

TWINNING CONTRACT

Support to the Statistics

Kosovo



MISSION REPORT

on

**Activity 1.2.1.1: A Quality System for Statistics
Organization of quality work in Statistics: User
Forum**

Component no 1

Mission carried out by Lars Thygesen, Hilikka Vihavainen & Annegrete Wulff

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IPA 2012

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List of Abbreviations

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

1. General comments

This mission report was prepared within the Twinning Project „Support to Statistics”. It was the sixth mission to be devoted to the Component 1 of the project. The main task was to support KAS in conducting the user forum. In addition the 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

User forum

The major activity within the mission was a user forum. KAS had invited their key users to the forum. All in all 13 users of statistics came. Among them were very important users like the representatives of the Ministry of Finance, the Central Bank, other ministries, a couple of researchers and representatives of some international organisations. The programme of the forum included

- welcome speech by Mr Isa Krasniqi, Chief Executive of KAS
- presentation on statistical quality of Mr Lars Thygesen,
- presentation on quality policy of KAS by Mr Ulaj Ramiz
- presentation on statistical database by Ms Annegrete Wulff
- presentation on user dialogue by Ms Hilikka Vihavainen
- discussion on user needs and filling in of user satisfaction survey.

The user forum was a very successful event. The presentation of the statistical database received particularly great interest. The users spontaneously applauded and expressed their enthusiasm on the new tool. Their wish was to get the tool in use as soon as possible.

Unfortunately no exact promise could be given by KAS in the event.

The user satisfaction survey questionnaire was filled by 11 users. The summary and the comments of the survey are in the annex 2. The users present seemed to exploit regularly statistics from KAS and regarded the service of KAS at the good level. There were some comments and remarks which require further consideration at KAS.

Meetings with quality committee

The consultants had three meetings with the quality committee. In the first meeting the preparation for user forum were monitored. The second meeting consisted of discussion on the following items:

- Assessment of the user forum: All agreed that the forum had been a success and a good starting point for further regular user meetings.
- Quality commitment: The chairman of the quality committee informed that the commitment is finalised and agreed at KAS, but before making it public the KAS

management is waiting for a consultative advice from the legal office of the government.

- Competence gap survey: The first assessment of staff competences has been conducted. However, there is need for further elaboration and discussion within the organisation since the results are not fully comparable. Staff members have had different scales when assessing their competences. Some are overskilled while some are underskilled. In addition KAS management should decide what kind competencies are needed in the organisation and how much.
- Quality Committee: The mandate has been approved by the chief executive, but a formal signature still waits for the advice from the legal office. The committee has had a couple meetings. It has discussed the mandate, quality commitment, check lists and competence cap survey. The consultants again stressed the importance of the workplan of the committee and regular meetings.
- Check-lists: They have been taken into use in various surveys. The list was confirmed to work quite well. One point in the list was changed. It was also emphasised by the consultants that new rows could be added according to the needs of KAS.
- Regular user dialogue: The item is mentioned in the annual plan of KAS for 2015, but there was no information how it will be implemented.
- Self-assessment of the Code of Practice (COP): The consultants shortly presented the self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) of the COP which every national statistical office of the EU countries had filled in before the peer review process. They proposed that KAS quality committee could make an experiment to fill in some parts of the SAQ. That could give ideas and input for the further development of quality work at KAS. The principle four (quality commitment) is a good starting point. In the discussion it was presented that the current implementation of national coordination is not functioning as well as it should. For that reason it was suggested that KAS could fill also additional questionnaire on coordination. It would help to see possible problems in implementation. In addition it was assured that there are good practices of coordination in some EU countries, if KAS wants to know more.
- Quality declarations and metadata: The topic is no more a direct responsibility of the twinning project, but since good metadata are essential for quality declarations of various statistics, the consultants wanted to hear what is the situation with the metadata project. However, no real progress had taken place during the last months. The first workshop on metadata will only be at the beginning of December.

The consultants made a couple of short presentations regarding user relations: One from Statistics Denmark showing the importance of user relations for the activities of the organisation. The other presentation was about service principles of Statistics Finland.

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 consultants had also a meeting with the Director General, Mr Isa Krasniqi. The target of the meeting was to emphasise the importance of quick reaction of KAS to user needs expressed in the user forum. In addition the need of the mission on coordination and update of the statistical law was discussed.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

3.1 Statistical Databank

The creation and launch of the Statistical Databank should be the top priority, especially for the coming months. The Databank should be made available on the web site of KAS around the end of the year with a rather limited but real content. There should from the start be a minimum of two important cubes, which will be continuously updated.

It is very important right now to take advantage of the momentum created by the users' overwhelming enthusiasm in the User Forum. They expect KAS to show real results. And KAS has the knowledge and capacity to do this.

KAS should make a plan for the development of the Databank, and the plan should show how the contents will be gradually developed in the future. All statistics should be included in the Databank over the coming 1-2 years, making the Databank the one-stop shop for all statistics. Existing databases containing different parts of the statistics can be closed down when their contents have been moved to the Databank.

KAS should announce this development in the nearest future, especially to the users who took part in the User Forum. At the same time KAS should announce an opening event for the Databank mid January 2015. For this event major users as well as representatives of media should be invited, in order to publicise as widely as possible. This could pave the way for a higher profile of KAS in society.

Before the opening of the Databank it could be launched as a beta version in order to test its performance with real users. This test should be as a secret link open only by invitation to the users from the Forum.

3.2 Communication with the government and key users

After the launch of the Databank an attempt should be made to organize a high-level meeting with the Minister or so: the target to influence on the resources of KAS. MS experts could contribute to such a meeting.

Before the end of the year KAS should invite to a co-ordination meeting with the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank, as these important users suggested during the Forum. This meeting should be at a high level and lead to increased communication and cooperation in future.

3.3 Recommendations for the work of the quality committee

The results from the user satisfaction survey that was conducted in connection with the user forum shall be analysed, taking into account that it covers very few – but very important users. KAS should decide how these contributions could be incorporated into the future work. A user satisfaction survey covering other important users, e.g the media, the business world, the students and the general public should also be planned to take place in 2015.

The analysis of the competence gap among the staff is regarded as a very sound frame and starting point. However, the descriptions of the different competences have to be more specific and explanations clearer if action shall be taken and competences improved. It is also important to be aware if new areas and competences will require more staff with these competences in the near future – not only to look at the tasks carried out today. As a result a training plan should be set up as soon as possible.

To improve quality the procedures involved in the production of statistics, from collection of data to the dissemination have been set up in “checklists”. The list could be improved by widening it to include more specific procedures. The filled in check lists must be stored and used for documentation of the quality control of the surveys. Recommendations for the work of the quality committee should be clearly stated and agreed.

One of the tasks of the committee should be to fill in the EU self-assessment questionnaire regarding the principle 4 on quality of the Code of Practice. This should be done by the end of 2014.

Another task of the quality committee will be to closely follow the metadata work and assure progress and concrete results.

All in all: Strengthen the work of quality committee (plan-implement-monitor-assess).

3.4 Next mission

Based on the discussion with the quality committee the experts have proposed to have a mission on revision of the statistical law and implementation of coordination of the national statistical system, e.g. in January 2015. However, the Director General has informed us that SCB/Sida project will assist in the revision of statistical law and that there is therefore no need for advice on implementation of coordination task of KAS. Consequently no missions in this component are foreseen.

A new activity could be a mission on dissemination policy, maybe in January.

Annex 1. Terms of Reference

EU Twinning Project
KS12 IB ST 01
Support to Statistics

Component 1: A Quality System for Statistics
Activity 1.2.1.1: Organization of quality work in Statistics: User Forum

Scheduling:

Tor –ready date: 7 October 2014
Start / end of activity: 21-24 October 2014
Reporting time: 31 October 2014

Mandatory result of the component:

Mandatory Result 1.2.1.1	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)
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Subject / purpose of activity: 1.2.1.1

To support the conduction of a user meeting at KAS.
 The activity will also 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.

Expected output of activity 1.2.1.1:

Conducting User Forum.
 Mission report stating current status of quality work within KAS.
 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.rrustemi@rks-gov.net
 Bekim Canolli, Head of Methodology Division and Quality Manager; bekim.canolli@rks-gov.net
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Member state resources:

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 Ms Annegrete Wulff, Head of Division, Statistics Denmark, awu@dst.dk

Twinning resources:

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

Background

5 missions in the Twinning project has all ready shown progress in the area of quality work, a quality committee has been established and a quality manager has been appointed. In June KAS experts participated in the European Conference on quality in official Statistics that was held in Vienna.

In August 2014 Mr. Lars Thygesen were on a mission dealing with the following issues:

1. Organization of the quality work. The quality steering group is now well established and working
2. Discussing and finalizing drafts for Mandate for the Steering Committee for Quality
3. Discussing and finalizing drafts for Quality Commitment
4. Discussing Competence Gap Survey
5. Discussing User Satisfaction Survey
6. Organizing User Meeting. Who will do what and when.
7. Discussion: Managing Access to Micro Data

It was agreed that the next mission should take place in October 2014. The main purpose of this mission was to conduct a User Forum Meeting. Before the meeting KAS (Ramiz Ulaj) will, in close cooperation with the Twinning team, organize the meeting and invite the users.

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)

The expected activities are:

- Conducting User Forum Meeting
- Reviewing activities since last mission
- Reviewing of current status of quality work

Expected output:

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

Programme, - October 2014

Day	Place	Time	Event
1	KAS	10:00- 16:00	Planning the 4 days. Preparing User Forum Meeting
2	KAS	09:00- 15:30	User Forum Meeting
3	KAS	09:00- 16:00	Meeting Quality Committee: Evaluation of User Forum Meeting Reviewing current status of quality work
4	KAS	09:00- 15:00	Agreement on recommendations Debriefing with BC Project Leader: Recommendations, time plan and implied work program for BC Reporting

Persons met

KAS:

1. Mr. Ramiz Ulaj, Director of Department and Head of Quality Committee, (Component Leader, Chairman of Quality Steering Group)
2. Ibrahim Rrustemi, Director of Administration Department (member of Quality Steering Group);
3. Servete Muriqi, Senior Officer in methodology (Secretary of Quality Steering Group)
4. Bekim Canolli, Head of Methodology Division and Quality Manager; bekim.canolli@rks-gov.net
5. Xhevrie Fetahu, Head of National Accounts division (member of Quality Steering Group), attended the first day of the mission
6. Avni Kastrati, Director of Population Statistics (member of Quality Steering Group), attended the first day of the mission
7. Ismail Sahiti, Head of Division of Economic Statistics (member of Quality Steering Group)

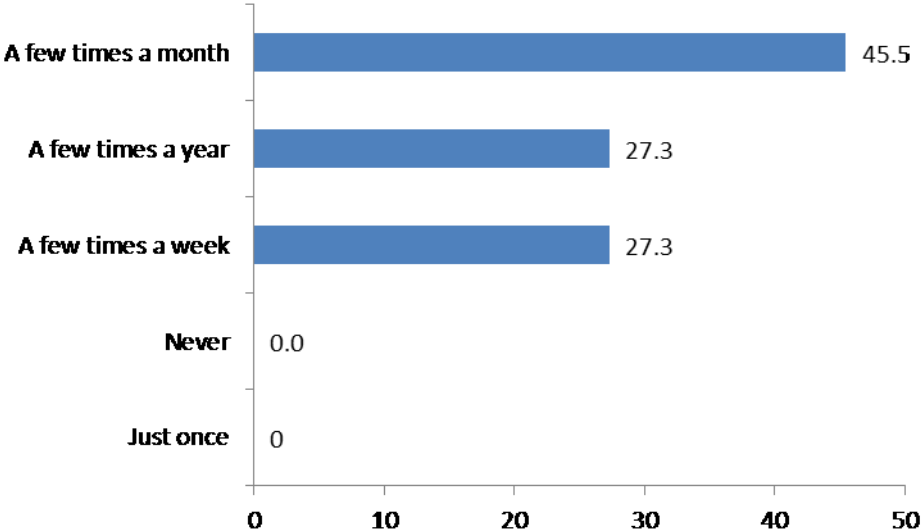
RTA Team:

Per Knudsen, RTA

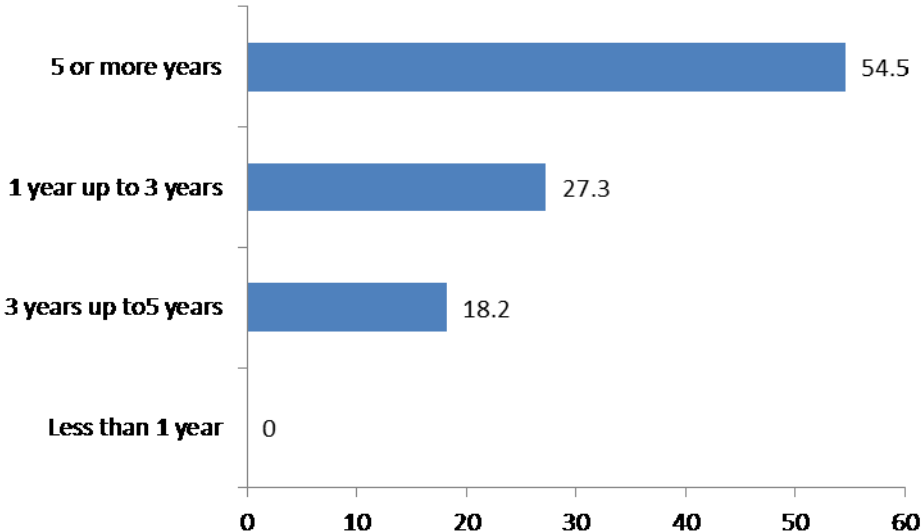
Nora Zogaj, RTA Assistant

Annex 2. User satisfaction survey results

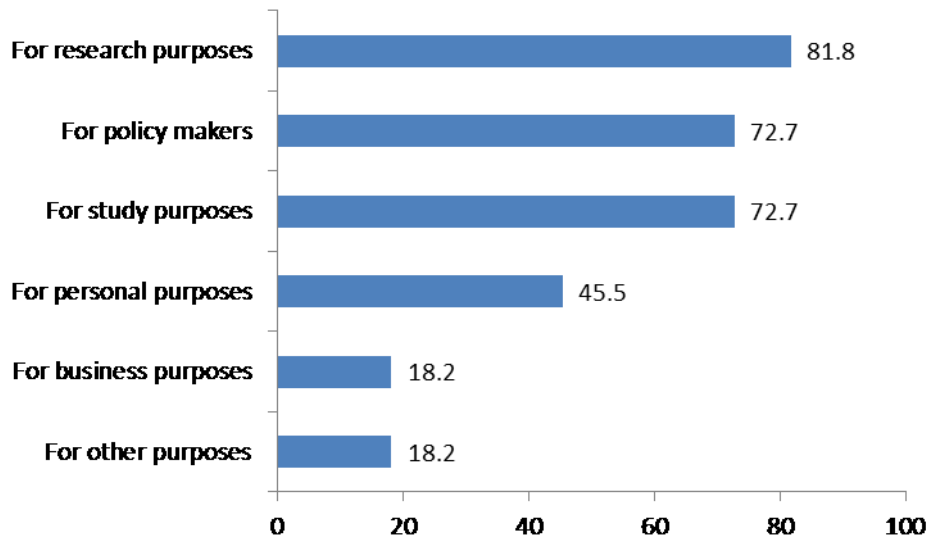
1. How frequently have you used the statistical data an information published by KAS?



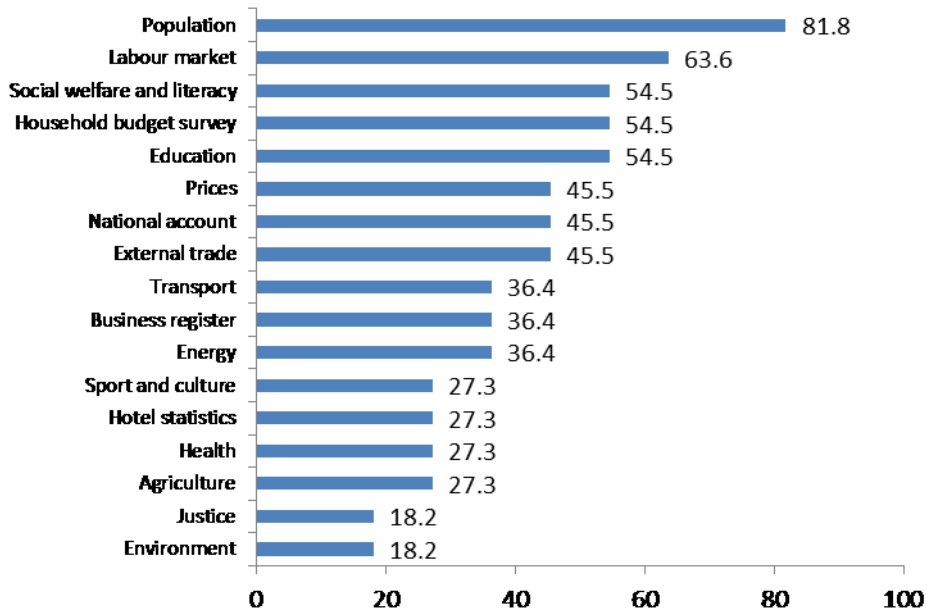
1. How long have been using KAS statistical data?



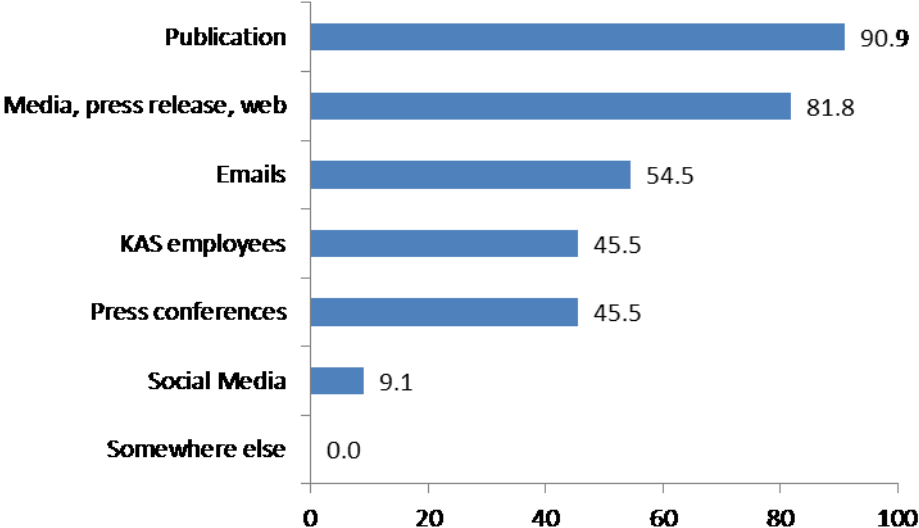
2. For what purposes do you use KAS statistical data?



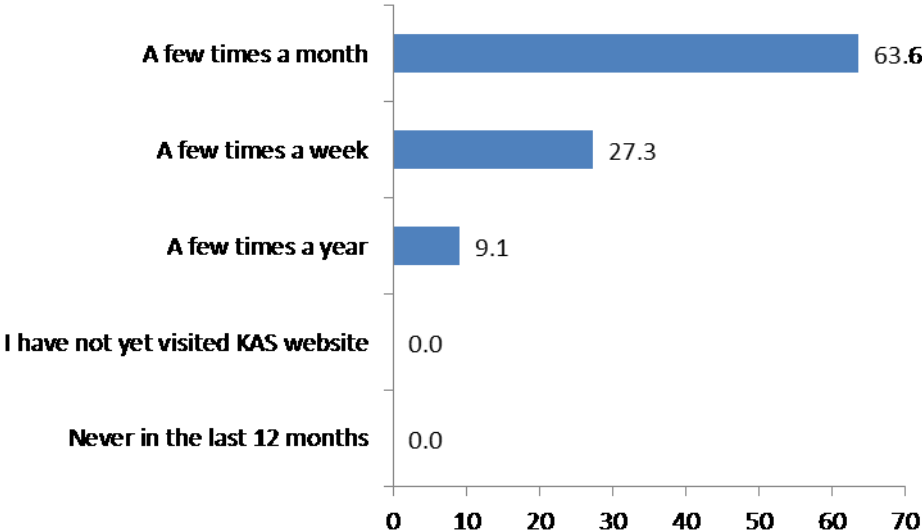
3. Which of the following statistical area do you often use?



4. Where do you get information about KAS statistical data?

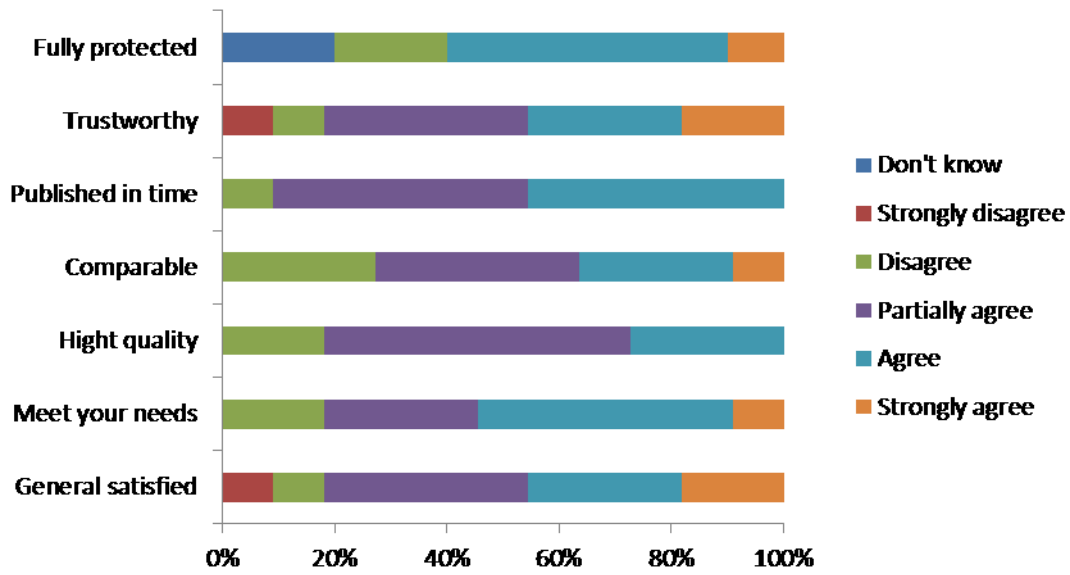


5. How often do you visit KAS website?



6. Do you usually find the information you are looking for on KAS website?
Usually the respondent find information on KAS’s web.

7. Evaluation general in statistics.



	Don't know	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Partially agree	Agree	Strongly agree
General satisfied	0	9.1	9.1	36.4	27.3	18.2
Meet your needs	0	0.0	18.2	27.3	45.5	9.1
Hight quality	0	0.0	18.2	54.5	27.3	0.0
Comparable	0	0.0	27.3	36.4	27.3	9.1
Published in time	0	0.0	9.1	45.5	45.5	0.0
Trustworthy	0	9.1	9.1	36.4	27.3	18.2
Fully protected	18.18	0.0	18.2	0.0	45.5	9.1

