



# STRATEGIC PLAN

## 2015-2017

### PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE

- 1.7.1. Harmonisation of statistics in accordance with the EU standards
- 1.7.2. Strengthening the coordination of the national statistical system
- 1.7.3. Strengthening the cooperation with providers of data and bearers of administrative data sets
- 1.7.4. Strengthening the cooperation and communication with users, continuous measurement of user needs and satisfaction, and strengthening the confidence in statistics
- 1.7.5. Strengthening the institutional capacity of the State Statistical Office

## ADDRESS OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE



*"The science of statistics is the chief instrumentality through which the progress of civilisation is now measured, and by which its development hereafter will be largely controlled"*  
S. N. D. North

As an institution responsible for producing official statistics in the country and as coordinator of the overall statistical system, the State Statistical Office achieves its strategic goals by following the principles of official statistics of the United Nations and the European Statistics Code of Practice, as well as the national Law on State Statistics and the Five-Year Work Programme.

The vision and mission of the State Statistical Office for producing and disseminating objective, timely and reliable statistical information are contained in the Strategic Plan for development of the State Statistical Office for the period 2015-2017.

This Strategy creates the framework in which the State Statistical Office defines its primary objectives, priorities and programmes for development for the next three-year period.

The ultimate goal is by achieving these programme objectives to enable the development of the State Statistical Office in order to satisfy user needs and to meet the European and world standards in statistics.

The Strategy will be implemented through the defined priorities, objectives and programmes. The accomplishment of the established goals will represent a measurable indicator of the performance of the institution, and the ability of the State Statistical Office to overcome all challenges, especially the strengthening of institutional capacities in the pre-accession negotiations for Chapter 18 – Statistics.

Sincerely,  
Blagica Novkovska, PhD  
Director-General of the State Statistical Office

## 1.1. INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Plan 2015-2017 of the State Statistical Office is a document containing the priorities, objectives, programmes, sub-programmes and activities which the Office plans to accomplish in accordance with the defined priorities in the process of harmonisation with European and international statistical standards and with the adopted quality management framework.

The priorities, objectives, programmes, sub-programmes and activities defined in this Strategic Plan are aimed at:

- Meeting the obligations pertaining to the State Statistical Office from the Programme of Statistical Surveys 2013-2017, which represents a strategic document for the statistical system of the country;
- Accomplishing the strategic priorities of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia (NATO and EU integration of the Republic of Macedonia), i.e. meeting the obligations of the National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA);
- Preparing the State Statistical Office for the Light Peer Review that will be conducted by the European Commission in the upcoming period.

The Strategic Plan takes into consideration the recommendations of the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat) from the regular annual missions to the State Statistical Office for monitoring the progress in the field of statistics, and of the European Commission's Light Peer Review of the progress in the implementation of the Code of Practice, conducted in November 2010.

The structure of this plan is based on the regulations and recommendations of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. Therefore, the Strategic Plan of the State Statistical Office, regarding the structure and contents, deviates to a degree from the strategies of other institutions of the European statistical system.

## **1.2. MISSION**

The State Statistical Office produces and disseminates official statistical data on the Macedonian economy and society as a basis for the process of decision making, based on relevant information. Published statistical data must be accurate, timely, unbiased, accessible and easy to use.

## **1.3. VISION**

Our vision is to be recognised as an institution that provides quality, timely and internationally comparable statistical data, an institution that is mindful of respondent burden and focused on meeting data user needs.

### **1.3.1. VALUES**

The values that the State Statistical Office upholds and adheres to in practice are those of the European Statistics Code of Practice, which consists of fifteen principles referring to the institutional environment, statistical processes and statistical outputs:

- Professional Independence
- Mandate for Data Collection
- Adequacy of Resources
- Quality Commitment
- Statistical Confidentiality
- Impartiality and Objectivity
- Sound Methodology
- Appropriate Statistical Procedures
- Non-Excessive Burden on Respondents
- Cost Effectiveness
- Relevance
- Accuracy and Reliability
- Timeliness and Punctuality
- Coherence and Comparability
- Accessibility and Clarity

## **1.4. TASKS AND DUTIES OF THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE**

The Office, within its competences, performs the following expert activities:

- coordinates the activities of state statistics within the national statistical system,
- prepares and prescribes instruments for statistical surveys (methodologies, guidelines, forms, etc.),
- gives opinion to authorised bodies regarding the methodological bases for surveys under their competence
- gives suggestions and opinions when introducing new and supplementing the existing data sets that can be used as a source of data for state statistics,
- give initiatives and suggestions for improving the contents of existing and new data sets that are used for statistical surveys in accordance with the law and the Programme of Statistical Surveys 2013-2017;

- cooperates with authorised bodies which, within their competences, conduct statistical surveys in the area of state statistics,
- establishes, keeps and maintains statistical data sets,
- prepares national statistical standards,
- determines the needs for statistical data,
- prescribes organisational and technical measures for protection of confidential data,
- collects and processes statistical data,
- performs analysis of statistical data,
- stores and disseminates statistical data,
- meets international obligations in the area of statistics,
- coordinates the transmission of statistical data to international organisations,
- performs services in the area of statistics for the needs of data users, on their request,
- popularises statistics;
- implements projects in the area of state statistics, independently and in cooperation with other authorised bodies,
- supervises the implementation of the provision of the Law on State Statistics;
- performs other tasks prescribed by the Law on State Statistics and other laws.

## **1.5. SUMMARY OF THE SPECIFICITY OF THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE**

The State Statistical Office is an independent professional organisation whose competences and scope of work are regulated by the Law on Organisation and Operation of the State Administration Bodies ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 58/00, 44/02, 82/08, 167/10 and 51/11) and the Law on State Statistics ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 54/97, 21/07, 51/11, 104/13 and 42/14).

In accordance with the Law on State Statistics, the State Statistical Office, on the basis of scientific methods, provides users (legal and natural persons) with data on the economy, demography, social life, environmental protection and other areas. Official statistical data, as well as the time and content of all forms of dissemination, are protected from any kind of influence, and all users are treated equally.

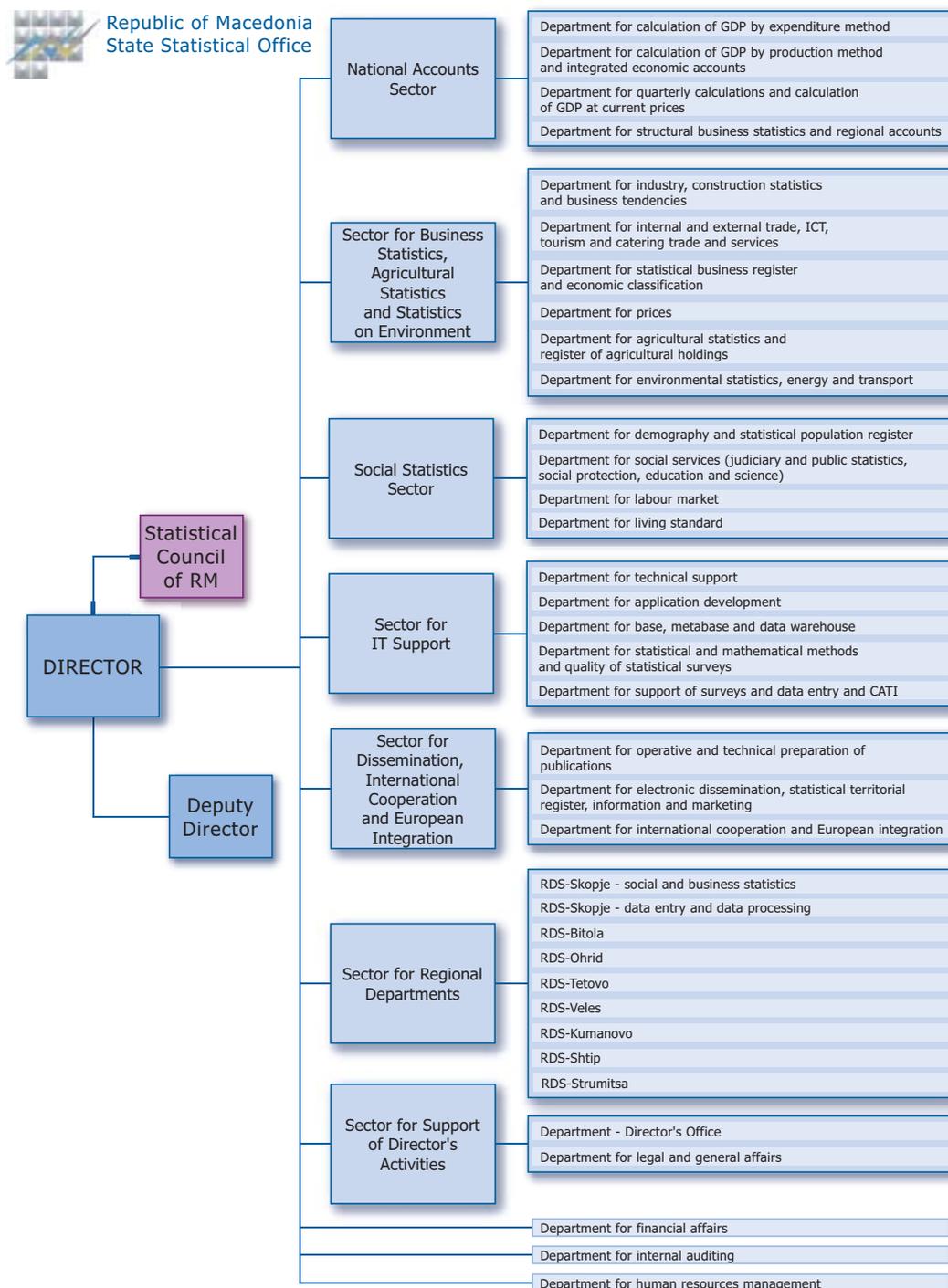
The State Statistical Office is responsible for producing official statistics in the Republic of Macedonia and, at the same time, is a coordinator of the statistical system in the Republic of Macedonia.

The State Statistical Office performs its role in cooperation with other entities - authorised bodies that are also responsible for producing official statistics in the frame of the Programme of Statistical Surveys 2013-2017 and which in the collection, processing and dissemination of data apply statistical standards, methods and techniques. In performing its functions, the State Statistical Office pays special attention to statistical data confidentiality. The data gathered through statistical surveys or indirectly, from administrative and other sources, represent confidential data, used for statistical purposes only, i.e. for development and production of official statistics, and are published as summary (aggregated) data. Within the system of official statistics, the Office acts as a coordinator in the frames of international statistical cooperation. In performing the international obligations, the Office, in cooperation with other authorised bodies, ensures comparability of data with other European countries, observes and implements international methodologies and standards, and actively participates in the development of official statistics at the international level.

## 1.6. STRUCTURE OF THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE

The State Statistical Office adopted a new Rulebook on Internal Organisation of the Office in November 2011 in accordance with its competences defined by law and the Regulation on Internal Organisation of the State Administration Bodies ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 93/00 and 14/02).

According to the Rulebook, the Office performs its competences through seven sectors and 36 departments, of which 8 are distributed on the territory the Republic of Macedonia. The organisational setup of the Office allows optimal management and monitoring of work processes and human resources management. The Office is managed by a Director appointed by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. In accordance with the amendments to the Law on State Statistics of March 2014, the Director is appointed after a public competition. Serving in an advisory role is the Statistical Council, composed of 15 members, of which 14 are appointed by the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, while the Director of the Office is an ex-officio member.



## 1.7. PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE

**For the period 2015-2017, the State Statistical Office defined the following priorities:**

- Harmonisation of statistics in accordance with the EU standards
- Strengthening the coordination of the national statistical system
- Strengthening the cooperation with providers of data and holders of data sets
- Strengthening the cooperation and communication with users, continuous measurement of user needs and satisfaction, and strengthening the confidence in statistics
- Strengthening the institutional capacity of the State Statistical Office
- Strengthening the cooperation between statistical institutions of the countries in the region

### 1.7.1. Harmonisation of statistics in accordance with the EU standards

Objectives:

- Implementation of the Programme of Statistical Surveys 2013-2017.
- Data and metadata transmission to Eurostat by using the tools and formats prescribed by Eurostat.
- Implementation of the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice.

Planned deadline for priority realisation: 2017.

### 1.7.2. Strengthening the coordination of the national statistical system

Objectives:

- Further strengthening the role of the State Statistical Office as coordinator of the national statistical system, giving opinions on the methodological bases for collecting data in the statistical surveys that are conducted by other authorised bodies in accordance with the Programme of Statistical Surveys 2013-2017, coordinating the application of uniform statistical classifications, nomenclatures and standards for statistical production purposes.
- Support for strengthening the capacity of authorised bodies in the national statistical system through trainings in certain areas of common interest, particularly regarding the preparations for the next Light Peer Review.
- Signing memoranda and protocols of cooperation, participation in joint projects and more efficient distribution of competences with other authorised bodies in the national statistical system.
- Cooperation with other institutions in performing tasks related to the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) of the International Monetary Fund, and in meeting other obligations towards international institutions.
- Cooperation with other producers of official statistics to increase the available data sets and cooperation in the process of submitting these data to Eurostat.

Planned deadline for priority realisation: 2017.

### **1.7.3. Strengthening the cooperation with providers of data and holders of data sets**

Objectives:

- Inclusion of the State Statistical Office in the process of creating and amending the data sets.
- Reducing respondent burden
- Signing agreements for cooperation and data exchange with holders of data sets.

Planned deadline for priority realisation: 2017.

### **1.7.4. Strengthening the cooperation and communication with users, continuous measurement of user needs and satisfaction, and strengthening the confidence in statistics**

Objectives:

- Simplifying the access to statistical data.
- Modernising the manner of disseminating statistical data.
- Increasing the amount of published data and providing data with longer time series.
- Establishing new forms of communication with users.
- Conducting a User Satisfaction Survey.

Planned deadline for priority realisation: 2017.

### **1.7.5. Strengthening the institutional capacity of the State Statistical Office**

Objectives:

- Implementation of the Strategy for Development of a Metainformation System.
- Preparation for the next Peer Review.
- Increasing work efficiency.
- Improving information security..

Planned deadline for priority realisation: 2017.

### **1.7.6. Strengthening the cooperation between statistical institutions of the countries in the region**

Objectives:

- Cooperation with countries of the region for exchange of knowledge and experiences in the application of statistical standards.
- Cooperation between statistical institutions in the dissemination of data of regional importance.

Planned deadline for priority realisation: 2017.

## **1.8. PROGRAMMES**

For achieving the planned priorities and objectives of the Strategic Plan 2015-2017, the following programmes have been defined: Sectoral statistics; Upgrading the statistical infrastructure; Strengthening the cooperation with users; and Strengthening the coordination of the National Statistical System. The implementation of all programmes requires the engagement of appropriate human and financial resources, and the schedule for their implementation is defined in the Plan for Implementation of the Statistical Programme, which is part of this document.

### **1.8.1. Sectoral statistics**

The implementation of this programme means fulfilling the basic function of the institution and refers to the execution of the Programme of Statistical Surveys 2013-2017.

Sub-programmes:

- Reducing respondent burden, increased utilisation of administrative data sources.
- Publishing quality reports for statistical surveys.
- Improving the volume and quality of statistical data in accordance with EU standards.

Success indicators:

- Implemented ESA 2010 and SNA 2008.
- Compiled EDP notification tables for the country.
- Increased number of surveys that use administrative data sources.
- Number of surveys carried out by electronic data collection.
- Number of prepared survey quality reports.
- Adopted regulations and published statistical data from new surveys and from additional analyses and calculations.
- Increased amount of data transmitted to Eurostat by using the standards and formats prescribed by Eurostat.

### **1.8.2. Upgrading the statistical infrastructure**

In order for the SSO to fulfil its basic function, it is necessary to invest continuously in strengthening the institutional capacity. For that purpose, plans have been made to improve the human resources as well as the technical capacity of the institution.

Sub-programmes:

- Further development of statistical registers and establishment of new data warehouses.
- Implementation of the policy for revision of statistical data, classifications and nomenclatures.

- Rational use of resources.
- Preparation for the next Peer Review.
- Acquiring ISO 9001 certificate.
- Information security.

Success indicators:

- Improvements to the procedures for updating the Statistical Farm Register and the Statistical Business Register.
- Establishing a procedure for updating the existing population records with data from statistical surveys and from administrative data sources.
- Defined procedures for updating the Statistical Territorial Register with data from the Administrative Territorial Register and other administrative sources.
- Established data warehouse for agricultural statistics.
- Redesigned data warehouse for national accounts.
- Registered statistical variables in the centralised metadata warehouse.
- Number of revised classifications, nomenclatures and data.
- Number of surveys covered with the system of electronic data collection.
- Changes to eStat in accordance with user requirements.
- Defined indicators for measuring the efficiency of resources used in separate surveys.
- Established communication with software companies for direct data delivery from the IT systems of business entities.
- Prepared manuals, guidelines, procedures and templates for the phases and processes of the Statistical Business Process Model (SBPM).
- Readiness of the SSO for the next cycle of the Light Peer Review.
- Performed preparatory activities for acquiring ISO-9001 quality certificate.
- Prepared additional guidelines, procedures and templates for improving information security.
- Updating the information security policy.
- Implemented automatic backup and archival system.
- Preparing an employee code for information security management.

### **1.8.3. Strengthening the cooperation with users**

The ultimate objective of statistical data production is meeting users' needs for official statistical data, thus supporting the democratic processes of the country.

Sub-programmes:

- Modernising the manner of disseminating statistical data.
- Maintaining regular communication with users.
- Access to microdata for scientific and research purposes.
- Strengthening the cooperation between statistical institutions of the countries in the region.

Success indicators:

- Created applications for access to web media.
- Disseminated statistical data via web cartography.
- Updated User Register.
- Increased number of users of the products and services of the Office.
- Greater amount of used statistical data.
- Prepared protected microdata sets for scientific research purposes and students.
- Signed memoranda of regional cooperation between the statistical institutions of the countries in the region.
- Number of organised regional events.
- Number of joint publications with countries in the region.

#### **1.8.4. Strengthening the coordination of the National Statistical System**

The State Statistical Office has a legal obligation to coordinate the national statistical system. In the period covered with this Strategic Plan, the institution will invest more resources in strengthening its coordinating role and in ensuring consistency of the Macedonian statistical system.

Sub-programmes:

- Strengthening the cooperation with providers of data and holders of administrative data sets.
- Strengthening the cooperation with authorised bodies for meeting the obligations within the National Statistical System.

Success indicators:

- Number of organised working meetings and signed agreements for cooperation with holders of data sets.
- Number of organised trainings and activities in certain areas of common interest with authorised bodies.

### **1.9. OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVED RESULTS OF THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE IN 2013**

The planned programmes and expected results for 2013 were defined in the Strategic Plan 2013-2015. The following programmes were defined:

- Sectoral statistics
- Upgrading the statistical infrastructure
- Strengthening the cooperation and communication with users, continuous measurement of user needs and satisfaction, strengthening the confidence in statistics, and
- Strengthening the coordination of the National Statistical System

### 1.9.1. In the programme Sectoral statistics, the following results were planned:

1. Reducing respondent burden
2. Providing regional data.
3. Preparing quality reports for statistical surveys
4. Improving the volume and quality of statistical data in accordance with EU standards
5. Activities on approved grants for implementation of the IPA 2011 Multi-Beneficiary Programme.
6. Implementing and supporting the activities of the IPA 2009 National Programme.

#### Realised activities:

**1. Reducing respondent burden:** In order to reduce respondent burden and for greater use of administrative data sources, activities have been performed for pre-filling statistical forms with available data from the Statistical Business Register. In higher education statistics, the process began of delivering data in electronic format.

**2. Providing regional data:** The SSO increased the amount of produced regional data from various areas, which have been systematised in the publication Regions of the Republic of Macedonia 2013, containing the latest economic and socio-demographic data on the regions of the country.

**3. Preparing quality reports for statistical surveys:** Activities continued for producing quality reports, created according to the SDMX standards (statistical data and metadata exchange) and prepared according to the ESMS structure. The reports include: description of the statistical data, information about their quality, description of the methodology and the process of production of the data.

**4. Improving the volume and quality of statistical data in accordance with EU standards:** The improvement in the quality and volume of statistical data in accordance with EU standards in 2013 was achieved through the following activities:

- In national accounts, the statistical surveys planned in the Programme of Statistical Surveys have been carried out, and GDP data have been prepared in accordance with the National Classification of Activities Rev.2. Activities for preparing sector accounts and calculation of consumption of fixed capital have been intensified.
- Most of the recommendations regarding ESA 1995 were implemented and preparations began for implementation of ESA 2010 for research and development and the treatment of military equipment.
- The statistical surveys in the field of business, agricultural and environmental statistics, planned in the Programme of Statistical Surveys, have been carried out.
- Industrial producer price indices on the non-domestic market and total (including the domestic market) have been calculated. The groups of monthly indices in the field of industrial producer prices have been harmonised with the manner of their publication in Eurostat. The industrial production index, adjusted for working days in

accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No. 1165/98 concerning short-term statistics, was published. Data have been provided for calculating turnover in industry by using deflators from industrial producer prices on the domestic and non-domestic market. Annual harmonisation with the European Classification of industrial products has begun, as well as transmission of data to Eurostat by using the same Classification.

- Data have been prepared by changing the base year for short-term statistics in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No. 1165/98 concerning short-term statistics, and a series of data has been produced with the new base year.
- Monthly construction cost indices have been calculated for the period 2005-2013. Data have been provided for calculation of the construction production index by using a construction cost deflator.
- Statistics on energy, transport, tourism and trade are continuously harmonised with EU regulations.
- Monthly data have been provided on natural gas and electricity. Full harmonisation has been achieved with the Directive concerning the transparency of gas and electricity prices charged to end-users.
- Further harmonisation has been made with Regulation 471/2009 by introducing a pilot survey on export and import by enterprise characteristics.
- Agricultural price statistics, being one of the best sources of quality data for calculation of economic accounts for agriculture, have been improved. Data on economic accounts for agriculture have been provided at the regional level for the period 2009-2011, and a revision has been made of data on economic accounts for agriculture in the part of labour force, for the period 1998-2011.
- The Farm Structure Survey has been carried out in accordance with European regulations. An inventory of animal production statistics has been prepared.
- The following pilot surveys have been conducted: organic production, environmental costs, passenger mobility, import-export prices, and sample-based pilot survey on crop production.
- In social statistics, the statistical surveys planned in the Programme of Statistical Surveys have been carried out.
- Data from the Job Vacancy Survey were transmitted to Eurostat for the first time, and the quality report from the Structure of Earnings Survey was delivered to Eurostat.
- Data on the structure of earnings and the indicators from the Survey on Income and Living Conditions have been published.
- In 2012, besides the surveys defined in the Programme of Statistical Surveys, the Office carried out the School-to-Work Transition Survey in cooperation with the International Labour Organisation, for which an analytical report was prepared and published in 2013.
- The innovation survey was carried out which provides data on innovations in business entities.

The activities in the defined programmes were performed with the support of the projects in which the State Statistical Office participated in 2013:

## **5. Activities on approved grants for implementation of the IPA 2011 Multi-beneficiary Programme:**

- Within **IPA 2009 Multi-Beneficiary Statistical Cooperation Programme**, which ended on 31 December 2012, the final reports (narrative and financial) for the entire duration of the project were submitted to and approved by Eurostat on 2 September 2013.
- In 2013, within the **IPA 2011 Multi-Beneficiary Statistical Cooperation Programme**, some of the financial problems the SSO faced in 2012 as a result of the debts of the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Education and Science were overcome, and part of the funds were transferred which enabled the implementation of priority activities. The interim report (narrative and financial) on the implementation of planned activities and spent funds was submitted in this period. The project duration is until 31 August 2014.
- **IPA 2012 Multi-Beneficiary Statistical Cooperation Programme.** The SSO applied for the grant for this Programme, including 15 pilot projects. The project is planned to last 23 months, from 1 January 2014 to 30 November 2015.

## **6. Implementing and supporting activities of the IPA 2009 National Programme:**

This programme included three contracts:

- **Twinning Project** "Support to the State Statistical Office", which was implemented in the period from 18 August 2012 to 17 August 2014.
- **Service Contract** for developing an IT system for metadata-driven data collection via Internet, which began in January 2013 and was fully completed by the end of 2013.
- **Procurement Contract** for IT equipment, for which the technical specification was prepared at the end of 2012 in cooperation with experts engaged in the Twinning Project. The tender procedure was carried out in 2013 and the procurement contract was signed on 21 December 2013.

### **1.9.2. In the programme Upgrading the statistical infrastructure, the following results were planned:**

1. Further development and improvement of the quality of the Statistical Farm Register.
2. Further development and improvement of the quality of the Statistical Business Register.
3. Development of the Statistical Population Register.
4. Further development and improvement of the quality of the Statistical Territorial Register
5. Implementation of the Statistical Data Revision Policy.
6. Revision of classifications
7. Sustainability of the development of the capacities of the State Statistical Office.
8. Implementation of the statistical disclosure control methods

9. Standardisation and integration of statistical processes
10. Implementation of the Strategy for Development of a Metainformation System
11. Improvement of the IT infrastructure in order to increase information security.
12. Preparing a Quality Policy.
13. Certification of the State Statistical Office for harmonisation with the ISO-9001 quality standard

Realised activities:

**1. Further development and improvement of the quality of the Statistical Farm Register:** Work continued on developing the procedures for updating the Statistical Farm Register. A farm structure survey was carried out, one of whose objectives is to provide data for updating the Register.

**2. Further development and improvement of the quality of the Statistical Business Register:** The scope and quality of the Statistical Business Register have been improved by conducting a statistical survey on local units. A database with groups of enterprises has been created and enterprise groups have been defined for 2010 and 2011.

**3. Development of the Statistical Population Register:** Regarding the Statistical Population Register, in 2013 the Office studied the positive practices and experiences of other countries in the process of building the Statistical Population Register, based on national circumstances and available data sources.

**4. Further development and improvement of the quality of the Statistical Territorial Register:** Amendments have been prepared for the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics - NUTS in accordance with the changes in the territorial organisation of the local self-government.

**5. Implementation of the Statistical Data Revision Policy:**

The planned data revisions were carried out in 2013.

**6. Revision of classifications:** The State Statistical Office in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science aligned the national education system with the International Standard Classification of Education – ISCED 2011. The changes in the economic classifications are regularly monitored. The National Nomenclature of Industrial Products – NNIP has been harmonised with the European nomenclature at the annual level, and amendments have been made to the National Classification of Activities NKD Rev.2.

**7. Sustainability of the development of the capacities of the State Statistical Office:**

In 2013, the State Statistical Office continued to pay particular attention to external and internal training of employees for the purpose of developing key skills in employees. As part of the external trainings in 2013, 37 employees took part in 36 meetings of Eurostat working groups, and 504 persons took part in 91 external training courses. In 2013, six internships were approved by Eurostat, of which three in Luxembourg, two in Hungary and one in Germany. In accordance with the training plan, the SSO continued with the practice of organising lectures given by the employees themselves. During 2013, a total of 31 internal trainings were held, which were attended by a total of 639 persons, or 21 per training on average. Of these, 24 were generic and 7 were specialised trainings.

In July 2013, the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia adopted new amendments to the Law on State Statistics. The amendments to the Law are aimed at aligning Macedonian

statistics with the principles of European statistics and at further specifying the definitions and categories used in the Law. Particular emphasis should be put on the introduction of the category "supervision" in the Law, for the purpose of strengthening the penal policy towards respondents regarding the delivery of timely and quality statistical information.

**8. Implementation of the statistical disclosure control methods:** The implementation of the statistical disclosure control methods started by using Argus software. Access to microdata has been allowed for scientific and research purposes. Procedures have been prepared for access to microdata.

**9. Standardisation and integration of statistical processes.** In order to achieve standardisation and integration of statistical processes, an IT system was developed for electronic data collection that enables standardised and metadata-driven design of statistical questionnaires, standardisation of the process of data collection and data management.

**10. Implementation of the Strategy for Development of a Metainformation System:** Regarding the implementation of the Strategy for Development of a Metainformation System, an action plan was developed and adopted and work began on achieving the first priority by meeting the preconditions for standardisation and integration of the data collection process.

**11. Improvement of the IT infrastructure in order to increase information security:** The tender procedure for procurement of hardware and software for automatic backup and archiving was successfully completed and a procurement contract was signed through IPA 2009 MBP, which will create preconditions for improving information security in the SSO.

**12. Preparing a Quality Policy:** A Quality Policy has been prepared, adopted and published on the web site of the SSO. Guidelines and procedures have also been prepared.

**13. Certification of the State Statistical Office for harmonisation with the ISO-9001 quality standard:** No activities were performed for ISO 9001 certification of the SSO due to lack of budget resources.

**1.9.3. In the programme Strengthening the cooperation and communication with users, continuous measurement of user needs and satisfaction, and strengthening the confidence in statistics, the following results were planned:**

1. Further improvement of the web site of the Office
2. Process of further redesign of statistical publications.
3. Establishing forms of regular communication with users

Realised activities:

**1. Further improvement of the web site of the Office:** During 2013, the web site was improved continuously. The following activities were undertaken:

- Updating the database with new data and including time series by areas.
- The tables of the Statistical Yearbook and the Statistical Reviews have been made available to users in Excel format.
- The State Statistical Office took part in celebrating the International Year of Statistics by posting a logo with a link to the web site of the International Year of Statistics 2013, and by including the logo in the editions of the Office.

- For improving the visualisation of statistical data and information, in several major areas on the web site there are tools for displaying animated graphs of the main data in these areas.
- Regular use of Twitter for posting information about the statistical products and activities of the Office.
- According to the latest Google Analytics data, the web site has had 1 633 119 hits (January - December 2013). In 2013, the web database was visited 56 677 times (January - December 2013).

**2. Process of further redesign of statistical publications:** New publications have been introduced and new data and indicators have been included for comparability with EU countries.

**3. Establishing forms of regular communication with users** - In 2013, regarding the forms of regular communication with users, the following activities were carried out:

- Lectures were organised for students from various faculties and universities.
- Texts prepared by experts from the SSO are published in the Newsletter of the Economic Chamber of Macedonia.

#### **1.9.4. In the programme Strengthening the coordination of the National Statistical System, the following results were planned:**

1. Strengthening the cooperation with providers of data and holders of administrative data sources
2. Strengthening the cooperation with authorised bodies for meeting the obligations within the National Statistical System

Realised activities:

**1. Strengthening the cooperation with providers of data and holders of administrative data sources** - In order to strengthen the cooperation with providers of data and holders of administrative data sets, several work meetings were held with the holders of administrative data sets to define the necessary standards for using administrative data for statistical purposes.

Agreements were signed for electronic data exchange with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Public Revenue Office, the Employment Service Agency, the Pension and Disability Insurance Fund and the Health Insurance Fund of Macedonia, as well as an Annexe to the Memorandum of cooperation and data exchange with the Public Revenue Office.

The cooperation with data providers was further strengthened by active participation in workshops organised at the Office in various statistical areas (agricultural statistics, labour market statistics, etc.).

**2. Strengthening the cooperation with authorised bodies for meeting the obligations within the National Statistical System** – Further strengthening of the cooperation with other authorised bodies for meeting the obligations within the National Statistical System:

- A sectorisation group was created with representatives of the State Statistical Office, the Ministry of Finance and the National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia to work on implementation of the ESA methodology.

- The SSO held a training on the use of the National Reference Metadata Editor, which was attended by representatives of the authorised bodies in the national statistical system: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Employment Service Agency, National Bank, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, Institute of Public Health, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.
- The group for EDP notification tables between the SSO and the IMF continued working.
- The SSO prepared an action plan with deadlines for implementation of ESA 2010 together with the National Bank and the Ministry of Finance, which was submitted to Eurostat.
- In 2013, employees of the State Statistical Office actively participated in the process of monitoring and updating the National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA).

## **1.10. OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVED AND EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE IN 2014**

The programmes and results planned for 2014 were defined in the Strategic Plan 2014-2016. The following programmes were defined:

- Sectoral statistics
- Upgrading the statistical infrastructure
- Strengthening the cooperation and communication with users, continuous measurement of user needs and satisfaction, and strengthening the confidence in statistics
- Strengthening the coordination of the National Statistical System

### **1.10.1. In the programme Sectoral statistics, the following results were planned:**

1. Reducing respondent burden, increased utilisation of administrative data sources
2. Publishing quality reports for statistical surveys
3. Improving the volume and quality of statistical data in accordance with EU standards

Realised activities:

#### **Reducing respondent burden, increased utilisation of administrative data sources:**

For reducing respondent burden, the activities for developing an IT system for electronic data collection over the Internet under the Service Contract ended at the beginning of 2014. The new system, which became operational at the beginning of September, is expected to significantly facilitate the method of reporting by respondents.

**2. Publishing quality reports for statistical surveys:** The quality reports prepared according to the ESMS structure have been posted on the web site of the SSO.

**3. The improvement of the volume and quality of statistical data in accordance with EU standards in 2014 was achieved through the following results:**

- The statistical surveys planned in the Programme of Statistical Surveys 2013-2017 have been conducted, and activities have been carried out for preparation of sector accounts and for calculation of consumption of fixed capital.
- Further improvements have been made in the calculations for compiling the supply and use tables. Tables have been prepared with revised national accounts data in accordance with NKD Rev.2. The revised data include all improvements in the methods and sources of data according to ESA 95.
- Some of the changes for implementing ESA 2010 have been applied.
- The action plan for implementation of SNA 2008 has been updated.
- The group created from representatives of the SSO, the Ministry of Finance and the National Bank worked on compiling the Excessive Deficit Procedure tables.
- The sectorisation group worked regularly on the criteria for sectorisation of business entities by institutional sectors and examined the possibilities for sectorisation of new entities.
- Data from the Farm Structure Survey have been published.
- Data on external trade by mode of transport were published for the first time in the Publication on external trade in June 2014.
- Indicators have been defined for forestry statistics
- Economic accounts for agriculture have been published at the regional level, data on labour force in agriculture have been revised and the Inventory has been updated.

Quality reports have been prepared for:

- Quality report and Inventory of animal production statistics
- Quality report on crop production
- Quality report on municipal waste and waste by sections of economic activity
- Quality report on the monthly trade survey
- Quality report on construction statistics
- Quality report on construction cost indices for new residential buildings
- For the first time the SSO began to publish on a regular basis energy data on coal, oil and petroleum products, prices of electricity and natural gas for households and industry in monthly news releases, thus achieving full compliance with Annexe C of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2008 on energy statistics and Directive 2008/92/EC
- For short-term statistics (industry, prices, construction and trade), data and metadata transmission to Eurostat began through the National Reference Metadata Editor.

- In the area of ESSPROS statistics the SSO signed memoranda of cooperation with relevant institutions holders of administrative data.
- Data were published from the first multi-sector survey on innovation activity in enterprises.
- Data from the survey on income and living conditions were transmitted to Eurostat for the first time.
- In 2014, the school-to-work transition survey was carried out for the second time in cooperation with the International Labour Organisation.
- Activities were carried out for improving health and culture statistics.

**1.10.2. In the programme Upgrading the statistical infrastructure, the following sub-programmes were planned:**

1. Further development of statistical registers
2. Implementation of the policy for revision of statistical data, classifications and nomenclatures
3. Sustainability of the capacities of the SSO
4. Implementation of statistical disclosure protection methods
5. Implementation of the Strategy for Development of a Metainformation System
6. Improvement of the IT infrastructure in order to increase information security.
7. Implementation of the Quality Policy of the SSO
8. Certification of the SSO for harmonisation with the ISO-9001 quality standard

Realised activities:

1. Further development of statistical registers
  - Continuous efforts are made for developing the procedures for updating the Statistical Farm Register from administrative sources (Food and Veterinary Agency) and from the Farm Structure Survey.
  - The scope and quality of the Statistical Business Register have been improved by conducting a statistical survey on local units (data have been processed and data on local units are updated). A database with groups of enterprises has been created and enterprise groups have been defined for 2012.
  - Continuous efforts are made for developing the procedures for updating the Statistical Population Register.
  - Analysis has been made of the methodological bases for maintaining the Statistical Territorial Register. Amendments have been adopted for the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics - NUTS in accordance with the changes in the territorial organisation of the local self-government of the Republic of Macedonia.

## 2. Implementation of the policy for revision of statistical data, classifications and nomenclatures

- The International Standard Classification of Education - ISCED 2011 was implemented. There is an ongoing process of amending the National Classification of Occupations (NKZ 2008) at the national 6-digit level.
- Regarding the application of statistical classifications in agriculture, a workshop was organised for the exchange of information and familiarisation with the collection and processing of data between the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy and the SSO.
- The National Nomenclature of Industrial Products – NNIP has been harmonised with the European nomenclature at the annual level. The Government of the Republic of Macedonia adopted the changes in the National Nomenclature of Industrial Products – NNIP 2013.

## 3. Sustainability of the capacities of the SSO

- An Employee Training Programme was adopted for 2014, and external and internal trainings were organised for SSO employees.
- As part of the external trainings, in the period January – August 2014, 32 employees took part in 26 meetings of Eurostat working groups, and 589 persons took part in 80 external training courses. In 2014, three traineeships were approved by Eurostat, of which one was completed, and two are due to start in September 2014. Also, three more applications have been submitted for internships which are due to start in January 2015. In the period January – July 2014, a total of 25 internal trainings were held, of which 5 were specialised trainings attended by 61 employees, and 20 generic trainings attended by a total of 229 employees.
- In March 2014, the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia adopted new amendments to the Law on State Statistics. The amendments are aimed at introducing the principles of transparency and competence in the procedure for appointment of Director and Deputy Director of the State Statistical Office.

## 4. Implementation of statistical disclosure protection methods

- The implementation of the statistical disclosure protection methods began with the use of self-created software applications, which helps achieve optimal balance between data protection and their analytical potential. The cooperation with the scientific research community was intensified by granting access to microdata available at the SSO.

## 5. Implementation of the Strategy for Development of a Metainformation System

- The Office works continuously on standardisation and integration of statistical processes, and in 2014 with the available IT system for electronic data collection the SSO standardised and integrated multiple activities of different phases of the statistical business process model, which represents the beginning of the accomplishment of the first priority of the Strategy for Development of a Metainformation System.

## 6. Improvement of the IT infrastructure in order to increase information security

- For improving the IT infrastructure in order to increase information security, the purchased equipment was installed and configured, and the SSO started the process of transferring structured and unstructured data and metadata from local workstations to shared network resources. Basic procedures have been prepared for backup-related daily activities.

## 7. Implementation of the Quality Policy of the SSO

- This activity included working on preparation for the Light Peer Review, primarily on analysis of the self-assessment questionnaire and development of a template for monitoring the applied methods and tools recommended by Eurostat.

## 8. Certification of the SSO for harmonisation with the ISO-9001 quality standard

- Regarding the ISO-9001 certification, a quality coordinator was nominated who began with training in basic knowledge of the quality management system ISO 9001:2008.

### **1.10.3 In the programme Strengthening the cooperation and communication with users, continuous measurement of user needs and satisfaction, and strengthening the confidence in statistics, the following sub-programmes were planned:**

1. Further development of user-oriented tools on the website of the SSO.
2. Process of further redesign of statistical publications.
3. Maintaining regular communication with users.

#### Realised activities:

1. Further development of user-oriented tools on the website of the SSO

The website is continuously improved and the following activities have been carried out so far:

- Updating the web database with new data and including time series by areas.
- Publication of multi-domain publications: Statistical Yearbook, Regions of the Republic of Macedonia, Macedonia in Figures, Women and Men in the Republic of Macedonia, Sustainable Development.
- A Statistical Glossary has been posted on the website, as a useful tool for users for looking up statistical terms
- Metadata have been published on the website from the statistical surveys conducted by the SSO, created according to the SDMX standards.
- An AutoMap application has been developed for creating thematic maps.
- Development began of web cartography.
- Regular use of Twitter for posting information about the statistical products and activities of the Office.

- According to the latest Google Analytics data, the web site has had 872524 hits in the period January - August 2014. In 2014, the web database was visited 55 225 times (January - August 2014).

## 2. Process of further redesign of statistical publications

- The statistical publications are continuously redesigned for the purpose of harmonisation with European standards. The Office publishes editions with statistical data in a timely manner, in accordance with the Advance Release Calendar, and pays particular attention to the introduction of new indicators and data for comparison with European Union countries in new publications.

## 3. Maintaining regular communication with users

- In 2014, regarding the forms of regular communication with users, the following activities were carried out:
- Cooperation continued with higher education institutions and secondary schools.
- Texts prepared by experts from the SSO are published in the Newsletter of the Economic Chamber of Macedonia.

### **1.10.4 In the programme Strengthening the coordination of the National Statistical System, the following sub-programmes were planned:**

1. Strengthening the cooperation with providers of data and holders of administrative data sets
2. Strengthening the cooperation with authorised bodies for meeting the obligations within the National Statistical System

#### Realised activities:

1. Strengthening the cooperation with providers of data and holders of administrative data sets
  - Amendments have been adopted by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia for the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics - NUTS in accordance with the changes in the territorial organisation of the local self-government
2. Strengthening the cooperation with authorised bodies for meeting the obligations within the National Statistical System
  - The State Statistical Office actively participates and provides support in the execution of other institutions' projects.
  - The SSO takes part in specialised meetings organised by other institutions of the national statistical system for the purpose of mutual education in certain areas of the statistical system.

The activities in the defined programmes were performed with the support of the projects in which the State Statistical Office participated in 2014:

### **National programmes:**

- Twinning Project "Support to the State Statistical Office", which was implemented in the period from 18 August 2012 to 17 August 2014.
- Service Contract for developing an IT system for metadata-driven data collection via Internet, which began in January 2013 and was fully completed by the end of 2013, and the delivered software was tested and accepted in February 2014.
- The same programme, IPA 2009, included delivery of IT equipment and software for creating backup copy and disaster recovery, which was installed and configured, and provisional acceptance was performed on 18 July.
- On 30 June 2014, six parallel seminars were organised, and on 1 July at the EU Delegation to Macedonia, there was a closing event dedicated to the project results. The objective of the seminars was to present to users the results of the Twinning Project activities.

### **IPA 2012/2013 National Programme**

- Prepared project (PPF) for terms of reference for expert assistance in the preparation of specific terms of reference for "Support to the State Statistical Office for corporate data statistics and warehouse for development of economic statistics."

### **Multi-beneficiary programmes:**

- IPA 2012 Multi-Beneficiary Statistical Cooperation Programme. The implementation of this project began on 1 January 2014, including pilot-projects in the following areas: national accounts, agricultural statistics, social statistics and price statistics.

### **Other international cooperation**

For several years the State Statistical Office was beneficiary of SIDA funds (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) for the activities for promotion and harmonisation of statistics. The SIDA regional cooperation continues this year as well, and the funds will be used for capacity building of human resources in statistical production, and for further harmonisation of statistics with European and international statistical standards.

- Memorandum of cooperation was signed with the National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria for the purposes of international cooperation within the project "Bulgarian Border Dialogues - Developing a Regional Data Centre".
- - On 1 and 2 September 2014, the State Statistical Office hosted a Conference on Register-Based Censuses, organised by Eurostat. This Conference was part of the Budva Initiative for cooperation between statistical institutions of the region.
- - In December 2013, for the purpose of promoting evidence-based decision making, the SSO began a series regional meetings with representatives of local self-government and municipal institutions to promote the usefulness of statistical data and to stimulate their use in the plans for future growth and development of the regions and municipalities, which should form the basis for the development plans of the country as a whole. This activity continued in 2014 in cooperation with UNICEF and the World Bank Office in Macedonia.