



IAOS Special Meeting

“NSOs Professional Independence: Threats and Responses”

Tuesday 18 September 2018

Discussion: The Role of the International Statistical Community.

Moderator: Hermann Habermann
Rapporteur: Hallgrímur Snorrason

Meaning of Independence

- **If an office is part of the government, then, in what sense can it be independent?**
- **To what extent can the formulation of the budget of the office, the content of surveys, and say professional decisions on the use of adaptive survey design be independent?**
- **Are there parallels and contrasts between the operations of Central Banks?**
- **What are reasonable remedies for attacks on independence? Are they likely to be successful?**
- **How important are laws to protect and strengthen national statistical offices?**

The role of international agencies and NGO's in protecting independence.

- **What is the effect of the Fundamental Principles on independence?**
- **Does there need to be a more active presence of international agencies in reviewing the independence of national statistical offices?**
- **Independence, e.g. more frequent reviews of national statistical offices with respect to their independence?**
- **Should there be reviews of the offices adherence to fundamental principles?**
- **Given that country adherence to international standards and norms are generally voluntary (with the possible exception of the IMF and Eurostat) what are the limits of international reviews?**
- **Are there conflicts with national sovereignty? What have we learned about the effectiveness of international agency participation in recent cases?**
- **Can non-governmental organizations such as the ISI, IAOS, ASA, and the Royal Society have a greater impact? How can this be accomplished?**

Impact of social media

- **Issues on social media can become viral in a matter of hours and have significant impact on the policies of governments.**
- **Is social media a beneficial tool for the defense of a statistical office, is it a threat or both?**
- **Are there ways to maximize the benefits and minimize the threats?**
- **How does one deal with false statements that can become viral almost immediately?**
- **How can social media galvanize support for both official statistics and those who have undertaken to lead those agencies?**
- **Are there lessons that can be learned from Argentina and Greece with respect to the impact of social media?**