# Facts of the following kind were in the verdicts left outside consideration

- (1) the needed stronger and thicker quality of paper,
- (2) the generally higher quality needed for the forthcoming scanning process,
- (3) the enumerating of the Census blanks for keeping track,
- (4) the need to have different sorts of Census blanks of one interviewed household to be interlinked with each other,
- (5) the colour print of the blanks as contradicted to the normal data collection blanks of the ARKS,
- (6) the very exact and specific design and layout needed for the scanning process and also concerning the use of the Kazakh language with its specific fonts,
- (7) the by time very pressed period of having the print work done on time and
- (8) the by time very pressed period of having all the logistical transmission of the blanks from the place(s) of printing to the Regional Offices of the ARKS.

# ”The Case against Statisticians” has brought unmeasurable damage to

- The credibility of the Census data in Kazakhstan
- The credibility of Official Statistics in general in Kazakhstan
- The Agency of Statistics of Kazakhstan by halting its modernisation process for years
- To the convicted directors and their families

# Possible reasons for the false accusations in “The Case against Stats”

- “The old guard” of state functionaries was becoming nervous about the clearly activated role of the Statistical Agency under Chairperson Meshimbayeva
- The Financial Police had a big need to show off its importance
- The main target of the accusations was possibly not at all the Directors of the Statistical Agency; the main target was possibly higher
  
- And later: For the law enforcement structures it was impossible to admit the grave mistake performed through the grave maltreatment of the innocent professionals

We should work for better legal structures and treat professionals in a proper way



- Maybe soon the time will ripen for a fact-based **reconsiderance** of what happened
- An **acquittal** of the wrongly condemned “mere professionals” would certainly be needed

# Former Chairperson Meshimbayeva and her Deputies are now out of prison



- However,
- They must report themselves at the police on a regular and continuous basis
- They are to pay a huge sum, over 500 million tenge (today over 1,5 million US dollars) to the state as compensation for a crime they did not commit
- They cannot travel abroad
- For this IAOS Conference Anar Meshimbaeva was invited. She received a Schengen visa, but was nevertheless not allowed to travel to Paris