

## Did you know statistics is great?

What comes to mind when you hear the word “statistics”? Is it a positive or a negative word for you? Did you know a statistician might become one of the most important jobs of the future? Let’s look at the reasons why.



The amount of information in the world is not only growing but exploding. More data has been created in the past two years than in the entire human history. This year alone about 1.7 megabytes of new information will be created every second for every human being on the planet. And this is just the beginning of an information revolution that will touch every person alive today.

Statistics is a set of mathematical equations that we use to analyse information. It sorts data and lets us know which one is the most important. At the moment, less than 0.5% of all data is ever analysed and used. Just imagine how many more things we could discover if we simply managed to wrap our minds around all that information! Statistics could help us significantly, as it is already doing in the following fields:

- In education, teachers use statistics to create tests which are fair and properly graded. Students use probabilities to decide what they need to study before their exams. School psychologists and other school staff get the resources they need to help their students through statistical analysis.

- Statistics determine whether our food and water are good to consume, as well as how many ingredients and spices go into food which we buy in shops, cafes or restaurants.
- Every successful business looks at statistics to figure out if their costs are too high, and how they can make more profit. It can also show what makes customers return, and how to create attractive ads.
- All weather forecasts use data from instruments on land, in water and the atmosphere, such as satellites, barometers, radars, and weather balloons. Analysing such information about atmospheric pressure, temperature, rain, wind, and other elements, tells people what the weather will be like.



As you can see, data is everywhere. Therefore, if you want to understand how the world works, you should learn at least a little about statistics.

Unfortunately, some students worry that they need an A in math to understand it. This is not true at all! Basic statistics only uses general math taught in regular high schools. Addition, subtraction, multiplication and division are enough to get some practical skills in statistics.

We can't know what future will be like, but one thing we do know is that there will be more and more information. The people who can figure it out will have an easier time, with more choices and flexibility in their jobs. They will also be better equipped to face real-life challenges.

**Questions and tasks:**

- 1 How are data and statistics connected?
- 2 Can you think of (or research) more examples of where statistics is useful?
- 3 Use your knowledge of Maths and ICT to calculate how much data will be produced this year for you alone. (The amount of data mentioned multiplied by the number of seconds there are in a year.)
- 4 Find out: When and where can you learn statistics in Croatia?
- 5 Get practical: Use Google and YouTube to find simple tools for kids to try out statistics in your class. Ask for your English or Maths teacher's help if needed.