



**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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**Statement from the Project Leaders**

This is the 7<sup>th</sup> and final newsletter for the joint twinning project “Support to the State Statistical Office for Capacity Building and Improving Compliance of Statistics with EU Standards”.

Both main partners, the State Statistical Office (SSO) and the Federal Statistical Office of Germany (FSO) share a history of close cooperation that started in 2006 with the first joint twinning project.

During the last two years 61 experts from 9 EU member states and 676 colleagues from the SSO worked jointly towards achieving the ambitious objectives that were set for this twinning project.

The concluding events that were organized at the end of the project have certainly been one of the highlights of the implementation. It is very positive that, after hard work throughout the lifetime of the project, the SSO has been able to inform the interested public about the outcome of the activities in the twinning project. One of the major results has been an improved methodology and calculations for national accounts including the implementation of NACE rev.2. In addition, pilot surveys have

been organized successfully and evaluated in the areas of transport statistics, organic farming, and environment statistics. In the area of data quality instruments for quality review have been discussed and adopted. Furthermore, significant improvements could be achieved with regard to the IT infrastructure of the SSO.

We would like to say thank you to all individuals and institutions who participated in the joint work and we hope that the close relationships that have been established will last into the future.



**Blagica Novkovska, PhD,**  
BC Project Leader, SSO Director

**Ringo Raupach,**  
MS Project Leader, Head of Section International Cooperation, FSO Germany

**Concluding Events**

On 1<sup>st</sup> July 2014, at the EU Info Centre of the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Macedonia, a concluding promotional event was organized under the title “Macedonian Statistics Closer to the Vision for the ESS”. In this event the twinning partners presented the activities and results of the joint project. Speakers included Aivo Orav, Head of



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the EU Delegation to the Republic of Macedonia, Jovan Andonovski, State Secretary at the Secretariat for European Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, Hans-Helge Sander, Deputy-Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Republic of Macedonia, Blagica Novkovska, Director of the SSO and BC PL, Roderich Egeler, President of the Federal Statistical Office of Germany (FSO), and Ringo Raupach, Head of Section at the FSO and EU MS PL.

President Egeler of the FSO stressed in his contribution that he sees the SSO on a good way towards further harmonization of the statistical work with EU requirements.

On 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014, at the premises of the SSO and the Economic Chamber of the Republic of Macedonia, several seminars took place marking the end of the Twinning Project. The seminars covered the following subjects:

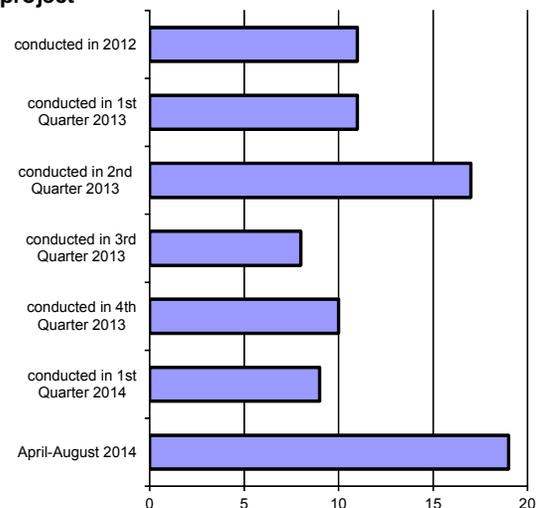
- Standardization and modernization of data collection methods
- Progress made for better understanding of NA
- Social statistics
- Organic farming and EPE
- Import-export indices
- European Statistics Code of Practice
- Thematic maps

The seminars were well-attended by professional audiences including representatives from science, media, government institutions and trade associations. As part of each seminar colleagues from the SSO together with main experts from the EU twinning partners presented the main results of the work within the respective project subcomponents.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> July the seventh meeting of the SC of the Twinning project “Support to the SSO for capacity building and improving compliance of statistics with EU standards” took place.

#### The last months at a glance

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



The final months of the implementation phase have been the most intensive time in the project. All activities were concluded as planned. In addition to a relatively high number of activities that were originally foreseen to be conducted during these months, a number of additional project missions could be implemented. The need for these missions arose from the previous consultations when experts concluded that additional expertise may be required in order to finalize the discussions.

From April to August 2014 altogether 18 short-term-expert missions and one study visit was



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conducted. That means that overall 83 short-term-expert missions and six study visits to MS countries were implemented within the project.

This means that the implementation of activities has been completed as planned in all four components of the project.

**Project results**

The following major results have been achieved:

**Component 1: National Accounts**

- Improvement of National accounts methodologies and indicators
- Implementation of seasonal adjustment in quarterly accounts data
- Implementation of NACE Rev.2 in NA calculation
- Developed set of Euro/PEEs indicators and sustainable development indicators

**Component 2: Sectoral Statistics**

Improvement of

- Passenger transport statistics
- External trade and real price import/export statistics
- statistics on organic farming
- Indicators on sustainable forest management
- Statistics on environmental protection expenditures and
- Statistics in the fields of culture, health, crime and social exclusion (Laeken indicators)

**Component 3: Institutional Building**

Quality review of statistics and production of thematic maps in GIS environment

**Component 4: Electronic Data Collection**

- Assistance in the preparation of the tender files for centralized backup and disaster recovery system
- Procurement of applications for online data collection

**Project implementation in figures**

During the last months of the project the following activities were carried out.

Month in 2014	Activities realized
April	1
May	7
June	4
July	7

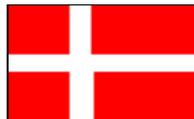
The realized short-term activities are reflected in all components:

	Activities realized until the end of the project (August 2014)	% of all in that component
Component 1	31	103.3 (out of 30)
Component 2	23	100.0 (out of 23)
Component 3	16	100.0 (out of 16)
Component 4	12	100.0 (out of 12)

In addition, six study visits have been hosted by the MS partners. All missions have been implemented as planned.



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**Component leaders' perspectives**

***Interview with Ms. Helena Papazoska,  
Leader of Components 3.1 and 4,  
Head of IT Sector, SSO***



**1. What are the key areas and the project goals in your component(s)?**

The two components for which I was responsible had several sub-components, that looked very different at a first glance but all had a common denominator – European Statistics Code of Practice. The key area and the objective of Components 3 and 4 of the project is further harmonization with the principles of this Code and efforts to fulfil as many indicators as possible.

The key objectives of the Components were the following: Improvement of specific standards of the statistics business process model in accordance with the European quality standards, Defining of Strategy for Electronic Data Collection and Strategy for Data Management, Automatic Backup and Archiving, Process Quality monitoring of the works carried out in the parallel project for metadata-supported data collection over the Internet, Development of technical specification for updating of the IT

infrastructure “Centralized system for backup and disaster recovery“.

**2. Are you satisfied with the current state of realization of the project goals?**

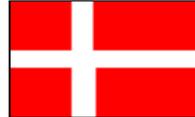
Since the project is almost at the end, it is more appropriate to discuss about evaluation of the project results instead of the current status. Detailed attention was paid on making the defined objectives measurable and to have visible outputs during the development of the Twinning Fiche. These are some of the numerous measurable results:

1. The applied European questionnaire for self-assessment of the statistical research managers (DESAP) which is a process oriented tool that simply identifies the strengths and weaknesses in the statistical survey cycle which is a basis for continuous improvement of the quality of the products and processes. The adapted DESAP questionnaire is harmonized with the statistical business process model of the State Statistical Office (SSO).

2. In accordance with the Law on State Statistics and the Official Statistics Principles, the SSO is obliged to protect the statistical data from disclosure but it in the same time it should provide access to protected micro-data for the needs of the scientific and research community. A lot work was invested in the frames of the Twinning on elaborating various micro data protection methods and their application by developing own software solutions – all with a purpose to achieve optimal balance between the level of protection and usability of the micro data.



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3. The updating of the IT infrastructure in the SSO provides many benefits: reduced maintenance costs, the use of the IT resources becomes more efficient due to the possibility to balance the servers load in the virtual environment, reduced electricity consumption, centralized data storage which improves the security and the process of backup and archiving is automated.

4. The IT system for Internet data collection is very significant achievement that will contribute towards better quality of the data collected, timeliness and less burden on the data providers.

**3. Can you indicate some specifics related to the activities in your component?**

The Component 4 was very specific. In parallel with the Twinning, the SSO was beneficiary of two other projects from the IPA 2009 National Program. The Twinning activities were aimed to support the SSO for successful implementation of those projects which is the achievement of the above mentioned results 3 and 4. The first Project was development of IT system for metadata-supported electronic data collection process. For this project, experts from the Danish Statistical Office were continuously involved in the evaluation of the quality of the works carried out by the software company delivering the project for services. The other parallel project was the contract for purchase of new IT equipment in the State Statistical Office. The Twinning project developed the technical specifications for the software and hardware solutions, which were the results of this project. A current situation assessment was made, including the risks, needs and Data

Management Strategy was development which also included automatization of the process for making backup and archiving.

**4. What is your forecast for the remaining time of the Twinning project and after?**

The implementation of all the activities foreseen by the working plan and with the agreed changes for introduction of two new activities has been done. What remains now is to work on the sustainability of the results achieved and very good basis for this are the recommendations of the experts integrated in the reports and conclusions from the implemented activities.

This is the second Twinning Project for the SSO and we deem that the benefit of these Twinning Projects is that they include peer sharing experiences between the Institutions part of the European Statistical System and the SSO. We are looking forward for the good relations established with our colleagues from other statistical offices to continue, all for the mutual benefit.

***Interview with Mr. Goran Kirandziski,  
Leader of Component 3.2, Head of  
Department for dissemination, statistical  
territorial register, information and marketing***



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**1. What are the main objectives to be fulfilled in your sub-component?**

Within the Twinning project, the sub-component 3.2 refers to improvement of cartographic outputs in displaying and visualization of statistical data in the GIS environment. It includes an automation of the process of production of thematic maps by developing application in GIS environment. Another aspect is the development of web mapping.

Considering that one picture replaces a 1000 words, the thematic maps provide displaying intensity and spatial distribution of a particular statistical phenomena. Thus allows the users with quick glance at the map to get a picture of the statistical occurrence which is the subject of the thematic map displaying.

Since that internet is an integral part of our everyday living, the web mapping will allow users of the website of the State Statistical Office to follow the most important statistical indicators from various areas of statistics and different territorial levels through the cartographic displays.

Certainly, the gained experience and knowledge for employees in this area should not be forgotten to be mentioned, which in my opinion

is a great benefit during the project implementation.

**2. Has the implementation been successful so far? What has been achieved at this stage already?**

I am quite satisfied with the dynamics of the project objectives implementation considering that the development for application of thematic maps in ArcGIS environment is finishing. Also the process for displaying (showing) maps through the web mapping in Open Source environment is completed and the testing phase in local conditions is successfully conducted.

**3. Has the support from international experts been efficient?**

The topic itself is specific, it is a field with certain specific requirements. During the missions with the experts have been discussed and considered various aspects of thematic cartography, functionalities that an application for production of thematic maps should have, as well as the potential solutions, that again opened new questions.

For us, the web mapping has been a new experience and challenge with own forces to establish basis for displaying thematic maps in Open Source web environment.

**4. What do you expect for the end of the Twinning Project?**

As mentioned earlier, by the end of the project an application for the production of thematic maps and testing of web mapping application in a real environment should be completed. In terms of web mapping certainly this is the initial



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phase and it will be developed in the following period after the project completion.

Some impressions from the concluding event, 30 June / 1 July 2014



Audience in the Chamber of Commerce



Blagica Novkovska, SSO Director



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Concluding Event at the EU Delegation



Roderich Egeler, President FSO

**Contacts at a glance**

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