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**Which facts does society actually need?**

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Is data the new gold? In some discussions you can't help but get the impression that we are exploring all the technical finesses to access the valuable commodity and make our best use of it. Whatever is associated with the term 'data' seems to get some of the glamour out of it. Decisions, politics, management and much more should now be 'data-driven'. In a job interview it is advantageous to distinguish yourself as a 'data scientist', whereas it is considered rather boring to use the professional title 'statistician'. Big data, machine learning, algorithms and artificial intelligence promise solutions for problems that have so far been handled without much success. Traditional methods of generating knowledge by laborious, cost-intensive and time-consuming collecting of data appear outdated and superfluous in this light.

The growing importance of statistical evidence, data and information for political decisions is reflected in the handy and popular formulation 'Data for Policy' (D4P). However, this label is only suitable to a limited extent for characterising the network of relationships and mutual influence between data on the one hand and politics on the other. Even if the amount of data is growing at an enormous rate in the era of digitalisation and globalisation, this raw material of data is not directly usable for politics. Instead, suitable processes are needed to distil, refine and process the valuable content for politics into digestible information from the flood of raw data. The term 'facts' is used here as a generic term for such information. When data is at the beginning of the processing, facts are at the end.

Three aspects are decisive for the quality of statistical information: first, statistical measurement quality; second, theoretical-methodological consistency; and third, relevance for information needs and decisions. Only if all three aspects are achieved satisfactorily, or better 'adequately', can a statistical number, indicator, graph or map play its role: Because then it is fit for purpose.