

## Reputation survey of Statistics Denmark

In the spring of 2018, Epinion has completed a survey of the Danish population's knowledge of and trust in Statistics Denmark by asking a representative sample of the population. In 2016, Epinion completed a similar survey, and the results from the present survey have been compared with the 2016 results to the extent possible. Due to changes of method, it is not possible to compare with surveys prior to the 2016 survey. As opposed to previous surveys, international comparisons are not included in the 2018 final report.

### Results from the survey

High level of knowledge of and trust in Statistics Denmark.

- The population has a good knowledge of Statistics Denmark. 71 per cent know of the institution, while 92 per cent have at least heard the name.
- A full 80 per cent of the population trust Statistics Denmark. Trust is on the same level as that of the central bank of Denmark and close to that of the police and the courts, which are top-rated.
- Two thirds of those who at least know Statistics Denmark by name have confidence in statistics from Statistics Denmark being prepared without political interference. Total confidence corresponds to the level in 2016, only with a few more respondents who *strongly* agree now.
- Confidence in Statistics Denmark handling information confidentially is high – of those who know the institution by name or more closely, 88 per cent trust this. A few more *strongly* agree with this than in 2016.

Less trust in the individual statistics than in the institution

- Six in ten trust that specific unemployment statistics and economic growth/GDP statistics reflect developments in society, and so it is lower than the level of trust in the institution as such.
- 86 per cent of the Danes agree that official statistics are important. Of these, 35 per cent strongly agree, and this is an increase on 2016.

One in two has been in contact with Statistics Denmark

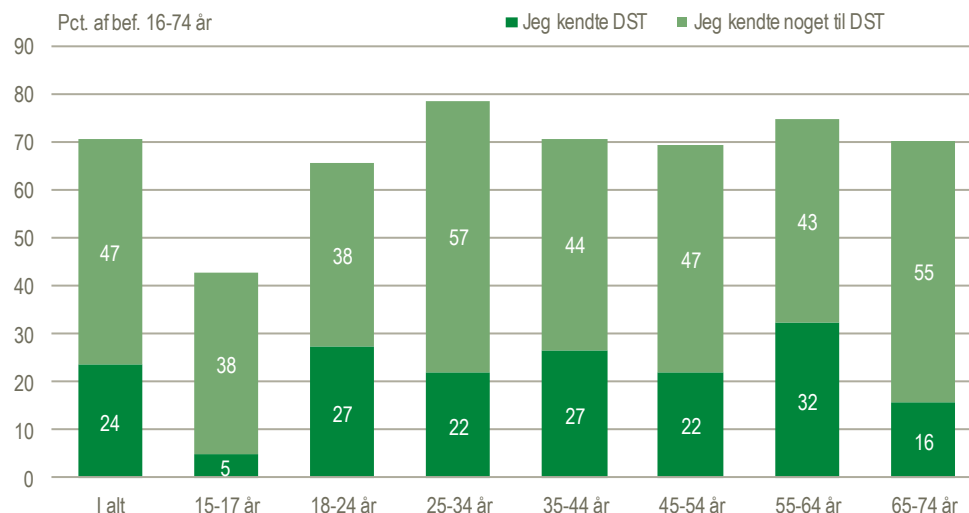
- In the last two years, 48 per cent of the Danes have been in contact with Statistics Denmark. The majority have used the Statistics Denmark website or Statbank Denmark.
- Of those looking for information with Statistics Denmark, two out of three find it easy to locate.

## High level of knowledge of Statistics Denmark – as in 2016

Over 70 per cent know of Statistics Denmark.

The Danish population has a good knowledge of Statistics Denmark: 71 per cent know the institution, while 92 per cent have at least heard the name. This is on the same level as in the corresponding survey from 2016.

### To what extent did you know Statistics Denmark before this survey?



Knowledge varies with age

The age group 25-34 years has the highest share of people with a knowledge of Statistics Denmark beyond the name. *Good* knowledge, however, is most common among the 55-64 year old Danes. The youngest age groups have the lowest level of knowledge of the institution.

The level of knowledge coincides with the level of education

The level of education also makes a difference for the knowledge of Statistics Denmark. In general, the higher the level of education, the higher knowledge of Statistics Denmark. People with short-cycle higher education are an exception, as they are at the top with 86 per cent who know more of the institution than just the name. This group is followed by people with long-cycle higher education, 83 per cent of whom know more of the institution than just the name. Next are people with medium-cycle higher education, for whom it applies to 78 per cent. People with basic school or no indicated level of education have the lowest level of knowledge of Statistics Denmark, as only 58 per cent know more of the institution than the name.

People from North Jutland have highest share of knowledge of Statistics Denmark

Geographically, there are also differences in the level of knowledge of Statistics Denmark. Even though the share in the Capital Region of Denmark who reply that they know Statistics Denmark well (27 per cent), the North Denmark Region has the highest share who knows Statistics Denmark more than by name (75 per cent).

### Four in five trust Statistics Denmark

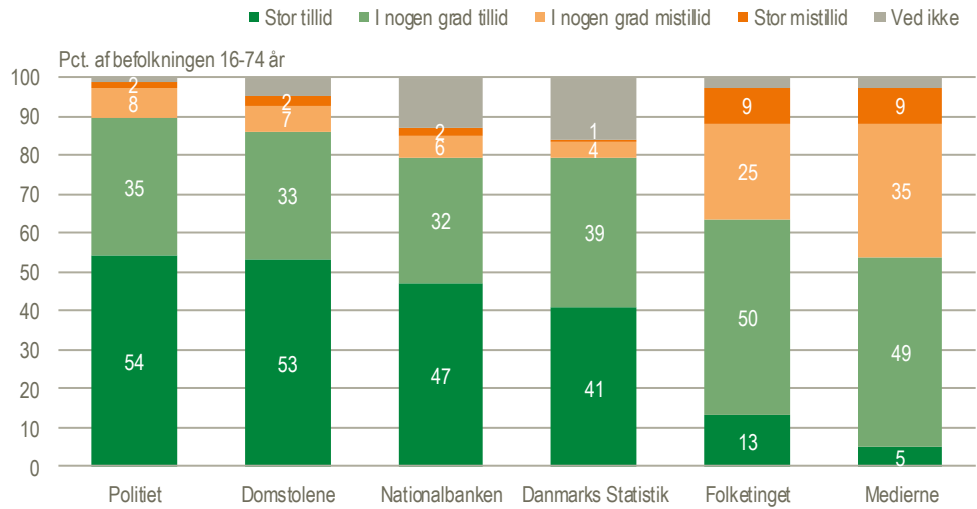
80 per cent of the population trust Statistics Denmark

The population has a high level of trust in Statistics Denmark. A total of 80 per cent indicate that they have a great deal of trust or tend to trust in the institution. Of those who have at the very least heard the name, the share is 83 per cent. This corresponds to the level in 2016.

Trust on the level of the central bank of Denmark

The high level of trust in Statistics Denmark is roughly similar to that of Nationalbanken (the central bank of Denmark) and just under that of Danish Police and the Courts of Denmark. The level of trust is significantly above the level of trust in the Danish Parliament and the media. Among those who strongly agree that statistics from Statistics Denmark are made free from political interference, the trust is as high as 94 per cent.

### To what extent do you trust the following institutions?



Only a few distrust Statistics Denmark.

Only a very small part of the population distrust Statistics Denmark to some or to a greater extent, i.e. five per cent of the part of the population who at least knows Statistics Denmark by name. Less than 1 per cent distrusts it *a great deal*. A somewhat bigger share of 13 per cent do not know if they trust in Statistics Denmark or not.

Higher level of trust among people with a long education

People with basic school or higher secondary education have a lower level of trust in Statistics Denmark than those with a long education. This applies for 69 per cent of those with basic school and 79 per cent of those with higher secondary education as their highest educational attainment, while approximately 90 per cent of those with long-cycle education trust Statistics Denmark. Geographically, the trust in the institution is at the lowest level in Region Zealand, where a total of 73 per cent put some level of trust in the institution.

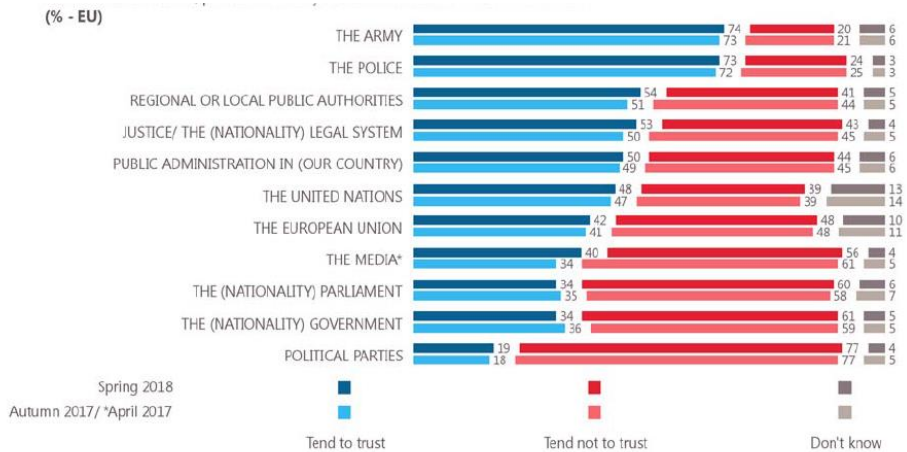
Danish level of trust generally high

Traditionally, Danes show a very high level of trust in Danish authorities and institutions, which appears e.g. from the regular Eurobarometer surveys from the European Commission. Denmark virtually always ranks as one of the highest scorers of trust in national institutions.

Ranking corresponds to that of other EU countries

The ranking of trust is roughly the same all over Europe. A Eurobarometer survey from spring 2018 for the entire EU shows correspondingly the highest level of trust in the police and the courts, followed by public administration and with government and parliament at a somewhat lower level.

### Trust in selected institutions in the EU



## Two thirds trust in statistics free from political interference

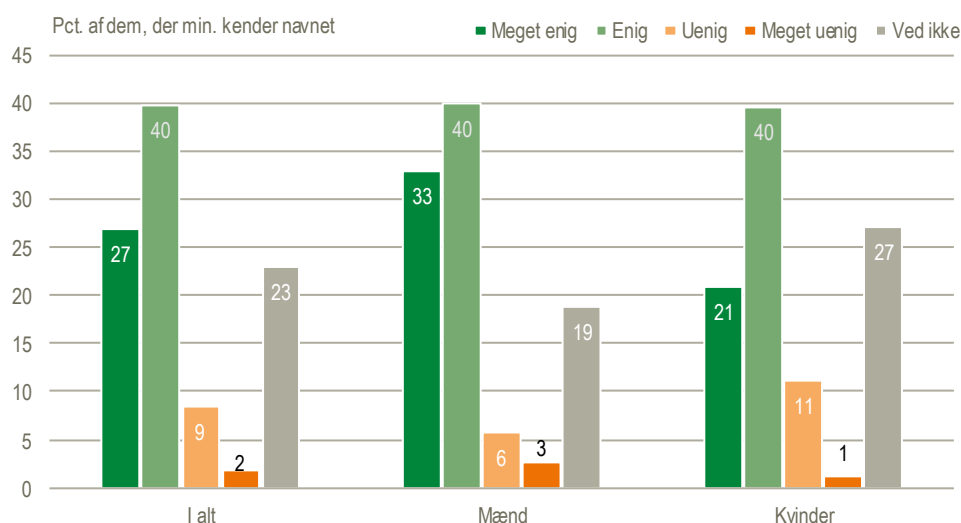
Two out of three trust in apolitical statistics

Of those who at least know Statistics Denmark by name, 67 per cent agree or strongly agree that statistics from Statistics Denmark are made without political interference. This corresponds to the level in 2016. The share who disagrees or strongly disagrees is 10 per cent, the majority of which “just” disagree. A relatively large share – more than one fifth of the population (23 per cent) – do not declare themselves in agreement nor disagreement, but reply “don’t know”.

Higher level of knowledge gives higher level of trust in apolitical figures

People with a high level of knowledge of Statistics Denmark tend to have more faith in the statistics being free from political interference. This applies to 81 per cent of those who know the institution well and only 46 per cent of those who only know the institution by name.

## Statistics from Statistics Denmark are free from political interference



More men believe in apolitical statistics

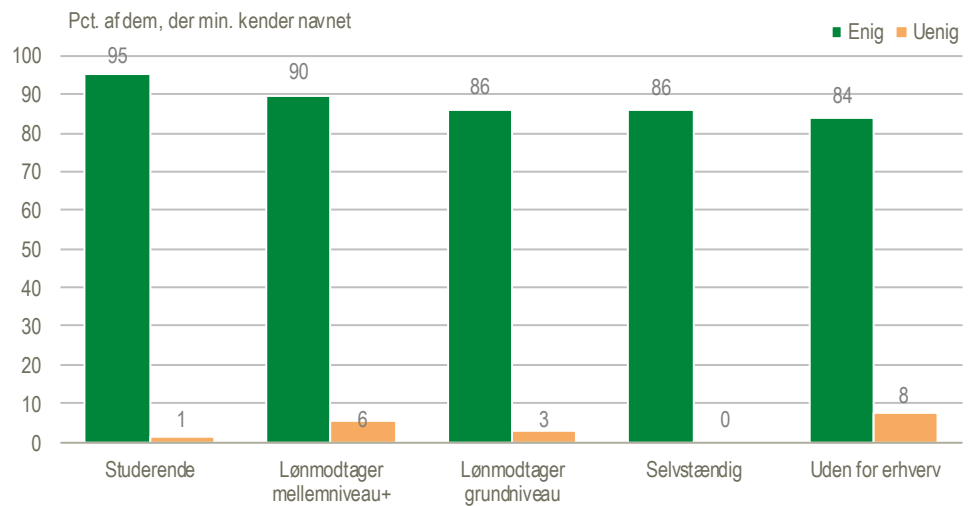
More men (73 per cent) than women (61 per cent) agree that the statistics are compiled without political interference. In this case too, the share who agrees is higher among people with long-cycle education.

## Slightly higher level of trust that information is handled confidentially

High share trusts that data is handled confidentially

Of those who at least know Statistics Denmark by name, 88 per cent trust that the information they give to Statistics Denmark is being handled confidentially. This corresponds to the level in 2016, though the share who *strongly agrees* is now higher (45 per cent against 38 per cent in 2016). The trust in confidential handling of data is highest among students, where 95 per cent agree and only 1 per cent disagree. The trust of the other socio-economic groups ranges from 84 to 91 per cent. Among self-employed persons, a fairly large group replies *don't know*, but 0 per cent disagree.

**I trust that the information I give to Statistics Denmark will be kept confidential**



### Less trust in the individual statistics than in the institution

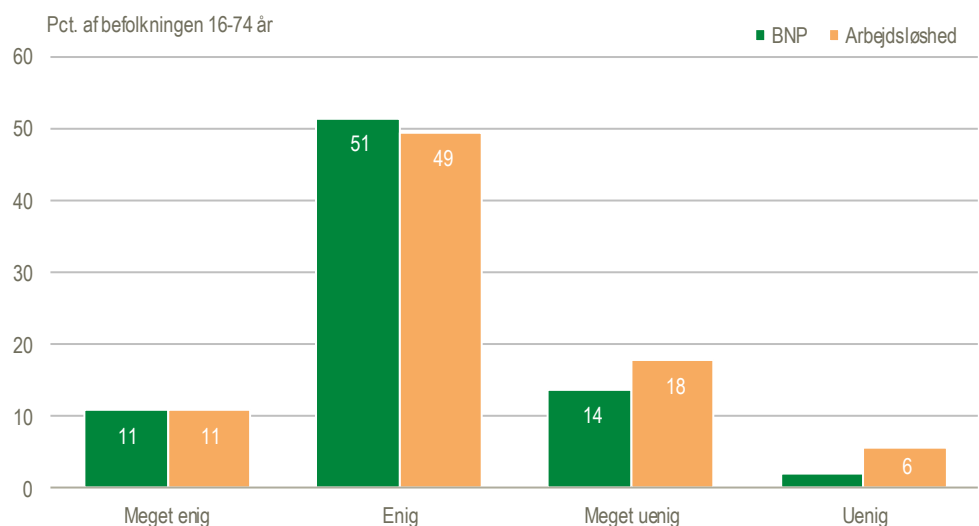
Six in ten think that statistics reflect developments accurately

Even though 80 per cent of the population trust Statistics Denmark as an institution, the trust that selected statistics reflect accurately what happens in Denmark is lower. 60 per cent of the population agree that unemployment statistics reflect accurately what happens in Denmark, while 62 per cent agree that the same applies to economic growth or GDP statistics. Here, 16 per cent *disagree* or *strongly disagree* that the statistics reflect the developments in society. There is less scepticism than in 2016, where 23 per cent disagreed, despite the fact that the gross national product has undergone major revision in the interim period. As for unemployment, trust measured as agreement with the statement is higher than in 2016, where only 49 per cent declared that they *strongly agree* or *agree*.

Several possible sources of confusion

For the unemployment statistics, it may cause confusion among some users that there are different unemployment concepts dealing with different aspects and each of which are suitable for different types of comparisons. The question about GDP statistics may seem complicated, as a relatively high share of 22 per cent reply “don’t know”.

### Changes in the statistics reflect accurately what is happening in Denmark



Men have more confidence in the statistics

In general, a higher share of men than women agree that the statistics reflect the developments in society, and this difference is especially true in the case of economic growth, where 67 per cent of the men and 57 per cent of the women agree. The youngest age group up to 24 years and the oldest from 55 years and older are the most sceptical.

Personal experience may affect the assessment of the individual sets of statistics

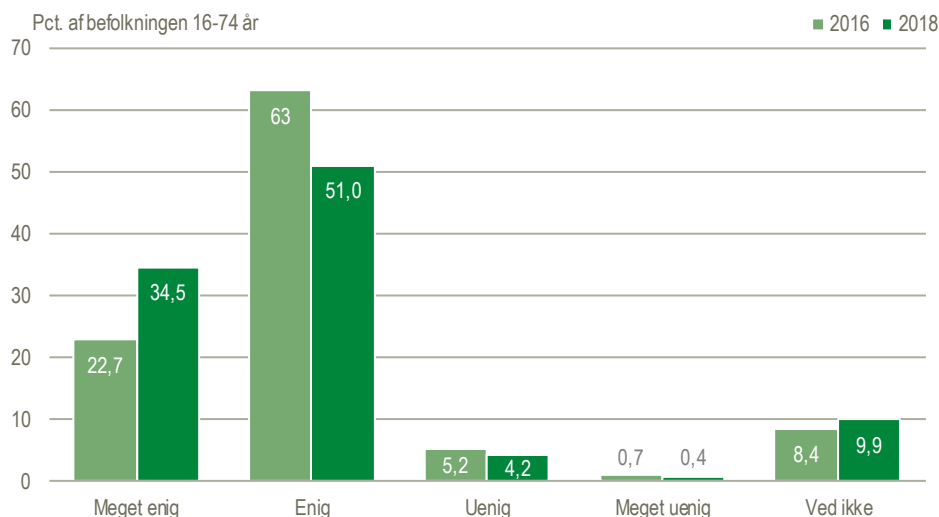
The total picture of a lower level of trust in specific sets of statistics than in the institution corresponds to previous Danish, and also foreign, results. This could e.g. be due to the fact that it is more likely that people have experiences in specific areas – personally or in their circle of friends – that may be inconsistent with the overall picture of economic trends represented in the statistics. In addition, it is conceivable that media coverage could influence the assessment of statistics in certain areas. Furthermore, the claim of the wording that you see developments reflected “accurately” may seem ambitious.

### The importance of statistics widely supported

Increasing agreement with the importance of statistics

A full 86 per cent of the Danes agree that official statistics are important to understand the developments in society. This is unchanged relative to 2016, although the share of people who *strongly agree* has increased from 23 per cent to 35 per cent. This may be linked to an increasing awareness of the threat from fake news and an increasing number of figures from sources of very different credibility.

### Statistics produced by Statistics Denmark on our economy and society are important to understand our country.

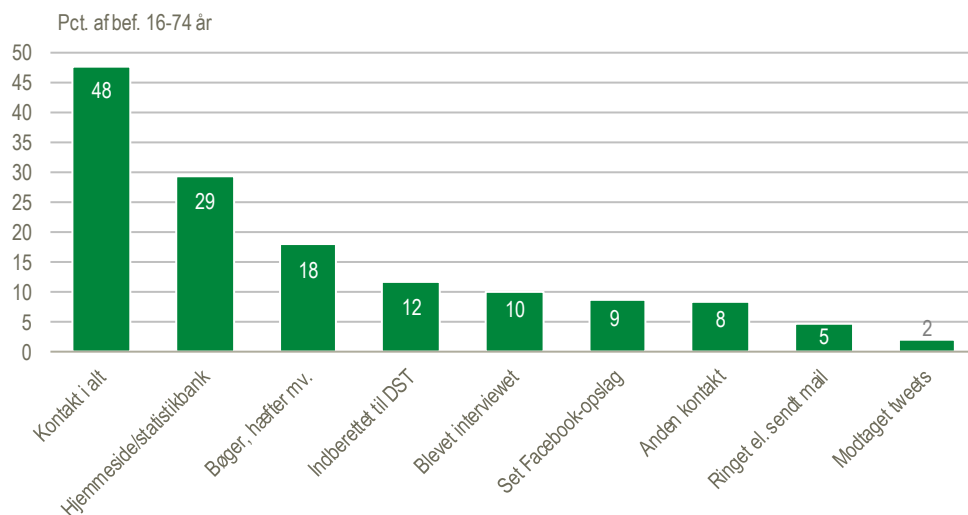


### Every other Dane has been in contact with Statistics Denmark

The majority have used the website or Statbank Denmark.

Approximately half of the population have been in contact with Statistics Denmark within the last two years. The major part have used the website or Statbank Denmark (29 per cent), while the second largest share have used books, booklets or the like produced by Statistics Denmark (18 per cent)

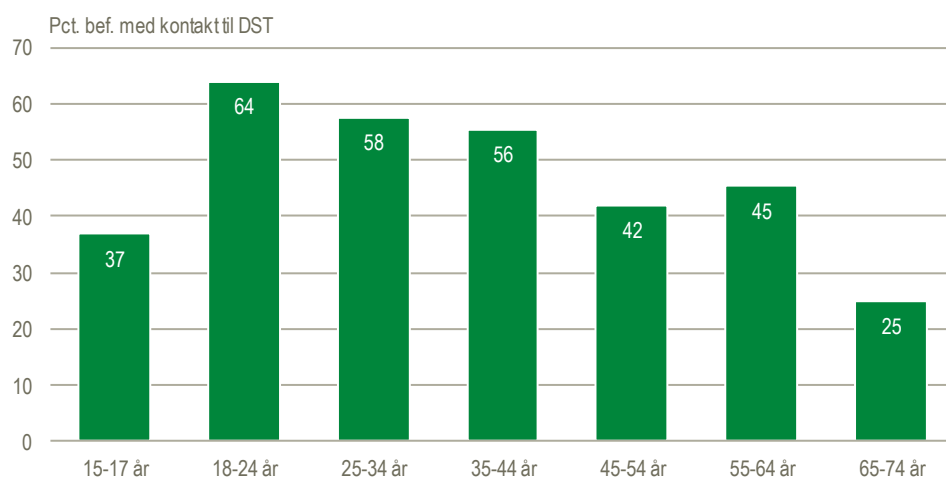
### Have been in contact with Statistics Denmark within the last two years



Young people most contact

The highest share of people who have had contact with Statistics Denmark is found in the age group 18-24 years, and the share drops from there with age. This also corresponds with the fact that many students use Statistics Denmark figures. Seven in ten students have been in contact with the institution within the last two years. The age pattern is relatively consistent for the forms of contact where the users seek out Statistics Denmark themselves, i.e. the contact forms in the figure above except interview and reporting.

### Have been in contact with Statistics Denmark within the last two years



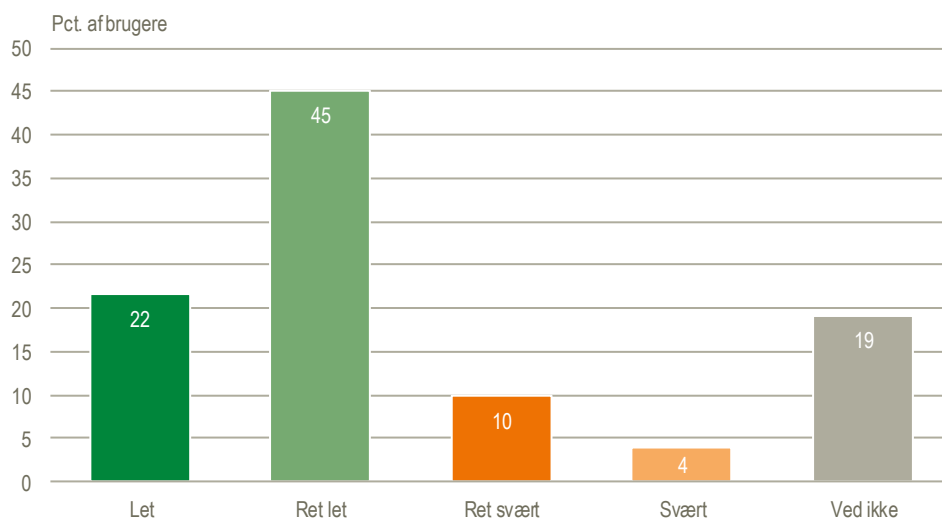
Receivers of Facebook posts have slightly more trust in Statistics Denmark

Statistics Denmark only created a Facebook profile in the autumn 2016. For that reason, this is the first time that figures are included for the share of the population who have seen Facebook posts from Statistics Denmark. The share is nine per cent, and not surprisingly, young people up to the age of 24 are best represented.

The share who have seen Twitter posts is not surprisingly somewhat lower, namely two per cent. However, this should be seen against the fact that only seven per cent of the Danish population used Twitter on a daily basis in 2017, whereas 65 per cent

used Facebook<sup>1</sup>. Despite the limited number, Twitter users are an important target group in relation to Statistics Denmark's desire to contribute to the public debate and to fact-based political decisions. This is because a large number of journalists, politicians and analysts are active on Twitter.

#### How easy or difficult do you think it is to find the information that you are looking for with Statistics Denmark?



*Students easily find what they're looking for*

Two in three (67 per cent) of those who seek out Statistics Denmark or information from the institution easily find the information they are looking for. This corresponds to the level in 2016. 10 per cent find it difficult and 4 per cent find it very difficult. The groups with the highest share of people who easily find what they are looking for, are students, inhabitants of the Region of Southern Denmark, people aged 55-64 years and people with long-cycle higher education.

#### About this survey

Lower response rate among ages 25-34 and immigrants

A total of 1,999 Danes were contacted and asked about their knowledge of and attitude towards Statistics Denmark. Hereof, 741 persons or 37.1 per cent have responded. Subsequently, the responses received were grossed up, so that they correspond to a representative section of the total Danish population. The questions as well as the distribution of answers are available at the end of the text. In the population groups with a relatively low response rate, the uncertainty of the grossing-up is higher than for the other groups. This applies especially to ages 25-34 years, immigrants and descendants and people with short-cycle higher education. For this reason, comments on fluctuations in the answers from these groups are limited. The response rate is also relatively low among people whose highest educational attainment is basic school and inhabitants of Region Zealand, which increases the uncertainty for these groups.

Epinion has collected data, and Statistics Denmark has analysed it

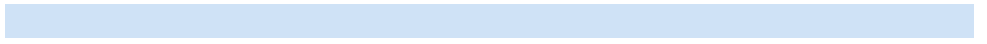
As with the reputation survey from 2016, Epinion has handled the data collection for this survey. Statistics Denmark carried out the analysis of the results. From 2000 to 2012, Statistics Denmark made a corresponding user survey every two years. The results from the user surveys are not comparable with the reputation surveys, as Statistics Denmark handled the data collection themselves for the user surveys.

#### Sources

Reputation survey of Statistics Denmark, September 2016  
 The European Commission: Standard Eurobarometer 89, June 2018  
 DR (the Danish Broadcasting Corporation): Medieudviklingen 2017

<sup>1</sup> DR: Medieudviklingen 2017





## Distribution of questions and answers

<b>Statistics Denmark is the organisation that produces official statistics on our economy and society. To what extent did you know Statistics Denmark before this survey? (share of the whole population)</b>				
I knew Statistics Denmark well	I knew of Statistics Denmark	I had only heard the name	I had never heard of it	Don't know
23.6 per cent	46.9 per cent	21.9 per cent	7.2 per cent	0.3 per cent

<b>To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Statistics produced by Statistics Denmark on our economy and society are important to understand our country (share of the whole population)</b>				
Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
34.5 per cent	51.0 per cent	4.2 per cent	0.4 per cent	9.9 per cent

**Have you had contact with Statistics Denmark in the last two years in one or more of the following ways? (share of those who have at least heard of Statistics Denmark)**

<b>Have used the Statistics Denmark website or Statbank Denmark</b>		
Yes	No	Don't know
29.3 per cent	68.3 per cent	2.4 per cent

<b>Have phoned or sent emails to Statistics Denmark</b>		
Yes	No	Don't know
4.7 per cent	93.7 per cent	1.7 per cent

<b>Have used books, booklets or the like produced by Statistics Denmark</b>		
Yes	No	Don't know
17.8 per cent	76.1 per cent	6 per cent

<b>Have been interviewed</b>		
Yes	No	Don't know
9.8 per cent	86.7 per cent	3.5 per cent

<b>Have reported information to Statistics Denmark</b>		
Yes	No	Don't know
11.6 per cent	81.7 per cent	6.6 per cent

<b>Have received tweets from Statistics Denmark</b>		
Yes	No	Don't know
1.8 per cent	95.4 per cent	2.8 per cent

<b>Have seen Facebook posts from Statistics Denmark</b>		
Yes	No	Don't know
8.7 per cent	85.7 per cent	5.6 per cent

<b>Have had other kind of contact</b>		
Yes	No	Don't know
8.3 per cent	85.1 per cent	6.6 per cent

<b>Have been in contact with Statistics Denmark (share of the total population)</b>	
Yes	No
47.7 per cent	52.3 per cent

<b>How easy or difficult do you think it is to find the information that you are looking for from Statistics Denmark?            (share of those who have used the Statistics Denmark website or Statbank Denmark, have called or emailed Statistics Denmark, have received tweets from Statistics Denmark, have seen Facebook posts from Statistics Denmark or used books, booklets or the like from Statistics Denmark)</b>				
Easy	Relatively easy	Relatively difficult	Difficult	Don't know
21.7 per cent	45.1 per cent	10.0 per cent	4.0 per cent	19.2 per cent

<b>Please state to what extent you trust or distrust the following institutions:            (share of the total population)</b>					
	Trust it a great deal	Tend to trust it	Tend to distrust it	Distrust it a great deal	Don't know
The media	5.1 per cent	48.6 per cent	34.6 per cent	9.0 per cent	2.6 per cent
The Danish Parliament	13.2 per cent	50.3 per cent	24.7 per cent	8.9 per cent	2.9 per cent
Statistics Denmark	40.7	38.8	3.8	0.9	15.9
Statistics Denmark – of respondents who at least know the name	43.4 per cent	39.3 per cent	3.6 per cent	0.8 per cent	12.9 per cent
The Courts of Denmark	53.2 per cent	32.8 per cent	6.7 per cent	2.4 per cent	4.9 per cent
Nationalbanken (the central bank of Denmark)	47.3 per cent	32.1 per cent	5.6 per cent	2.0 per cent	12.9 per cent
Danish police	54.2 per cent	35.3 per cent	7.7 per cent	1.7 per cent	1.1 per cent

<b>To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:            "Statistics from Statistics Denmark are free from political interference"?            (share of respondents who have at least heard of Statistics Denmark)</b>				
Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
26.9 per cent	39.8 per cent	8.5 per cent	1.9 per cent	23.0 per cent

<b>To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:            "I trust that the information I give to Statistics Denmark will be kept confidential?"            (share of respondents who have at least heard of Statistics Denmark)</b>				
Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
45.4 per cent	42.1 per cent	3.4 per cent	1.1 per cent	8.0 per cent

**The next question is about unemployment statistics.  
 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement on unemployment statistics:  
 "Changes in the statistics reflect accurately what is happening in Denmark"?  
 (share of the total population)**

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
10.9 per cent	49.3 per cent	17.8 per cent	5.6 per cent	16.4 per cent

<p><b>The last question is about economic growth or Gross Domestic Product (GDP).</b>  <b>To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement on economic growth or GDP statistics:</b>  <b>"Changes in the statistics reflect accurately what is happening in Denmark"?</b>  <b>(share of the total population)</b></p>				
Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
10.8	51.4	13.7	2.1	22.1