# **TWINNING PROJECT**

**Support to Development Process in the State Statistics Service of Ukraine with the Objective to Enhance its Capacity and Production**

**Ukraine**



**MISSION REPORT**

**on**

**Component 16 : Data collection**

**Activity 16.1: Improvement of data collection and communication with respondents**

Mission carried out by Philippe Brion, INSEE France

22-24 September 2015

Version: Draft

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**List of abbreviations**

ICT Information and Communication Technology

GSBPM Generic Statistical Business Process Model

INSEE Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques

JOS Journal of Official Statistics

SBS Structural Business Statistics

SSSU State Statistics Service of Ukraine

*I would like first to express my thanks to all officials from SSSU met, for their kind welcome, the valuable information which I received during my stay in Ukraine and the quality of the discussions, as to Mrs Liliana Lehbab, interpreter, whose work was very useful to facilitate the exchanges between all participants.*

1 - Executive summary

The purpose of the activity 16.1 “Improvement of data collection and communication with respondents” is to work with the SSSU in order to get, in a continuous way, a more efficient data collection process. A lot of aspects are concerned with this goal : design of questionnaires, feedback of information to respondents, and more generally all kinds of actions of communication with the enterprises.

Two presentations by the expert have been dedicated to these subjects, and have been used as a basis during the three days. The discussions with the Ukrainian colleagues allowed to exchange views and share ideas on how to tackle these problems. Four recommendations are made in this report, and most are in line with the work still undertaken by the SSSU.

2 - The carrying out of the mission

The objectives of the mission were given in the terms of reference (see Annex 1):

* improvement of statistical tools, up-grade of visual representation of questionnaires /ensuring "user friendly" interface of statistical forms and guidelines;
* development of conceptual frameworks, identifying principles and rules to design statistical forms; formulation of names of variables/questions in statistical questionnaires, ensuring their international harmonization and comparability;
* organization of internal and external testing of statistical forms and guidelines;
* coordination of interaction with respondents, preparing news releases to support feedback with respondents.

For these purposes, two Powerpoint files, based on the French experience as on “academic” papers, have been prepared by the expert and presented during the mission. These Powerpoint files were used as a basis for the discussions concerning the topics mentioned before.

The two presentations are attached to this report in their French version, but they have also been translated to produce a Ukrainian version.

**2.1 First Powerpoint presentation :**

This presentation is a general presentation giving elements about all aspects linked to the data collection: communication with respondents, including all vectors used (questionnaires, letters, etc.) ; statistical burden ; tests of questionnaires ; methods for improving - in a continuous way - the whole data collection device ; specific aspects for web surveys. All elements presented are not repeated hereafter, but only the most important ones, referring to what has been discussed with the Ukrainian colleagues.

Concerning the communication with enterprises, different vectors do exist : questionnaires (including web versions), letters, but also telephone calls coming from the enterprises as from the statistical office. Having a unified presentation for the questionnaire as for the letters gives a better visibility to the statistical office ; also, having a list of model responses for usual questions helps the clerks in case of telephone calls coming from the enterprises.

Some examples of feedback to respondents have been shown, even if they are no more used by Insee, essentially for cost reasons. Two kinds of feedback have been studied : one with general results, and one with the values of the enterprise, for a given set of main variables, compared with the characteristics of the category to which the enterprise belongs (in terms of mean value, but also distribution indicators, as deciles).

Relatively to the statistical burden, one first idea is to get objective measures, by getting quantified information on it. This may help to answer to external questions (coming from the authorities as from the professional organizations). Producing this information may be done, for example, by having a question, within each questionnaire, about the time spent to fill it. Then, working on the question of the statistical burden needs to study the sampling plans to reduce, as much as possible, the size of the samples, but also to distribute the burden among a large number of enterprises, for the smallest ones (in order to avoid one enterprises getting two, or three or more, different surveys during one year, for example). For this purpose, statistical methods have been developed (see for example the paper *« Sampling Coordination of Business Surveys Conducted by Insee »* by F. Guggemos & O. Sautory, presented at the Fourth International Conference on Establishment Surveys (Montreal, June 2012).

Then, before a survey to be launched, some tests have to be conducted. In France, each questionnaire of a new survey, after a first version has been worked out by statisticians, in relation with representatives of enterprises, is tested by a specialized team. Generally, between 50 and 100 tests are conducted, by including different kinds of enterprises (small/medium/large, enterprises from different economic sectors). What is expected from the tests is a report question by question (is the answer easy to get/difficult/impossible?), but also a general report on the questionnaire (presentation, order of the questions, etc.). It is better if the enterprises included in the test do receive the questionnaire before the visit of the surveyor of the statistical office.

Finally, improving the whole data collection device (questionnaires, controls, etc.) may be done using metadata and paradata : non response rates (general and item non response), but also data collected during the data editing process (for example number of error messages by variable, difference between the values provided by enterprises and final values used to produce the results, etc.). For the web surveys, some additional paradata exist, as the time spent to fill the questionnaire, the fact that for some variables different successive values may have been typed, etc.

The French “*comité du label*” has been also presented : this committee gathers representatives of the administration and of the enterprises (professional organizations, Chambers of commerce, etc.), and does examine, for each new survey, a report giving elements about the way the survey will be conducted. There is a “model” of report to present to the committee (see in Annex 2 the address on the Insee website where the French version may be found), and three points are very important for the committee : the sampling method used and the size of the sample, the existence of meetings with the professional organizations before launching the survey, and the existence of tests of the questionnaire. The committee gives (or not, if the report shows some problems in the preparation of the survey) a “label” which guarantees the quality of the survey, and also decides if the survey will be mandatory or not. For regular surveys (for example annual surveys), it is not necessary to present the report every year, but only every five years.

**2.2. Second Powerpoint presentation :**

This presentation is dedicated to the design of the questionnaire.

General recommendations have been presented, followed by more “technical” guidelines based on the paper of Morrison, Dillman et Christian « *Questionnaire Design Guidelines for Establishment Surveys*» published in the JOS (*Journal of Official Statistics)* vol. 26 n°1 in 2010. Then, two examples of French surveys have been studied in a more detailed way : the ICT 2015 survey, as the survey used for the French SBS device. Particularly, references, within these two questionnaires, have been shown concerning contact information within Insee, and concerning also the statistical law. Last, the question, mandatory and located at the end of each questionnaire of a statistical business survey, about the time spent to fill it has been highlighted.

**2.3. Exchanges between the SSSU representatives and the expert :**

The first discussion did concern two documents prepared by the SSSU. The first one is intended to give a feedback of results to the respondents, and aims at unifying, and simplifying, what was previously done by the regional statistical offices. The version under review brings indeed improvement compared to the previous one; one may think that additional information giving, for example, distribution indicators, as 10% of enterprises are under this value, or 10% above this value, might be interesting for enterprises to compare their own values to those of their competitors. However, a balance has to be found between adding this information and keeping a reasonable size for the document.

The second document is linked to the measure of the statistical burden; every regional statistical office will use a “sample” of three enterprises by size groups (micro, small, medium sized, large) and ask questions, through a form, about the burden. An additional part will concern the wish to receive a feedback ; if more than 50% do express this wish, the decision to prepare and send a feedback should be taken by the methodological commission. However, it can be interesting to study the share of enterprises answering yes according to categories (as size groups) before taking the decision to send, or not, the feedback.it is intended to include that group in addition to representatives of the departments of statistical information technology infrastructure and also representatives of other independent structural units GosstataSecond document Guidelines on establishing interaction between the state statistical bodies and respondents is being prepared. Concerning this document the question of the design of questionnaires was addressed. Within the SSSU, a commission gathering participants from different departments (it is intended to associate to this grouprepresentatives from other SSSU structural divisions in addition to the representatives from the Departments for statistical infrastructure and IT)works on the questionnaire, and produces recommendations. The recommendations of this group take also into account the opinion of the regional offices, as those of researchers (from University or from applied research agencies). It is intended to associate some people representing the respondents and the users of statistics, which will obviously improve the quality of the final version of the questionnaires. The commission aims also at giving a unified format to all questionnaires.

But field tests might be interesting, to give complementary elements on the questionnaire. The Ukrainian colleagues have asked if, in France, a document does explain the way of carrying out the tests of questionnaires ; there is no such formal document, but there is a general structure of what is expected (see part 2.1), and the “*comité du label*” is very attentive to the results of the tests, and to the way these results have been taken into account in the final version of the questionnaire.

Second, more general questions about organization have been discussed.

SSSU intends to use the GSBPM approach, which is supported by the United Nations. This approach is interesting, and will help to share some technical skills. Concerning the quality aspects, the SSSU wants to use the ISO certification. This option is also interesting, but may be favorably completed by quality reports filled for every statistical process (survey or use of an administrative source) ; such quality reports are asked by Eurostat for a majority of statistics, and models can be found on its website.

Then, the way of defining the program of the statistical office has been discussed : in France, there is a triennial procedure, asking for the projects and the means needed for them, and comparing them with the previsions of available resources, through arbitration procedures. SSSU intends to suppress an important number of forms actually sent, among the 155 types of questionnaires, and will have to use such a procedure, but the discussions have to be conducted with other state statistical bodies to define the priorities of the SSSU.

**3 - Conclusions and recommendations**

The discussions held during the mission have shown that for a lot of issues, colleagues form the SSSU have still started actions that are a strong base. However, three main recommendations may be proposed. If needed, another mission could work on one (or more) of this subjects, to examine it with more details.First recommendation : concerning the questionnaires, to continue to work on the redesign of them, and to try to get a unified presentation, for example by using the guidelines given in the second Powerpoint presentation. The association of representatives of enterprises to this work is highly recommended.

Using field tests, conducted by a specialized team, should improve the quality of the questionnaires, as the instructions that can be given to respondents on a separate sheet.

Second recommendation : concerning the feedback of results to respondents, continue the work of simplification undertaken, and conduct statistical studies on the information still collected (for example proportion of enterprises asking for a feedback according to different criteria). The possibility to include, in the feedback sent, some information about the distribution of respondents (on not only mean values) should be studied.

Third recommendation : it could be interesting to build a database with para and metadata about the behaviour of respondents (nonresponse rates, item non response rates, data editing indicators, etc.) to improve, in the future, the whole data collection process.

**Annex 1 : Terms of Reference**

for a short-term mission to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine

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**European Union Twinning Project**

**Support to Development Process in the State Statistics Service of Ukraine with the Objective to Enhance its Capacity and Production**

**Twinning No.: UA/13/ENP/ST/38**

**MISSION PROGRAMME**

for a short-term mission to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine

22- 24 September 2015

Working meetings between the EU expert (INSEE France) and SSSU experts within the framework of the Twinning Project “Support to Development Process in the State Statistics Service of Ukraine with the Objective to Enhance its Capacity and Production”

**Component 16: Data collection. Activity 16.1: Improvement of data collection and communication with respondents**

**Expert: Mr Philippe Brion, INSEE France**

**Date: 22–24 September 2015**

**Working language: French**

**Interpreter: Liliana Lehbab**

The mission aims at improving statistical tools to ensure effective data collection, establishing partnership relations with respondents and preparing news releases.

Expected results: get expect recommendations on

* improvement of statistical tools, up-grade of visual representation of questionnaires /ensuring "user friendly" interface of statistical forms and guidelines;
* development of conceptual frameworks, identifying principles and rules to design statistical forms; formulation of names of variables/questions in statistical questionnaires, ensuring their international harmonization and comparability;
* organization of internal and external testing of statistical forms and guidelines;
* coordination of interaction with respondents, preparing news releases to support feedback with respondents.

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|  | **Morning** | **Afternoon** |
| Monday  21/09/2015 |  | **18.35 Arrival to Kyiv (Boryspil airport)**  **Transfer** from the airport arranged with Vitaliy (+380934171888) (price: €25) You can pay on your way home, €50 roundtrip  **Reservation** at Rus Hotel:  # 2363353 (room type: business class**)** |
| Tuesday  22/09/2015 | **10:00 Arrival to the SSSU**  At the entrance to the SSSU you will be picked up by Kateryna Zhulay, Protocol Department  **Address:** 3 Shota Rustaveli Str., Press center  **10:00 – 13:00**  Coordination of interaction with respondents  Preparing news releases to support feedback with respondents  Presentations on   * data collection & communication with respondents and * questionnaire design   Improving statistical tools; upgrading visual representation of questionnaires /ensuring "user friendly" interface of statistical forms and guidelines | **14:00 – 16:30**  To be continued |
| Wednesday  23/09/2015 | **10:00 Arrival to the SSSU**  At the entrance to the SSSU you will be picked up by Kateryna Zhulay, Protocol Department  **Address:** 3 Shota Rustaveli Str., Press center  **10:00 – 13:00**  Organisation of internal testing of statistical forms and guidelines  Development of conceptual frameworks, identifying principles and rules to design statistical forms; formulation of names of variables/questions in statistical questionnaires, ensuring their international harmonization and comparability  Organisation of external testing of statistical forms and guidelines | **14:00 – 16:30**  To be continued |
| Thursday  24/09/2015 | **10:00 Arrival to the SSSU**  At the entrance to the SSSU you will be picked up by Kateryna Zhulay, Protocol Department  **Address:** 3 Shota Rustaveli Str., Press center  **10:00 – 13:00**  Debriefing and recommendations |  |
| Friday  25/09/2015 |  | **15.15 Departure from Kiev (Boryspil)**  **Transfer** to the airport arranged with Vitaliy (+380933203140) |

**Participants**

*INSEE France*

Philippe Brion

*SSSU*

Natalia Pavlenko, Acting Director, Department for Planning and Coordination of Statistical Activity

Vira Tishchenko, Head of Unit, Department for Reporting and statistical documentation

Iryna Tomilets, chief specialist-economist, Unit for communication with respondents and providers of administrative data, Department for Planning and Coordination of Statistical

Oksana Zashchyk, chief specialist-economist, Unit for reporting documentation, Department for Planning and Coordination of Statistical

Anna Rozumna, Deputy Director, Department for Statistical Methodology

Marianna Korol, Deputy Director, It Department

Anna Zakharchenko, Division for Mathematical Methods to Process and Analyze Statistical Data, Department for Statistical Infrastructure, SSSU

**Annex 2 : Documents presented during the mission**

- Two Powerpoint presentations :

\* *La collecte des données et la communication avec les répondants* (in French, translated in Ukrainian)

\* *La construction du questionnaire* (in French, translated in Ukrainian)

- Questionnaire of the annual business survey of the French structural business statistics device, dedicated to the sector of road transportation :

<http://www.insee.fr/fr/methodes/sources/pdf/Questionnaire_de_l_enquete_-_Transports.pdf>

The different versions of questionnaires, for the different economic sectors, may be found on the website of Insee :

<http://www.insee.fr/fr/methodes/default.asp?page=sources/sou-enq-sectorielle-annuelle-esa.htm>

- Questionnaire, and instructions sheet, of the ICT2015 survey conducted by Insee :

<http://www.insee.fr/fr/methodes/sources/pdf/TIC2015_Questionnaire.pdf>

<http://www.insee.fr/fr/methodes/sources/pdf/TIC2015_NOTICE.pdf>

- Model of letter sent to enterprises with a business survey questionnaire :

For the purpose of the mission, this letter has been translated in Ukrainian, but all different kinds of letters (for example remind letters) may be found, in French, in the standard file to be presented to the “label committee”, available on the Insee website :

<http://www.cnis.fr/files/content/sites/Cnis/files/Fichiers/comite_du_label/DC_2012_label_procedure_enquete.PDF>

The letter that has been translated in Ukrainian is the Annex 4a of this file.