



EU Twinning Project MK/09/IB/ST/01  
SUPPORT TO THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE FOR CAPACITY BUILDING AND  
IMPROVING COMPLIANCE OF STATISTICS WITH EU STANDARDS



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## The 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2013 at a glance

Dear readers,  
during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2013 the half of the project implementation time was reached. That's an occasion to have a look on the current state of realization of the project for the first year.

40 short-term-expert missions and 2 study visits were realized. 79 EU-experts visited Skopje and 326 participations of Macedonian colleagues on the short-term-missions and study visits were recorded.

Activities implemented till the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> Project year			
Component	Expert missions	Number of Macedonian participants	Number of involved EU-experts
1	18	149	36
2	10	65	15
3	6	50	16
4	6	62	12
<b>Total</b>	40	326	79

One of the challenges of the project in the first year was the timely implementation of the activities. Due the multitasking obligations of all involved statisticians it was a hard work to find an appropriate date for the 1<sup>st</sup> short-term-missions in the several subcomponents. Nev-

ertheless with 29 most of the missions started in time or with a delay less than one month.

Besides the figures the personal impressions are important to get information about the progress of the project. This is why in this issue you will find an evaluation of the current state of the project by both project leaders.

The usually more quiet summer time was characterized by a special theme. In three meetings (1.1.2.1, 1.1.2.2 and 1.1.2.7) the topic dealt with were fixed capital indicators. That means e.g. to find methods for including the value of buildings and monuments into the National Accounts.

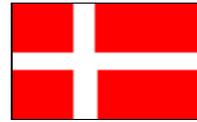


*What's the value of the Osogovski manastir in National Accounts – a special question, which was considered during two missions of the project.*

Six more short-term-expert missions were conducted in September, one of them again in National Accounts. National Accounts are not only a summary of figures and tables, which



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are not easy to understand for someone from general public. Principle European Economic Indicators give a summary and make the results comparable. The calculation of these special Indicators for Macedonia was the topic of mission 1.4.1. The complexity of this topic was a challenge for the management as well, it was difficult to find experts, who are competent for all of these indicators.

The topics of the activities in component 2 were passenger mobility transport statistics and indicators for sustainable forest management. In 2.1.2 the preparation of the pilot survey continued, in mission 2.3.1.2 the development of forest indicators started with the assessment of the current situation.

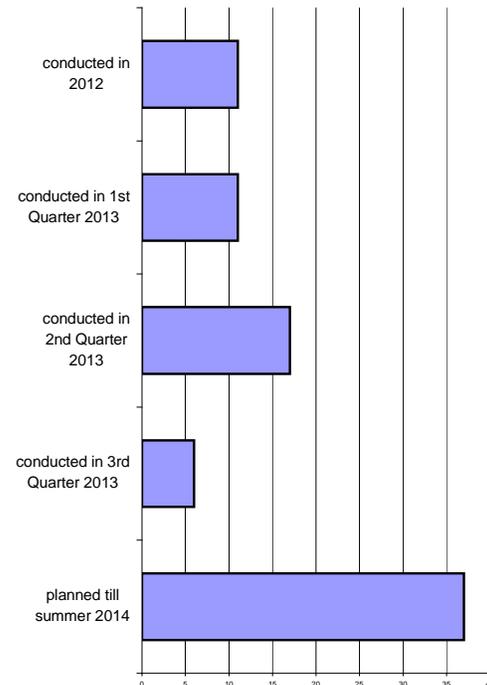
In Component 3 the work continued on quality review on statistics (3.1.1.3) and the usage of a special software (Arc GIS) for the visualisation of statistical results (3.2.5).

The continuation of the implementation of an electronic data collection system in the SSO was the purpose of mission 4.2.4. In result of that mission a strategy for online data collection was finished and the connected benchmark can be considered as achieved.

An additional activity during the summer months was the preparation of a contract with a private firm for support of the SSO staff in interpretation and explanation of the business accounting information in Macedonia. It was agreed that the planned knowledge transfer will be realized by consultations for the SSO staff organized by the company and by prepar-

ing and providing of documentation on the topics of the consultations. These consultations have started on 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

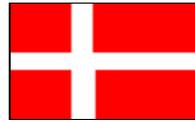
### Short-term-expert missions in the project - current state



The 4<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee Meeting took place on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2013. The meeting included to presentation of an evaluation of the current status of the project. The project progress and related topics were discussed afterwards. The Quarterly Report was adopted in the final version for approval.



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**The Project after the first half – with the eyes of the Project Leaders**

**Interview with the Director General of the State Statistical Office, Ms. Blagica Novk-ovska**



**1. What is your general impression after the first year?**

It was really quite a dynamic year filled with lots of planning and plenty of work. In addition, we are very pleased to summarize that all activities are being carried out in accordance with the working plan of our project. Our work and results have shown that the successful implementation of the project is our primary objective. I am really satisfied with the achieved progress.

**2. What is special about the project compared with previous projects?**

My office has had really extensive experience with international cooperation since 1993 and international projects since 1997. Our joint work with DESTATIS on national projects started with CARDS 2005, continued with IPA

2007 and now with IPA 2009. As you can see, we have been working together for a long time and this cooperation simply just works. To summarize, all projects with DESTATIS are based on close and trustful cooperation between all parties involved. This is an absolute essential and it is of great benefit for all of us.

**3. Is there space for improvements?**

As I said, I am quite satisfied with the achieved progress. However, there is always space for improvements. On our joint meetings we are continuously exploring the possibilities to make improvements regarding better organization and trying to do it in a practical and goal-oriented manner.

**4. Your forecast for the second part of the project?**

It is quite optimistic. I am sure that we will reach the ultimate goal of our project to further develop the overall system for production of quality statistics. Personally, I am eager to see on our website the availability of advanced online services for data collection. I believe that this service will have multiple effects on our work: it will improve the quality in general terms, it will decrease the costs for data production, and it will reduce the burden on our staff and on the respondents. I expect that it will really strengthen the image of our office as a modern institution.



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**Interview with the Member State Project Leader, Mr. Ringo Raupach**



**1. What is your general impression after the first year?**

As we enter into the second year of our joint Twinning project, we are now starting to see the results of our work. The cooperation with our partners has been close from the very start. This is a strong basis for achieving all agreed project results. Thanks to this we have seen good progress towards the transfer of national accounts data to NACE Rev.2 or the compilation of supply and use tables. Together with the SSO we have also prepared the methodologies for the surveys on import/export prices, passenger transport, organic farming and environmental protection expenditures. So the general impression, in light of the ambitious tasks and objectives, is really positive.

**2. What is special about the project compared with previous projects?**

The SSO has been a long-standing partner for Destatis since the beginning of our first joint project in 2006. German statisticians have provided significant support to the national statistical offices of candidate countries for the accession to the European Union. Many of our former partners have joined the EU in the meantime and we are now supported by ex-

perts from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic for the implementation of this project. Today, Macedonia is among all accession candidates the closest partner of Destatis and we are very happy to continue this special relationship.

**3. Is there space for improvements?**

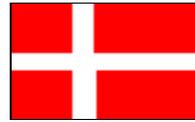
We think that it is one of the advantages of our work that experts from different EU countries can share the peculiarities of their respective statistical systems with their counterparts from the SSO. This enables us to share best practices. In some cases the experts from different countries have joined forces and conduct the missions together. In an area such as statistics, international cooperation is facilitated by the fact that most activities of the member states are harmonized on the European level to ensure a maximum level of data comparability. In some cases we, therefore, have readjusted the implementation in order to be able to present the most relevant solutions for the SSO. In this context, we also thank our international colleagues, not only from new EU member states but also from Denmark and France, for their flexibility during the implementation.

**4. Your forecast for the second part of the project?**

We are very optimistic about the positive outcome of our joint work. Taking into account that a large part of our cooperation includes discussions about quality management issues and the improvement of processes, we are also very optimistic about the long-term impact of this project.



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### Next activities in the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2013\*

After the summer holiday period the realization of the project goals in the next quarter will continue with an increased number of activities.\*\* For the coming quarter up to now 9 missions have been confirmed\*, 4 of them in the National Accounts Components. Three more missions are scheduled in subcomponent 2 and two more in subcomponent 3. There is also a study visit to Germany planned till the end of the year within Component 3.1 for the improvement of processes and process change management. The discussions from the previous activities should be continued during this visit with the participation of the BC project leader. The date is not confirmed yet.

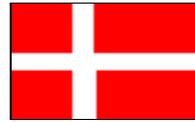
Activity- No.	Contents	Date
1.2.2	National Accounts - Seasonal adjustment in quarterly accounts data – revision of data	14. – 17.10.2013
2.5.1.2	Crime statistics – improvements	15. – 18.10.2013
1.3.1.3	Continuation of practical work on transfers of NA data to new NACE	28.10. – 01.11.2013
1.3.2.1	Elaboration of methods for implementation of health accounts	04. – 08.11.2013
2.5.4.3	Improvement and publication of Laeken indicators	05. – 08.11.2013
3.1.3.2	Trade-off between data protection and the usability of data	12. – 15.11.2013
2.5.3.	Cultural statistics I	25. – 29.11.2013
1.1.1.10	National Accounts - Integration of sector accounts (III)	25. – 29.11.2013
3.1.1.4	Quality management - First DESAP self-assessment	10. – 13.12.2013

\* Current status: 8th October 2013

\*\* Two more missions (2.1.2 and 2.3.2.1) started on 30<sup>th</sup> September and are reported for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter.



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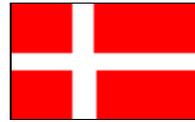


### Contacts at a glance

Project team Members			
Member State Country		Beneficiary Country	
Name	Function	Name	Function
Mr Ringo Raupach	German MS Project Leader ringo.raupach@destatis.de Tel: + 49 228 99 643 8932	Ms Blagica Novkovska, PhD	Beneficiary Country Project Leader blagica.novkovska@stat.gov.mk Tel: + 389 2 3295 665
Mr Leonhard Fix	German MS Project Manager leonhard.fix@destatis.de Tel: + 49 228 99 643 8936	Ms Tatjana Velkova Jovanchevska	RTA Counterpart tatjana.velkova@stat.gov.mk tel: + 389 2 3295 787
Ms Charlotte Juul Hansen	Junior MS Project Leader CJH@dst.de Tel: + 45 39 17 39 37	Component leaders	
		Name	Function
Mr Bernd Richter	Resident Twinning Adviser (RTA) bernd.richter@stat.gov.mk Tel: + 389 2 3295 668	Ms Verka Grozdanoska Panova	BC Component 1 Leader verka.panova@stat.gov.mk tel: + 389 2 3295 681
Ms. Badeva Rajna	RTA Office rajna.badeva@stat.gov.mk Tel: + 389 2 3295 768	Ms Mirjana Bosnjak	BC Component 2 Leader, (Sub-components 2.1-2.4) mirjana.bosnjak@stat.gov.mk tel: + 389 2 3295 655
		Ms Violeta Krsteva	BC Component 2 Leader, (Sub-component 2.5) violeta.krsteva@stat.gov.mk tel: + 389 2 3295 617
		Ms Helena Papazoska	BC Component 3 Leader (Sub-component 3.1) BC Component 4 Leader helena.papazoska@stat.gov.mk tel: + 389 2 3295 630



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		Mr Goran Kirandziski	BC Component 3 Leader, (Sub-component 3.2) goran.kirandziski@stat.gov.mk tel: + 389 2 3295 684
		Ms Tatjana Mitevaska	RTA Counterpart (Deputy), Department for International Co- operation and European Integration at SSO tatjana.mitevaska@stat.gov.mk tel: + 389 2 3295 670
		Ms Makedonka Trajkova-Cingarovska	Monitoring Function makedonka.trajkova @stat.gov.mk tel: + 389 2 3295 674
		Ms Biljana Karajovanovik	Monitoring Function (Deputy) biljana.ristevska@stat.gov.mk tel: + 389 2 3295 703