

Twinning Project

Contract: GE 16 ENI ST 06 18

Strengthening the Capacity of the Georgian Statistical System

Component 1: “Development of External Sector Statistics”

Component 1.2: “Statistics on International Trade in Services (ITS)”

MISSION REPORT

Activity: 1.2.E (RS): “Evaluation and discussions on dissemination and work to be done”

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List of Abbreviations

EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
MS	EU Member State
RTA	Resident Twinning Adviser
RTAA	Resident Twinning Adviser Assistant
ToR	Terms of Reference

1. General comments

This mission report was prepared within the EU Twinning Project "Strengthening the Capacity of Georgian Statistical System". It describes the fifth mission within *Component 1.2: Statistics on International Trade in Services (ITS) compiled*. Before this mission, work within the subcomponent had mainly focused on defining a sampling frame for a new ITSS survey and creating sampling and grossing up procedures. Moreover, a pilot survey had been carried out. Following the pilot survey, the specific purposes of this mission were to discuss and work on the below mentioned subjects:

- Nil reports to the pilot survey
- Evaluation of fully compiled pilot statistics
- Finalize validation and validation procedures
- Revisions to questionnaire
- Discussion of data dissemination
- Routine work description

The consultants would like to express their gratitude to all officials and individuals met for the kind support and valuable information which they received during the stay in Georgia and which highly facilitated the work of the consultants.

The views and observations stated in this report are those of the consultants and do not necessarily correspond to the views of the European Union, GEOSTAT, Statistics Denmark, or other statistical institutions involved in the implementation of the project.

2. Assessment and results

During the mission it was possible to take further steps towards the final objective of the subcomponent. However, not all the foreseen tasks could be solved. Therefore, a significant amount of work remains to be done before and during the last mission within the subcomponent, which will take place in October 2021.

The largest and most important task within the mission was to compile a full pilot statistics based on the pilot survey and relevant supplementary sources. National Bank of Georgia had carried out significant preparatory work in this area and presented plans for the compilation process. A core focus point was transportation services where several issues must be solved. Firstly, there are cases where reporters claim that they cannot deliver a country distribution for passenger transportation. Secondly, it must be decided how survey data on freight transport should be combined with traditional CIF-FOB-corrections. While National Bank of Georgia presented significant input to the solving of these (and other) issues, work still remains to be done. Moreover, solutions proposed must be described in greater detail on order for the experts to deliver substantial feedback. This also implies that changes proposed by Geostat to the questionnaire can only be evaluated by the experts when the compilations plans are final and well understood.

Besides the work related to the compilation process, data validation was a major theme for the mission. Geostat informed that a new project will be undertaken together with International Trade Center (ITC). ITC has proposed to assist in defining data validation for the new ITSS survey within this new project. This approach seems reasonable as longer time series will be available during the ITC project, which will make it easier to define good validation procedures. It was agreed, however, that DST will present its own validation in more detail during the next mission as an input for the further process. Moreover, Geostat will carry out a preliminary validation of the pilot survey. Afterwards, final validation procedures will be defined within the ITC project.

Dissemination plans were also discussed during the mission. As part of the targets for the twinning component, the final pilot statistics will be shared with EUDB and NBG in November 2021. Moreover, pilot statistics will be published as experimental statistics on Geostat's webpage starting from Q1 2022, accompanied by a press

release. For this purpose an official note stating what “experimental statistics” implies as compared to “standard statistics” must be written. This will be part of the next mission.

Finally, the so-called routine work descriptions were discussed. Routine work descriptions are standard metadata documents describing methodology behind Geostat’s statistics. Several different formats exist, so it must be decided which one to apply. Geostat will clarify internal expectations regarding this matter before the next mission. Drafting of the routine work descriptions will take place during the next mission.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

Progress has been made during the mission. However, as stated above the step from a pilot survey to a fully compiled statistics has proven to be difficult and some work in this area still remains. As the next mission (in October 2021) will be the last one within this subcomponent, it will be important to ensure that the work related to compilation of the statistics can be finalised during that mission. Therefore, the experts have recommended that the preparatory compilation work should be split into several deliveries to be accomplished in the period before the next mission. This will make it easier to monitor the progress and ensure that a full pilot statistics can be reviewed during the mission. Based on this recommendation, Geostat and NBG have composed a compilation calendar, which is copied below. It is the view of the experts that deliveries according to the compilation calendar will make it possible to finalise the work within the subcomponent and achieve the results foreseen in the twinning project.

Calendar of Compilation of ITS according to Q1 2021	
Export/Import of Tourism Services	15-16 July, 2021
Transport Services: Passengers	
Sea transport, Air transport, Railway transport	21-22 July, 2021
Road transport	26-27 July, 2021
Transport Services: Freight	
Sea transport, Air transport, Railway transport	29-30 July, 2021
Road transport	2-3 August, 2021
Pipelines, Power lines	25 July, 2021
Insurance Services (Export)	9-10 August, 2021
Financial Services Export/import	17-18 August, 2021
Import of Government services (not included elsewhere)	1-20 August, 2021
Export of Government services (not included elsewhere)	24-25 August, 2021

Other tasks agreed for the period until the next mission

- Geostat will clarify internal requirements to the routine work descriptions

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- Geostat will carry out validation of the pilot survey data

Annex 1. Terms of Reference

EU Twinning Project GE 16 ENI ST 06 18

May 17th – 28th 2021

Component 1: Development of External Sector Statistics

Sub-component 1.2: Statistics on International Trade in Services (ITS)

Mandatory results and benchmarks for sub-component 1.2:

- Statistics on International Trade in Services (ITS) compiled

Indicators of Achievement (baseline and targets):

- Availability of International Trade in Services as a statistical product
 - Baseline:** 2019 – ITS is not produced by Geostat.
 - Target:** November 2021 – ITS available as an experimental and preliminary statistical product
- Number of staff capable of producing ITS
 - Baseline:** 2019 – 0
 - Target:** November 2021 – At least 3 staff members trained and capable of producing ITS

Activity 1.2.E (RS): Evaluation and discussions on dissemination and work to be done

1. Purpose of the activity

To discuss and work on the below mentioned subjects:

- Nil reports to the pilot survey
- Evaluation of fully compiled statistics
- Finalize validation and validation procedures
- Revisions to questionnaire
- Discussion of data dissemination
- Routine work description
- Next steps

2. Expected output of the activity

- Reasons behind nil reports for the pilot survey have been clarified
- Fully compiled statistics has been evaluated
- Validation and validation procedures have been discussed and finalized
- Questionnaire has been evaluated and revised
- Data dissemination has been discussed and decided upon
- Routine work description has been outlined
- Next steps have been discussed and agreed
- Work plan is reviewed and updated where relevant
- Mission Report written
- ToR for next activity prepared

Annex 2. Persons met

Geostat

Ms. Maka Kalandarishvili, Head of External Trade and Foreign Investments Statistics Department

Ms. Nino Maisuradze, Head of Foreign Investments Statistics Division,

Ms. Tamar Lursmanashvili, Chief specialist Foreign Investments Statistics Division,

Ms. Nino Meskheli, Chief specialist Foreign Investments Statistics Division,

Mr. Aleko Zoidze, Senior specialist, Foreign Investments Statistics Division,

Mr. Mamuka Benashvili, Chief specialist, Short-term Statistics Division, Business Statistics Department

Mr. Ivane Kechakmadze, Sampling specialist by contract

National Bank of Georgia

Mr. Vakhtang Pkhakadze, Head of Balance of Payments division,

Ms. Manana Bakashvili, Leading Specialist Macroeconomics and Statistics Department

RTA Twinning Team

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