TWINNING CONTRACT

AM/14/ENP/ST/15

Strengthening of the National Statistical System of Armenia – Phase II

STUDY VISIT REPORT

on
Statistical information dissemination system

Activity 1.4 Study visit

Study visit to Statistics Denmark

28 June -1 July 2016

National Statistical Service of
   the Republic of Armenia

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List of Abbreviations

EU	European Union
NSI	National Statistical Institute (e.g. NSSRA)
NSS	National Statistical System (of official statistics)
NSSRA	National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia

1. General comments

This study visit report was prepared within the Twinning Project " Strengthening of the National Statistical System of Armenia – Phase II " and organised under component 1, activity 1.4.

The purpose of the study visit was to gain knowledge on the Danish experience and the practical application related to dissemination and quality management, and to draft description on how this knowledge can be used in NSSRA.

The staff of NSSRA would like to express its thanks to all officials and individuals met for the kind support and valuable information which they received during the stay in Demark and which highly facilitated the work.

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

2. Lessons Learned

The topics discussedduring the study visit were:

- Quality assurance framework,
- Tool for quality assurance,
- Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) and Generic Activity Model for Statistical Organizations (GAMSO),
- Working with users,
- Dissemination strategy and visualisation,
- Website and bank of statistical data (Statbank),
- Production process of Statbank and training of users,
- Tailor made statistics, marketing and branding,
- Statistical data and metadata exchange (SDMX) Data Documentation Initiative (DDI),
- Generic Statistical Information System (GSIM) and Common Statistical Production Architecture (CSPA),
- Time registration

At the meeting the Armenian delegation presented the Armenian experience in the areas of statistics dissemination and quality management.

On the first day of the study visit the Senior Adviser from International Consulting division Charlotte Juul Hansen made a welcome speech and introduced the programme of the study visit. The Member of State Council of Statistics Anahit Safyan made a detailed presentation on the work performed by NSSRA and the current situation in the area of quality management. She particularly pointed out that the NSSRA quality system is based on 15 principles of European Statistical Code of Practice.

The NSSRA quality policy is aimed at coordinated improvement of statistical production and processes with development of relevant methodologies and tools by focusing on provision of quality services and raising productivity of work and cost effectiveness.

She informed that within the first EU Twinning project "Support to the National Statistical Service of Armenia" in 2011 a working group on quality management was established. Thegroup

developed a list of statistical products the number of which comprised 36 in total. During 2011-2012 quality declarations were developed for each of the product. The products were grouped into 17 areas. At present there are 138 statistical products in place.

The quality declarations describe legal basis of statistics, its aim and methodology, dissemination and other important information for users of statistical data, and they give answers to questions arising in users.

In the NSSRA website /www.armstat.am/ a new section called "Documentation" was created containing /http://www.armstat.am/am/?nid=498/the quality declarations developed within the EU Twinning project "Support to the National Statistical Service of Armenia". The documents are available in Armenian and English.

PC Axis/PX Web dissemination tool was introduced and ARMSTATBANK.AM data base was developed within the Twinning project "Support to the National Statistical Service of Armenia".ARMSTATBANK.AM provides quick and accessible availability to statistical information and gives users of statistical information a possibility to download data in MS Excel, xml or another format as well as to create graphs and tables. ARMSTATBANK.AM is linked to quality declarations.

In 2014 the working group on quality management started a new activity in the area of quality management. It undertook new obligations at the same time retaining the former task of updating the quality declarations and if necessary adding new declarations as well as supporting divisions.

In September 2014 the working group started introducing the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM). At present 129 statistical products are described according to Generic Statistical Business Process Model of which 112 are grouped in 29 groups.

The works are going on now and the descriptions for all 138 products will be according to Generic Statistical Business Process Model.

In February 2016 a quality management division was created. A quality policy paper was developed and also posted in the NSSRA website /http://www.armstat.am/file/doc/99498028.pdf/.

The next presentation was made by the chief adviser on methodology and analysis Karin Blix. She introduced the publication "Strategy of Denmark 2020" in which the major activities of the Statistics Denmark were defined for coming 5 years.

The first part of the presentation by Karin Blix covered the Quality assurance framework. According to her the quality can be good or bad. The trust in statistics is based on the UN fundamental principles on official statistics, Code of Practice of European Statistics and Quality Declaration of the European Statistical System.

At Statistics Denmark the quality management is very much in focus. The specialists conduct a well-coordinated research on weaknesses and strengths of each released product in order to improve the process itself and the quality of product continuously. The quality is regularly audited which stimulates improvement of the process.

The next part of her presentation was on the tool for quality assurance. She pointed out that at present in Statistics Denmark there is a quality control division in place which is divided into three groups. Of these groups the first one is in charge for the quality, the second one – for metadata, and the third one – study of methodology. There is a self - assessment system.

The final part of Mrs Blix' presentation was on Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) and Generic Activity Model for Statistical Organizations (GAMSO). GSBPM was developed in 2009. It is normally used to improve the quality of statistics and the statistical production process becomes more productive. GAMSO is one of the 4 cornerstones of the main architecture of modernized statistics and statistical product. It contains three hierarchic levels the first of which is the strategy and leading, the second one – possibility management and united cooperation, and the third one – production.

On the second day of the study visit the Director on Communication and Sales Carsten Zangenberg and the Head of Division on Communication Annegrete Wulff made a joint presentation. They underlined that the strategy of Statistics Denmark is aimed at getting knowledge on the target users of public and the main needs of respondents and meeting their needs in the best possible way.

The cooperation with users and their involvement has three levels: to listen to them, to cooperate, and to create relevant statistics jointly (to work with users, and not for users).

One of the major goals is to create new ways for meeting their needs while meeting the challenges in regard with data security (to be careful but also open to public). Statistics Denmark is the main umbrella and platform for other producers and users always come back to the website of Statistics Denmark to search and to satisfy their needs.   It is worth mentioning that in Denmark 163 statistical products are received from 16 ministries whereas Statistics Denmark elaborates 300 products. Statisticians follow up what statistics is disseminated in mass media, and regularly the matters of concern are being discussed and Google Analytics helps to assess how many times the users have entered and left the website. To disseminate statistics other social media are used as well. In future they are going to improve the search system, to provide better clarity and introduce longer time series.

The next presentation was made by Steen Dahl Pedersen and Lars Knudsen on Dissemination strategy and visualization of Statistics Denmark which tends to fully satisfy users' needs.

On the second day of the study visit the Head of Communication Division Annegrete Wulff introduced her viewpoints on statistical information dissemination. She particularly pointed out that the statistical information dissemination should be coherent with the principles of the European Statistical Code of Practice. The statisticians should put efforts in order to satisfy user needs. It needs to be mentioned that the time of statistical information dissemination is 9.00. The main information base is Statbank which contains 3 500 tables, 3 mln indicators. There is also a quicker and more accessible way of information dissemination: by telephone (mobile). 2.5 mln users visit the website per year of which 800 000 users visit the Statbank. 215 000 frequently asked questions are registered per year to which complete responses are given.

Works are carried out to update and modernize the home page of Statistics Denmark. Recently the "search tool" has been improved: news are presented in red colour, there is a separate field for interesting information, providing short information has become more frequent, the number of analytical clarifications has increased.

The Senior Adviser on Communication Jacob Solander and the Head of Section in Customer Centre Lone Schlüter introduced the production process in Statbank and user training procedure.

On the fourth day of the study visit with request of the IT Chief Adviser Mogens Grosen the member of the State Council of Statistics Anahit Safyan introduced in details the whole process of quality management by the NSSRA. Afterwards the expert introduced the history of quality and metadata at Statistics Denmark. He said that jointly with Lars Thygesen they had worked at introduction of standards and created generic model.

In January 2012 they created a new system through which statistical information documentation, metadata standards and classification changes have been completely carried out. The statistical information should help users to orient in constantly changing and continuously improving the information sea in the process of their awareness, and ensure comprehensive information on statistical production of Denmark. Statistics is led by models and standards of main statistical production, processes and architecture (GSBPM, GAMSO and GSIM). Moreover, GSIM standard gives very important knowledge and serves as an umbrella for DDI (documentation) and SDMX (statistical data and metadata exchange). Thanks to this working model statistics is constantly improving and business processes and principles are reshaped.

At the end of his presentation the expert also introduced "Fulfilling user-needs and improving efficiency through statistical standards and Nordic cooperation" in which the author focuses on more efficient use of metadata: a/ the importance of understanding metadata in relations with users, b/ accessibility of metadata in the process of producing statistics, and the most important c/ improvement and accuracy terms when speaking about metadata.

The Head of Section in Finance and Service division Martin Bingen Jørgensen made a presentation on "Time Registration". The time registration has started since 1990 and the current "mTIME" system- since 2004. The system registers entry and leave times of employees. Working time is flexible, daily registration of products is carried out. In the system the following groups of activities are reflected: statistics, grants, registers, publications, sales, other (ex. lunch time), cooperation with IT specialists, management, and absence. Product is evaluated with 7-digit system in which the first digit shows to which group the product belongs, from 2nd to 4th digits show the type of statistics, and from 5th to 7th digits – the serial number.

At the end of the visit the Senior Adviser on International Consulting in Statistics Denmark Charlotte Juul Hansen made a summary speech. She finished the meeting introducing the results of the visit, summary conclusions and further steps and activities to be implemented.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

The Armenian statisticians' participation in the meetings gave them a possibility to get knowledge on the best practices of Statistics Denmark in the areas of information dissemination, communication and quality management and the recent developments in this regard as well as to discuss issues related to introduction and implementation of the presented tools and standards, challenges and activities aimed at improvement of the national statistical system of Armenia. All the presentations made during the study visit were very interesting and meaningful. The experience of the Statistics Denmark related to the areas of cooperation with users and quality management was very edifying. The study visit was constructive and very efficient.

At the meetings discussions on further cooperation possibilities, particularly quality management and introduction of Generic Statistical Business Process Model, improvement of website design and work with users were carried out.

The study visit was covered within the EU Twinning project "Strengthening of the National Statistical System of Armenia – Phase II".

The new 2020 strategy of Statistics Denmark was the cornerstone of all the discussions. The presentations and discussions were very useful for the Armenian colleagues and were highly appreciated by them. "We strive for perfection but settle for excellence" was a motto with which the work at Statistics Denmark was concluded. The head of the delegation and the NSSRA president Stepan Mnatsakanyan thanked the Danish colleagues for the well-organized study visit acknowledging their invaluable work as well as the productive cooperation between the NSSRA and Statistics Denmark within the Twinning project.

Annex 1: Study Visit Programme

	Tuesday 28 June	*Venue: Styrelseslokalet*
10.00 - 10.30	Welcome and introduction to Statistics Denmark	Charlotte Juul Hansen
10.30 – 12.00	Quality assurance framework	Karin Blix
12.00 – 13.00	Lunch	
13:00 – 14:10	Tool for quality assurance	Karin Blix
14.10 – 14.20	Break	
14.20 – 15.30	GSBPM and GAMSO	Karin Blix

	Wednesday 29 June	*Venue: Styrelseslokalet*
10.00 - 12.00	Working with users	Carsten Zangenberg, Annegrete Wulff
12.00 – 12.45	Lunch	
12:45 – 14:15	Dissemination strategy and visualisation	Steen Dahl Pedersen, Lars Knudsen
14.20 – 18.00	Tour in Copenhagen	
18.15	Joint Dinner	

	Thursday 30 June	*Venue: Styrelseslokalet*
10.00 - 12.00	Web site and Statbank	Annegrete Wulff, Ditte Bechsgaard
12.00 – 13.00	Lunch	
13:00 – 14:10	Production process of Statbank and training of users	Jacob Solander, Lone Schlüter
14.10 – 14.20	Break	
14.20 – 15.30	Tailor made statistics, marketing and branding	Klaus Munch Haagensen
19.00	Dinner at Annegrete's home	

	Friday 1 July	*Venue: Styrelseslokalet*
10.00 - 12.00	SDMX and DDI	Mogens Grosen
12.00 – 13.00	Lunch	
13:00 – 14:00	GSIM and CSPA	Mogens Grosen
14.10 - 14.20	Break	
14.20-15.20	Time registration	Martin Bingen Jørgensen
15.20 – 15.30	Conclusion and evaluation	Charlotte Juul Hansen

Annex 2: List of participants

National Statistics Service of the Republic of Armenia (NSSRA)
Stepan Mnatsakanyan, President of NSSRA
Anahit Safyan, Member of State Council on Statistics of RA
Araik Hayrapetyan, Chief of Staff
Narine Musheghyan, Head of Division, Statistical Information Dissemination and Public Relations

RTA Office
Anush Poghosyan, Interpreter

Statistics Denmark
Annegrete Wulff, Head of Division, Communication
Carsten Zangenberg, Director, Communication and Sales
Charlotte Juul Hansen, Senior Adviser, International Consulting
Ditte Bechsgaard, Head of Section, Communication
Jacob Solander, Senior Adviser, Communication
Karin Blix, Chief Adviser, Methodology and Analysis
Klaus Munch Haagensen, Chief Adviser, Customer Centre
Lars Knudsen, Chief Adviser, IT
Lone Schlüter, Head of Section, Customer Centre
Martin Bingen Jørgensen, Head of Section, Finance and Service
Mogens Grosen, Chief Adviser, IT
Steen Dahl Pedersen, Head of Communication, Communication