

TWINNING CONTRACT

Support to the Statistics

Kosovo



MISSION REPORT

on

A Quality System for Statistics
Phase I: Further development of road map for implementation of quality management system continued

Component no 1

Mission carried out by Hilkka Vihavainen & Lars Thygesen

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Version: Draft

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Author's name, address, e-mail (keep the relevant information)

*Lars Thygesen
Statistics Denmark
Sejrøgade 11
DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø
Denmark
Tel: +4539173941
Email: lth@dst.dk*

*Hilkka Vihavainen
Statistics Finland
Verkstadsgatan 13
FI-00022 Helsinki
Finland
Tel: +358 50 5002296
Email: hilkkal.vihavainen@gmail.com*

Table of contents

| | |
|---|----------|
| List of Abbreviations | 3 |
| 1. General comments..... | 4 |
| 2. Assessment and results..... | 4 |
| 3. Conclusions and recommendations | 5 |
| 3.1. Recommendation: Strengthening the work of quality steering committee | 5 |
| 3.2 Recommendation: Capacity building | 6 |
| 3.3. Recommendation: Users | 6 |
| Future work | 7 |
| Annex 1. Terms of Reference | 8 |
| Annex 2. Persons met..... | 11 |

List of Abbreviations

| | |
|------|--|
| CoP | European Statistics Code of Practice |
| KAS | Kosovo Agency for Statistics |
| QAF | Quality Assurance Framework (Eurostat) |
| SIDA | Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency |
| SIMS | Single Integrated Metadata Structure (Eurostat standard for quality meatadata) |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |

1. General comments

This mission report was prepared within the Twinning Project „Support to Statistics”. It was the fourth mission to be devoted to the Component 1 of the project. The mission was aimed at monitoring what had been achieved after the first mission and define further activities within the component. In addition the target was to give a training course on quality for the statisticians and the members of the quality committee.

The concrete objectives of the mission were:

- To assess the current status of quality work in KAS.
- To update the roadmap of activities for the rest of the Component 1.
- To follow the agreed cooperation with SIDA on Quality reports and metadata.
- To give a one-day quality training course for the staff members of the KAS.

The consultants would like to express their thanks to all officials and individuals met for the kind support and valuable information received during the stay in Kosovo, which highly facilitated the work of the consultant and made the whole stay pleasant and memorable.

The 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 / Statistics Finland.

2. Assessment and results

The activity was carried out first as a meeting with from the members of KAS' quality steering group. It became clear that since the first mission of the component some progress in organising quality work has taken place. KAS has set up a quality steering committee comprising 14 staff members from various statistical/other units. The quality manager has also been nominated, although he was currently in Eurostat working as a trainee and the head of methodology acted as his substitute. The project steering group has decided to send two staff members to the quality conference Q2014 in Vienna in June. Preparation of the quality reports had been decided to move fully under the SIDA project in order to avoid overlapping work.

The participants presented their quality problems in their respective statistical fields. It was stressed by several participants that even though they follow European or other international standards in statistics production, there are problems in receiving data. The coverage of the business register is not good enough, the business operators don't necessarily answer to the KAS questionnaires, etc. The estimate of the share of informal economy is regarded as very uncertain. Progress had been made in relation to administrative authorities: since 2013 KAS receives the tax data from tax authorities. It was informed that the comparison of the tax and survey data is planned. The main targets which KAS set for its statistics production are a significant increase in the number of indicators in various statistical areas and improved timeliness of the data. In regard to new indicators the publishing of quarterly national accounts at the end of 2014 will be a good result. The discussion of the issues was lively and engaged and resulted in a clear picture of the issues that need to be addressed in this component.

The one-day training course was conducted in two half-day sessions. The target was to give an overview on the quality management from the European statistical perspective. The focus was particularly on the following topics:

- Definition of quality in statistics; quality principles and components
- European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP) and Quality Assurance Framework (QAF)
- Product and process quality and tools for measuring them
- Tools for measuring perceptions of various actors

During the mission the following presentations were made by the MS experts:

- Quality Training Course Program
- Definition of quality in statistics
- Code of Practice
- Quality Assurance Framework (QAF)
- Product and Process Quality
- Tools for measuring perceptions of various actors
- Future work
- E-learning and other learning facilities

Two other documents were provided to the participants of the training course:

- Draft Checklist for data quality assurance in statistical surveys
- User satisfaction survey_2010_questionnaire_Slovenia

The training course was conducted in good spirit. The mission has been evaluated very well by the participants, rating it with 4.4 out of 5 possible points.

In a short meeting with the SIDA representatives it became very clear that the SIDA project has taken over the assistance in preparation of quality reports. All statistical domains will be described according to the SIMS model until the end of 2015.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

The recommendations are grouped in three headings: Strengthening the work of the quality steering committee, capacity building and users.

3.1. Recommendation: Strengthening the work of quality steering committee

The quality steering group had been set up. It is important that the group will start to meet regularly, prepare its work plan and proceed according to it. Also the working procedures (what are the main tasks of the committee, how it prepares standards and how it approves them and distribute to the rest of the staff) of the group should be defined.

The short-term work plan should include e.g. the following tasks with responsible people and deadlines:

- *Define the commitment statement on quality to be published on the web site in accordance with the CoP*
- *A quality checklist finalized and adopted*
- *Conduct and analyze the results of the competence gap survey and prioritize the training needs*
- *Ensure that the quality commitment and quality guidelines are well understood and followed throughout the whole organization*

It is necessary that the selected Quality Manager:

- *Oversees the compliance of the quality guidelines and policies throughout the whole organization*
- *Drafts and discusses guidelines*
- *Follows international work on quality in statistics and thus is aware of best practice that could be used as an inspiration*
- *Functions as secretary of the Steering Committee*

3.2 Recommendation: Capacity building

According to KAS, quality assurance of statistical data is the responsibility of the heads of statistical products. They normally assess the quality when the product (e.g. publication) is ready. However, it is important that all the staff members understand the importance of quality considerations in every stage of statistics production. Moreover, it became clear that particularly new employees of KAS are in need of specific statistical training since that kind of training is not available at any school/university in Kosovo. The staff members of KAS need more training both on quality issues and in general on statistical methods and tools.

It is again recommended that

- *KAS will draft a training program for the staff. The training programme should be based on the competence gaps identified in the organisation. Before the next mission it is recommended that a survey on possible gaps and training needs will be conducted as it has been agreed. It could be done systematically among the heads of the units. KAS will find out whether during a couple of the next years there will be relevant European training courses (funded e.g. by IPA programme). The target then is to finalise the training programme for the year 2015.*

3.3. Recommendation: Users

Web-publishing has clearly increased the number of statistics users in Kosovo compared to earlier times. One of the main tasks is still to enhance further the use of statistical information. It is also important that users understand the role of the statistical agency as an independent provider of statistical information. As it was discussed during the training course, there are various ways of getting feedback from users. It is important to meet users and give them the chance to express their wishes and transmit feedback about the scope of statistical products and possible shortcomings there. After receiving feedback it is also of utmost importance that the feedback is properly analysed and the conclusions for further improvements are drawn.

For this reason it is again recommended that

- *KAS will use project experts to contribute to user seminars in various fields*
- *In the short run there could be user forum where main users, journalists and researchers should be invited.*

Future work*Actions needed for preparing the next mission*

| Action | Deadline | Responsible person |
|---|---------------------|--|
| Drafting quality commitment/policy | August 2014 | Quality Committee/ Ramiz and quality manager (Servete) |
| Plan of Quality Committee agreed and published internally | As soon as possible | Quality Committee/Ramiz, Ibrahim and quality manager |
| Terms of reference on the Activity 1.2.1 | August 2014 | RTA together with KAS |
| Survey on competence gaps of KAS | August 2014 | KAS/Ibrahim |
| User Forum programme | August 2014 | MS Experts together with KAS. Ramiz |
| Quality checklist agreed and tested | August 2014 | Quality Committee/Ramiz and quality manager |

Annex 1. Terms of Reference



EU Twinning Project KS12 IB ST 01 Support to Statistics

Terms of Reference:

Component 1: A Quality System for Statistics
Activity 1.0.2: Phase I: Further development of road map for implementation of quality management system continued

Scheduling:

Tor –ready date: 5 May 2014
Start / end of activity: 19-23 May 2014
Reporting time: 30 May 2014

Mandatory result of the component:

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Mandatory Result 1.1 | Updating statistical work plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardised procedures for developing statistical products presented by end of 4th project quarter Quality reports according to Eurostat standards prepared in 2 selected domains by 8th project quarter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistical work plan Quarterly reports from the Twinning Project Mission reports Quality reports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment and availability of all levels of KAS staff and management Effective communication and participation of all stakeholders Staff works on project related tasks in between missions Sufficient resources (both human and material resources) |
| Mandatory Result 1.2 | Preparing policies and guidelines for the implementation of a quality system | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guideline for quality assurance and documentation of the statistical production processes drafted by end of 4th project quarter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly reports from the Twinning Project Mission reports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> |

Subject / purpose of activity: 1.0.2 activity

This activity will follow up on all activities within the Quality Component.

Untill now 3 missions have been accomplished:

- #1. January 2014: Development of road map for implementation of quality management system.
- #2. March 2014: Methodologies for development and follow up on 2014 annual work plan.
- #3. April 2014: Introduction of quality reports according to Eurostat standards.

The experts will work further with actions proposed in the the first mission on Quality: Survey on competence gaps of KAS, E-learning possibilities, and Draft quality training course programme.

Expected output of activity 1.0.2:

Mission report stating current status of quality work in KAS. Detailed roadmap of activities for the rest of the Component 1. In cooperation with SIDA a road map is prepared for KAS's work on Quality reports and META-data. A meeting with SIDA will ensure that this road map is aligned with the rest of the activities in the Twinning project. Quality descriptions of selected statistics in a cooperation between KAS and experts from MS.

KAS resources:

Mr. Ramiz Ulaj, Director of Department and Head of Quality Committee, ramiz.ulaj@rks-gov.net
KAS (Component Leader)

Ibrahim Rustemi, Director of Administration Department; ibrahim.rustemi@rks-gov.net

Hasbie Qerqi , Outreach and communication officer; hazbije.qeriqi@rks-gov.net

Arta Salihu, Senior communication office; arta.salihu.morina@rks-gov.net

Burim Limolli Head of IT; burim.limolli@rks-gov.net

Bekim Canolli, Head of Methodology Division and Quality Manager; bekim.canolli@rks-gov.net

Drita Sylejmani Senior office of Dissemination; drita.sylejmani@rks-gov.net

Member state resources:

Ms Hilka Vihavainen, Deputy Director General, Division, Statistics Finland,
hilkkal.vihavainen@gmail.com

Mr Lars Thygesen, Director, Sales and Marketing, Statistics Denmark, lth@dst.dk

Twinning ressources:

Mr Per Knudsen, RTA, pkn@dst.dk

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

Background

KAS describes several procedures to monitor quality linked to the different stages of the statistical production process, from survey planning and survey design via data collection and data processing to data analysis and dissemination. The Eurostat recommendations and best practices are mostly used as guidelines. Development of quality and training is mainly provided by international experts.

3 missions in the Twinning project has all ready shown progress in quality work, a quality committe has been established and a quality manager appointed.

Activities to be undertaken in preparation for the mission:

Mission Report 1.0.1: Phase I: Development of road map for implementation of quality management system (Vihavainen & Thygesen)

Mission Report: 1.1.1 Methodologies for development and follow up on 2014 annual work plan. (Jurelevičenė & Gibaitė-Kudžmienė)

Mission Report: 1.3.1: Introduction of quality reports according to Eurostat standards (Grosen in cooperation with SIDA) (This report will be forwarded ASAP)

Metadata mission SCB and Twinning (SIDA document)

The expected activities are:

- Development of detailed plan for further actions on Quality by the twinning program
- Survey on competence gaps of KAS
- E-learning possibilities
- Training course on Quality
- Meeting and advising Quality Committee and Quality Manager

Expected output:

- Mission report – according to template
- Final agreement with SIDA concerning missions on Quality
- Detailed plan for further activities to be completed in component 1 by the twinning program

Annex 1. Programme, - May 2014

| Day | Place | Time | Event |
|----------|-------|-------------|---|
| 1 | KAS | 09.00 | Planning the week |
| | | 09:30 | KAS: Overview of the status of quality work in KAS as well as future perspective |
| | | 10:30 | Coffee break |
| | | 11:00 | Survey of competence gaps of KAS |
| | | 12:00 | Lunch break |
| | | 13:15 | Survey continued |
| | | 14:30 | Coffee break |
| | | 15:00 | Meeting Quality Committee and Quality Manager |
| | | | |
| 2 | KAS | 09:00-15:30 | A training course on Quality |
| | | | |
| 3 | KAS | 09:00-15:30 | Training course continued |
| | | | |
| 4 | KAS | 09:00 | Ad-hoc and hands-on meetings: Wrapping up |
| | | 10:30 | Coffee break |
| | | 10:45 | Agreement on recommendations and time plan |
| | | 12:00 | Lunch |
| | | 15:00 | Debriefing with BC Project Leader: Recommendations, time plan and implied work program for BC |
| | | | |

Annex 2. Persons met

KAS:

1. Mr. Ramiz Ulaj, Director of Department and Head of Quality Committee, (Component Leader, Chairman of Quality Steering Group)
2. Ibrahim Rustemi, Director of Administration Department (member of Quality Steering Group);
3. Servete Muriqi, Senior Officer in methodology (Secretary of Quality Steering Group)
4. Xhevrie Fetahu, Head of National Accounts division (member of Quality Steering Group), attended the first day of the mission
5. Avni Kastrati, Director of Population Statistics (member of Quality Steering Group), attended the first day of the mission
6. Ismail Sahiti, Head of Division of Economic Statistics (member of Quality Steering Group)
7. Avni Zejnullahu, Division of Surveys (member of Quality Steering Group)
8. Besa Haqifi, HBS, Department of Social Statistics
9. Teuta Ademi, Department of Agriculture and Environment
10. Mentor Shala, Department of IT and Methodology
11. Arta Salihu, Senior Coordination officer
12. Ylli Shala, Senior officer in National Accounts

RTA Team:

Per Knudsen, RTA

Nora Zogaj, RTA Assistant

XXXX, Interpreter (some missions)