Government and statistics have always been closely linked, and the risk of manipulation has therefore long been an important issue. Since the 1990s, there have been some valuable approaches to defining the risk factors for manipulation of statistics (Seltzer, 1994; Georgiou, 2021, Pullinger, 2021).

Guidelines and standards have been established to ensure statistical quality (see the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics) that were transformed into laws and codes in the public sector. However, developments in recent years have shown that approaches, based on national control mechanisms, are no longer sufficient for quality assurance of statistics.

The aim of the present project is first to present and critically examine previous approaches to the nomenclature of risks of manipulation. Subsequently, a new, complementary approach is discussed, in which a global, cross-national approach is adopted, based on the Academic Freedom Index, to evaluate the integrity of statistics.