

TWINNING CONTRACT

Support to the Statistics

Kosovo



MISSION REPORT

on

Activity 1.2.1.2: **A Quality System for Statistics:
Continued support to Quality work at KAS**

Component no 1

Mission carried out by Lars Thygesen and Hilikka Vihavainen

14-16 March 2015

IPA 2012

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

*Lars Thygesen
Statistics Denmark
Sejrøgade 11
DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø
Denmark
Tel: +4554627664
Mob: +4528403941
Email: lthygesen@gmail.com*

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

Table of contents

Table of contents	3
List of Abbreviations	3
1. General comments.....	4
2. Assessment and results	4
3. Conclusions and recommendations	5
3.1 User engagement	5
3.2 Enhance training for the staff	6
3.3 Strengthen the importance of confidentiality matters in KAS	6
3.4 Recommendations for the work of the quality committee	6
3.5 Next mission.....	7
Future work	8
Annex 1. Terms of Reference	9

List of Abbreviations

CoP	European Statistics Code of Practice
GSBPM	General Statistical Business Process Model
KAS	Kosovo Agency for Statistics
QAF	Quality Assurance Framework (Eurostat)
SAQ	Self-assessment Questionnaire
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
ToR	Terms of Reference

1. General comments

This mission report was prepared within the Twinning Project „Support to Statistics”. It was the seventh mission to be devoted to the Component 1 of the project. The main task was to monitor the achievements so far and give further recommendations on how to strengthen the quality work of 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 consultants 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 consultants had three meetings with the quality committee. In the first meeting the activities since the last mission (October 2014) were monitored. The following tasks were presented by the chairman of the quality committee and the corresponding achievements could be identified (in italics):

- Analyse the results of the user satisfaction survey conducted in the user forum in October 2014: *Unfortunately no results were published so far.*
- Finalise the competence gap analysis, prepare a training plan: *The competence matrix assessing the current and required skill levels per each employee had been compiled and shared to heads of divisions/departments. So far no specific training needs had been expressed. For that reason it was decided to invite a meeting with all heads to further specify the training needs. The meeting was agreed to be held next day.*
- Widen and repeat the use of check lists in the survey process: *It has not been accomplished in large extent. More and more survey processes should use checklists.*
- Mandate of the quality steering group has been prepared: *But it is not implemented and final approval is waiting for comments of the Prime Minister's office/legal service.*
- Fill in the EU self-assessment questionnaire regarding the principle 4 of the Code of Practice: *It was accomplished and the experts provided their comments on it during the mission.*
- Fill in the EU questionnaire on coordination - end of 2014: *not accomplished*
- Follow closely metadata work; assure concrete results: *This is progressing well in the SIDA project. It is foreseen that all metadata descriptions will be ready in 2016.*
- All in all: Strengthen the work of quality committee (plan-implement-monitor-assess): *The work has continued but without a proper work plan and quite irregularly.*
- Quality commitment statement has been approved by the Executive Chief and will be published on the web site of KAS.

The second meeting with the quality committee was devoted to the discussion on the requirements for the implementation of the CoP. The consultants went through the principles 1-2, 5 and 15 together with the members of the committee. The idea behind the discussion

was to help KAS to identify possible improvement areas in implementing the CoP. It became clear particularly that

- Staff's knowledge of CoP, GSBPM and quality standards is insufficient
- KAS' compliance with CoP : Principle 1-2, 5 and 15 were discussed
- Principle 1: It is a problem for the independence of KAS that the DG is appointed for only 3 years and the nomination/dismissal processes are not regulated, nor transparent. During the last 10 years or so, there have been 9 DGs, which is not good for the sustainability and reputation of the organisation.
- Principle 2: KAS has access to administrative data sources. The access is guaranteed in the legal act. However, sometimes some technical problems may be seen, but generally speaking it seemed that there are no major problems.
- Principle 5: KAS hasn't got a confidentiality policy, nor a person responsible for confidentiality matters in KAS.
- Principle 15: KAS hasn't got a dissemination policy.

The third meeting with the quality committee was devoted to the results of the mission and further recommendations. The recommendations are presented in the following section.

The meeting on training needs took place together with all the heads of KAS. Ibrahim presented the matrix results of the competence gap survey. The results were interesting and showed that there are skill and competence gaps in various levels. Some criticism about the used methodology was presented, e.g. the guidelines were not clear enough, the competence areas were too general, the excel table was only in English, etc. Generally many participants had the opinion that the matrix is a good starting point for specifying the training needs. However, they needed some time to specify the training needs. It was agreed that everybody will

- Further analyse the competence gap matrix
- Every head prepares a short note in Albanian, 5 priorities
 - Special needs
 - Number of persons
- Send the note to Ibrahim by Friday, 17 April 2015
- Nora will help to synthesize the information and translate the document in English
- Some training needs might be possible to fulfil within the current twinning project, some within other projects.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

3.1 User engagement

In the User Forum organized in October 2014 a user satisfaction survey was conducted. The short report on the results was been prepared by KAS. Information is not published so far. It is recommended that urgently some piece of news based on user satisfaction should be presented on the web site of KAS. A full-scale user satisfaction survey should be conducted later during this year. It was agreed that the format and scope of the survey will be more closely discussed within the mission 4.9.1 on dissemination strategy and policy in May. The dissemination policy should include also a statement on how KAS deals with incorrect criticism or misuse of statistics in the news media.

The creation and launch of the Statistical Databank is still a top priority. It will be ready for publishing in near future. The consultants emphasized the importance to take advantage

of the launch of the Databank to strengthen user engagement. The next user forum could be either in conjunction with the launch of the Databank or in autumn, possibly in October.

It was recommended already last October that after the launch of the Databank an attempt should be made to organize a high-level meeting with the Minister or so with the target to influence on the resources of KAS. The recommendation is still valid and MS experts could contribute to that if needed.

3.2 Enhance training for the staff

It was agreed in the meeting with all the heads of KAS that a training programme will be prepared based on the priority needs of the departments/divisions and on the competence gap analysis. The training programme will serve both the remaining period of the Twinning project and other projects.

It became clear during the discussions that the staff members of statistics production units are not generally enough familiar with the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP) and General Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM). It is recommended to have a specific training course on the principles of the CoP and GBPM during the autumn of 2015.

Moreover, it is recommended that the twinning project will investigate whether it would be possible to have a short training and assistance (see next point) in confidentiality matters for the staff members of KAS.

3.3 Strengthen the importance of confidentiality matters in KAS

Confidentiality matters are a key priority for all national statistical institutes. They should be properly addressed and taken care of. Even though no leaks of confidential data have taken place, it is recommended that KAS should nominate a person who is specialised in confidentiality matters and who could draft a confidentiality policy for the organisation. The confidentiality policy should be discussed widely in the organisation and approved by the top management. The major part of the policy should then be published on the web site. It is also vital that the staff is familiarised with the policy. In the longer run there should be a special committee which discusses and gives advice in safeguarding confidentiality and handling unclear cases.

3.4 Recommendations for the work of the quality committee

It was unfortunate that the mandate of the quality steering group was not yet officially approved. The experts recommend that the chairman of the quality committee urgently clarifies the situation and tries to get the decision done as soon as possible. The work of the committee should be strengthened and made regular. The committee should set up a work plan and organize its work accordingly. The experts emphasized again that the quality committee should work in line of the mode: plan-implement-monitor-assess.

To improve quality the procedures involved in the production of statistics, from collection of data to the dissemination have been set up in “checklist”. The list could be improved by widening it to include more specific procedures, and it should be employed in all surveys. The

filled in check lists must be stored and used for documentation of the quality control of the surveys.

One of the top tasks of the committee should be to fill in the EU self-assessment questionnaire regarding all the principles of the Code of Practice. In addition the questionnaire on coordination should be filled by the committee. These two tasks are recommended to be done by the end of October 2015.

It is also a task of the committee to follow the metadata work and assure progress and concrete results.

3.5 Next mission

The mission 4.9.1 in May 2015 on dissemination strategy and policy will support the quality management of KAS. In addition there will be a study visit to Denmark in June 2015 where quality issues will be on the agenda of the visit, and good practices of Statistics Denmark will be presented. During the study visit it is recommendable to discuss further organising of a training course on the CoP and GSBPM for the staff members of KAS. Moreover, it is proposed that when KAS has nominated a person responsible for confidentiality matters, the corresponding person from Statistics Denmark could pay a consultancy mission to KAS to assist to set up the function and give some training.

The possible other missions related to quality management work should be discussed and decided later if necessary.

People met

1. Ramiz Ulaj, Head of Quality Steering Group, Director of IT & Methodology Department
2. Ibrahim Rustemi, Director of Planning, Coordination and Communication
3. Bekim Canolli, Quality Manager
4. Servete Muriqi, Member of Quality Steering Group
5. Xhevrie Fetahu, Member of Quality Steering Group
6. Ismail Sahiti, Member of Quality Steering Group, Acting Director of Administration
7. Ilir Berisha, Director of Economic Statistics and National Accounts
8. Burim Limolli, Head of IT
9. Sabri Zabergja, Director of Census and Survey
10. Bajrush Qevani, Director of Agriculture Statistics Department
11. Bashkim Bellaqa, Director of Social Statistics Department
12. Bujar Hajrizi, LFS, Department of Social Statistics
13. Emina Deliu, HBS, Department of Social Statistics
14. Avni Kastrati, Head of Population Statistics
15. Haki Kurti Head of Environment Division
16. Naime Rexhepi, Head of Division, Department of Social Statistics

Future work

Actions needed for preparing the next mission

Action	Deadline	Responsible person/unit
A piece of news about the result of the user satisfaction survey to the web site of KAS	Asap	Ramiz
A training programme	End of April 2015	Ibrahim/Nora
Dissemination strategy and policy Preparation of future user satisfaction survey	May 2015	Quality Committee assisted by Annegrete & Jesper
Planning of training course on quality matters	June 2015	Per
Self-assessment questionnaire of CoP	End of October 2015	Ramiz/Quality Committee
Self-assessment questionnaire on co-ordination	End of October 2015	Ramiz/Quality Committee

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 1.2.1.2: Continued support to Quality work at KAS

Scheduling:

Tor –ready date: 1 April
Start / end of activity: 14-17 April 2015
Reporting time: 24 April 2015

Mandatory result of the component:

Mandatory Result 1.2.1.2	Organization of quality work in Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission reports providing operational advice on quality assurance in the field of statistical production published on project homepage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twinning quarterly reports • Mission Reports • Guidelines 	<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)
---------------------------------	--	--	---	--

Subject / purpose of activity: 1.2.1.2

The activity will continue the process of discussions and recommendations on how best to organize the quality work of KAS. Actions within KAS since last mission will be discussed. The experts will further discuss with KAS how to best implement the improved knowledge in the statistical divisions

Expected output of activity 1.2.1.2:

Mission report stating current status of quality work within KAS.
Recommendations for the way ahead for KAS Quality Working Group
Analyze results of the CoP Self-Assessment
Suggestions for further activities within Component 1.

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
Bekim Canolli, Head of Methodology Division and Quality Manager; bekim.canolli@rks-gov.net
Servete Muriqi, Senior Officer in Methodology, servete.muriqi@rks-gov.net
Xhevrie Fetahu, Head of National Accounts division, Xhevrije.Fetahu@rks-gov.net

Member state resources:

Mr Lars Thygesen, Former Director, Sales and Marketing, Statistics Denmark,
lthygesen@gmail.com
Ms Hilikka Vihavainen, Former Deputy Director General, Statistics Finland,
hilkkal.vihavainen@gmail.com

Twinning resources:

Mr Per Knudsen, RTA, pkn@dst.dk
Ms Nora Zogaj, RTA assistant, nzogaj@yahoo.com

Background

6 missions in the Twinning project has shown progress in the area of quality work:

- a quality committee has been established
- a quality manager has been appointed
- a User Meeting has been conducted
- a User Satisfaction Survey has been completed and analyzed
- a Quality Council Regulation has been finalized (but yet not approved)
- a Quality Statement has been finalized (but yet not approved)
- a Competence Gap survey has been completed and analyzed

Now the group should make sure that the statistical divisions implement the common understanding of statistical quality

Before the mission the experts ask the participants and the quality committee members to get acquainted with the CoP self-assessment questionnaire and the guidelines (if participants/committee members have not already filled it).

All CoP self-assessment material can be found at Eurostat website
<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/quality/peer-reviews>

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 1.2.1: A Quality System for Statistics. Organization of quality work in Statistics (Thygesen)
- Mission Report 1.2.1.1: Organization of quality work in statistics: User forum (Thygesen, Vihavainen, Wulff)

The expected activities are:

- Reviewing activities since last mission
- Reviewing of current status of quality work
- Discuss or/and fill CoP self-assessment questionnaire
- Discuss and agree on a plan for implementing quality at KAS

Expected output:

- Mission report – according to template
- Detailed plan for further activities to be completed within KAS on Quality

Annex 1, Agenda, - April 2015

Day	Place	Time	Event
1	KAS	10:00-16:00	KAS: Overview of what has been accomplished since the previous mission in October 2014 MS: Discussions on quality improvements Planning the week
2	KAS	09:00-15:30	Discussions on how to implement quality at KAS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CoP self-assessment questionnaire • Responsibility of the Quality committee • Competence gap survey. Further work? How to implement training and improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User satisfaction survey. How to use the results • User Forum. More User Forums?
3	KAS	09:00-16:00	Further discussions on how to implement quality work at KAS Agreement on recommendations Debriefing with BC Project Leader: Recommendations, time plan and implied work program for BC Reporting