

TWINNING CONTRACT
Support to Statistics

Kosovo



MISSION REPORT

on

**Information Technology System and Dissemination
Improvement of Internet Dissemination**

Component no 4.3.1

Mission carried out by
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List of Abbreviations

KAS	Kosovo Agency for Statistics
ToR	Terms of Reference

Executive Summary

The mission was the first in component 4 dedicated to dissemination. The main effort will be directed at providing KAS with a dissemination database based on PX-Web software. This goal / outcome is shared with the SIDA financed SCB project. KAS dissemination practices were compared to Eurostat expectations / requirements. An overall strategy should be developed and adopted by senior management. A fixed release time should be decided and implemented as soon as possible.

1. General comments

This mission report was prepared within the Twinning Project „Support to Statistics”. It was the first mission to be devoted to Improvement of Internet Dissemination (4.3.1) within Component 4 of the project. The mission was aimed at defining a strategic plan forming the base of the further implementation of the project in this area.

The concrete objectives of the mission were:

- *The mission was an assessment mission on KAS dissemination systems and needed developments*
- *Description of current situation regarding electronic communication and dissemination at KAS*
- *Tender specifications for internal network will be handled by SIDA and designing the new web site likewise. So activities on web site functionality and user testing will be done after SIDA has made the first outline of the new website.*

The consultants would like to express his/her thanks to all officials and individuals met for the kind support and valuable information which he/she received during the stay in Kosovo, and which highly facilitated the work of the consultant.

This views and observations stated in this report are those of the consultants and do not necessarily correspond to the views of EU, KAS or Statistics Denmark.

Our discussions with KAS on dissemination clearly indicated that the potential for overlap between the SIDA project and the twinning project. Overlaps will be de conflicted by the twinning RTA and the SIDA LTA¹.

2. Assessment and results

Activity 4.3.1 will ensure the following outputs:

KAS will brief the MS experts on the dissemination strategy/policy.

KAS will brief the MS experts on the current technical platform used for dissemination and problems that may be associated with it.

The MS-experts will brief KAS staff on European/ Eurostat requirements in the field of dissemination – based on The European Code of Practice principles (CoP).

KAS and the MS representatives will generate a matrix of current KAS practices and EU indicators for best practice in the field of dissemination- The matrix will be used as a tool to identify priorities and action areas for the remaining period.

During the KAS presentation the following long term objectives were mentioned:

- Improvement of the quality of statistical information
- Cover the needs of data users
- Promotion of the statistical system in Kosovo
- Integration within the EU statistical system

¹ A memorandum of understanding describing intervention areas between the two projects is been considered. However changes to activities planned by the Twinning project requires the acceptance of the EU representation in Kosovo.

- Use and implementation of latest information technology
- Use of sampling and registers in statistical practice

As a follow up, the CoP principles regarding dissemination were discussed and exemplified through concrete possible actions. During a workshop the KAS staff identified examples of where they conformed to the principles of CoP and the indicators found in the Quality Assurance Framework and where not. Low hanging fruits were identified.

KAS expressed a wish to minimize size and usages of the printed and pdf publications and instead provide the users with a “lighter” publication and links to a database. In particular there is a need to make a change in the production of CPI publishing. But also the dissemination of external trade will benefit.

Moreover any further development plans in the dissemination component need a clearer agreement with the Swedish SIDA funded project. It became clear during the meetings with KAS that there is an overlap between the Twinning project and the SIDA project. Some changes to the two work plans of each project have already been put in place but further changes are most likely needed.

This mission was cut from a 5 days mission to a 2½ days mission. Thus also some activities were postponed to a later mission, among them advice on the year book contents.

Below is a list of the items that were discussed during the meeting.

Issues raised regarding dissemination

Change of CMS

KAS expects the SIDA project to provide a new web site infrastructure. The new website will be based on the open source CMS Umbraco.²Umbraco is / has been implemented with SIDA / SCB support in the Albanian statistical office giving KAS an easily accessible local corporation partner.

Accessibility

Issues of accessibility to statistical content for users with various disabilities was briefly touch, it is not clear to us if any local legislation is in place. If changing the platform behind the website (CMS) any existing local requirements should be taken into consideration.

Advice on new web structure

The SIDA project is expected by KAS to provide advice and suggestions for the website design and content. When redesigning / re launching the website we recommend that some kind of systematic testing is done of the present website in order to identify areas that need improvement (usability testing). The use of focus groups/ meetings with important / major users groups as well as user satisfactions surveys are recommended. The twinning project can provide such inputs – but this will have to be coordinated with the SIDA project.

² Umbraco is an open source content management software based on Microsoft’s dot.Net technology. Various templates and extensions are freely available.

Dissemination database

In connection with Census 2011, ISTAT consultants had provided a dissemination database / tool called DaWinci. The solution is not applicable for the general statistics, and no further support from ISTAT is provided. As data will not be updated before the next census, it is OK to use it, and gradually export the data to a common database, where PC-Axis and PX-Web has already been chosen. KAS agrees that from a maintenance point of view as well as for the benefit of external users a single output database is preferred.

According to the twinning contract / work plan the Twinning project will support the implementation of PX-Web as the output database for KAS. A series of interventions will be programmed to ensure that a PX-Web solution is available to external users by the 7th project quarter – meaning no later than August 2015.

The KAS staff representing IT has a clear wish / ambition that the tables for internet use are compiled and updated by subject matter divisions.

An earlier version of PX-Web is already available internally but an update to the latest dot.Net version is clearly needed before the system can be made available to the public.

If and when the website is re launched on a new platform / CMS it is important that integration of PX-Web content is included in the planning.

According to the twinning project work plan the first activity / training on PX-Web will be conducted in July (7-11)

PX-Files

As PX-Web / PC-Axis has to some extent already been introduced to KAS so there should be a base foundation of knowledge to build on. During the activity KAS expressed that they were eager to start training on PX-Web. In the first activity dedicated to PX-Web KAS should brief the experts on their current knowledge of PX-Edit, PX-Web and PC-Axis.

Language on web site

In principle KAS strives to have the website in 3 languages, Albanian, Serbian and English. At the moment the different languages are not in sync do to a lack of translation resources. FX the release calendar for 2014 is only available in Albanian. Users visiting the English part of the page are shown only the 2013 calendar. At least a reference to the Albanian calendar should be noted so that international users do not conclude that KAS will not publish anything this year.

Dissemination calendar

Interest was also shown to improve the procedures around maintaining and updating the release calendar. The current calendar is only available in Albanian because lack of translation resources. It has some links to the published data. This seems to include manual links. Release dates for the calendar year are estimates as part of the annual work plan. In principle we recommend the use of a rolling calendar so the next release date is added at every release.

Timeliness / Punctuality

As required by the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) timeliness and punctuality need to be constantly monitored and reported. It seems that no automatic system / procedures are in place for this, although some timeliness measures are reported to senior management. Such a system is usually part of the system / software managing the dissemination calendar. It was briefly discussed if an adapted version of the Danish scheduling system could be transferred to KAS. The twinning project will investigate this option further.

Fixed release times

A fixed released time is not used by KAS. Making the day is considered more important than meeting a fixed time. From our perspective and from the CoP / QAF perspective a fixed time and pre announced release time should be consistently used by KAS. Local reasons / arguments properly exist, but from the outside adapting a fixed release time is very low hanging fruit.

Dialog with users – User satisfaction survey

KAS expect the SIDA funded project to support certain activities to conduct an online web questionnaire to measure user satisfaction. This would be a supplement to the information KAS can obtain from focus groups and / or testing of user friendliness / interaction.

Web metrics

The use of the website is monitored using Google analytics. Use of website is reported to senior management on an ad hoc / request basis. We recommend that some parameters are reported every quarter as a time series. Statistics on web usages is potentially a powerful tool for optimizing the user experience. But only if the necessary staff resources are available.

Compliance with Eurostat requirements

As previously mentioned we tried to generate a matrix of the relevant QAF / CoP indicators and current KAS practices in the area of dissemination. We recommended that the matrix is further expanded during a coming mission.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

KAS should set up a priority plan and a road map on which activities to select in order to fulfil some of the objectives sat in the long term plan. The activities refer to the CoP principles identified in the workshop.

Concretizing a general dissemination strategy should be initialized.

The next mission in component 4 will mainly deal with starting the process of implementing an output database based on PX-Web / PX-Edit.

Action	Deadline	Responsible person
Defined a fixed release time of day	?	Management KAS
Coordination of activities Twinning-SIDA	End August	Twinning Project RTA- Carling SIDA LTA (SCB)
Prioritise CoP actions	JULY 2014	KAS
Roadmap of actions	JULY	KAS
Provide MS consultants with	End June 2014	KAS

already produced PX-files from previous projects		
Provide MS consultants with example of trade statistics expected for output database	End June 2014	
Provide MS consultants with CPI data in excel / CSV format	End June 2014	
Install new PX-web version	JULY (next mission)	KAS/ Twinning

Annex 1. Terms of Reference



EU Twinning Project KS12 IB ST 01 Support to Statistics

Terms of Reference:

Component 4: Information Technology System and Dissemination Activity 4.3.1: Improvement of Internet Dissemination

Scheduling:

Tor –ready date: 12 May 2014
Start / end of activity: 26 May – 28 May 2014
Reporting time: 4 June 2014

Mandatory result of the component:

Mandatory Result	Intervention logic	Benchmarks	Sources of information	Assumptions
Mandatory Result 4.2 and 4.3	Developing IT system and Web dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KAS website and its user-friendliness improved by 8th project quarter Dissemination database installed and available to the public by 7th project quarter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KAS website Dissemination database 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient absorption capacity Functioning IT-technology Low turn-over of staff involved in implementation Staff works on project related tasks in between missions

Subject / purpose of activity: 4.3.1 activity

Description of current state of play regarding of electronic communication and dissemination at KAS.

Expected output of the 4.3.1 activity

Mission report with detailed review of KAS website and the Statistical Yearbook

Activity 4.3.1 will ensure the following outputs:

In this assessment mission KAS will brief the MS experts on the local dissemination strategy / policy. KAS will brief the MS experts on the current technical platform used for dissemination and problems that may be associated with it

The MS -experts will brief KAS staff on European / Eurostat requirements in the field of Dissemination. KAS and the MS representatives will generate a matrix of current KAS practices and EU indicators for best practice in the field of dissemination. The matrix will be used as tool to indicated priorities and action areas for the rest of the project period.

In order to suggest improvements for the dissemination done by KAS –KAS is asked to brief the MS experts on any user satisfaction surveys that have been done and to present available statistics on the use of the KAS website.

KAS resources:

1. Mr. Burim Limolli, Head of IT - Division, burim.limolli@rks-gov.net KAS
2. Mr. Dardan Gjoshi, IT Administrator, dardan.gjoshi@rks-gov.net, KAS
3. Mr. Mentor Shala, Software Developer, mentor.shala@rks-gov.net, KAS
4. Mr. Idriz Shala, GIS expert, [idrizz.shala@rks-gov.net](mailto:idriz.shala@rks-gov.net), KAS
5. Mr. Liridon Uka, IT Expert, liridon.uka@rks-gov.net, SIDA
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7. Ms. Drita Sylejmani, Dissemination Officer, Drita.sylejmani@rks-gov.net, KAS

KAS Twinning team:

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Member state resources:

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Ms Nora Zogaj, RTA assistant, nzogaj@yahoo.com

Background

The AGA report 2012 states that there is a strong need to improve KAS' website to make it a more user-friendly and flexible dissemination tool.

Component 4 within the Twinning Project has three mandatory results to meet these needs:

Tender specification for internal network (Handled by SIDA)

KAS website and user friendliness improved

Dissemination Database installed and available

In general the activities in component 4 will address the following issues:

- Improve web dissemination for selected statistics including improvement of ASK' website to make it a more user-friendly and flexible dissemination tool;
- Develop guidelines for the design of tables and graphs, also to be applied for dissemination on the web;
- Develop a dissemination database, including more complete metadata covering different aspects related to data quality;

Activities to be undertaken in preparation for the mission:

List of attached documents

- Adapted Global Assessment report (AGA)
- Program of official statistics 2013 -2017
- Strategic Development Plan 2009- 2013
- Swedish Support to Statistics development at the Kosovo Agency of Statistics (SIDA)
- ICT in the Kosovo National Statistical System – Baseline review and Recommendations for development (Dekker)

Annex 1. Program, - May 2014

Day	Place	Time	Event
1	KAS	09.00	Introductory remarks to this part of component 4
		09:15	KAS will brief the experts on their dissemination policy and practices
		10:30	Coffee
		11:00	Experts will give a briefing on Eurostat Requirements according to Code of Practice and the Quality Assurance framework.
		11:30	Lunch
		13:00	EU requirements continued – development of compliance matrix
		14:30	Coffee
		15:00 – 16:00	KAS will brief MS experts on challenges and goals in current technical solution for dissemination -
2	KAS	09:00-16:00	Workshop: Code of practice and Quality Assurance Recommendations, conclusion and report writing
3	KAS	09:00-10:00	Debriefing: Experts, KAS Project Leader, Component Leader, and RTA

Annex 2. Persons met

KAS:

1. Mr. Burim Limolli, Head of IT - Division, burim.limolli@rks-gov.net KAS
2. Mr. Idriz Shala, GIS expert, [idrizz.shala@rks-gov.net](mailto:idriz.shala@rks-gov.net), KAS
3. Mr. Liridon Uka, IT Expert, liridon.uka@rks-gov.net, SIDA
4. Mr. Fadil Bajraktari, Outreach & Communication Officer, fadil.q.bajraktari@rks-gov.net
5. Ms. Drita Sylejmani, Dissemination Officer, drita.sylejmani@rks-gov.net, KAS
6. Rexhep Fejzullahu, Agriculture Statistics Department, rexhep.fejzullahu@rks-gov.net

RTA Team:

Per Knudsen, RTA

Nora Zogaj, RTA Assistant

Interpreter (some missions)

Annex 3. Compliance matrix

Principle:	Why we are compliant?	Why we are not compliant?	Steps that can make us more compliant
Principle 6: Impartiality and objectivity			
Statistical authorities develop, produce and disseminate European Statistics respecting scientific independence and in an objective, professional and transparent manner in which all users are treated equitably			
Indicator 6.1: Statistics are compiled on an objective basis determined by statistical considerations.			
Indicator 6.2: Choices of sources and statistical methods as well as decisions about the dissemination of statistics are informed by statistical considerations.			
Indicator 6.3: Errors discovered in published statistics are corrected at the earliest possible date and publicised.			
	PDF documents are changed. Errors in corrected documents are not highlighted	Difficult to tell users that there is errors lack of subscription. A new webpage should include a kind of subscription method	Latest new used to highlight errors.
Indicator 6.4: Information on the methods and procedures used is publicly available			
	In all publications methodological explanations are found. Administrative information has less information.		

Indicator 6.5: Statistical release dates and times are pre-announced.			
	There is an advanced release calendar I place for dates. They monitor the time of release.		A fixed time on the day should be decided.
Indicator 6.6: Advance notice is given on major revisions or changes in methodologies.			
Indicator 6.7: All users have equal access to statistical releases at the same time. Any privileged pre-release access to any outside user is limited, controlled and publicised. In the event that leaks occur, pre-release arrangements			
	Everybody has access at the same time. No known requests. No data given with embargo.		
Indicator 6.8: Statistical releases and statements made in press conferences are objective and non-partisan.			
	Press conferences are used for special occasions / publications		