

# **TWINNING CONTRACT**

**AM/14/ENP/ST/15**

## **Strengthening of the National Statistical System of Armenia – Phase II**



### **MISSION REPORT**

**on**

#### **Statistical Information Dissemination System**

##### **Activity 1.7: Quality assurance**

Mission carried out by

Ms. Karin Blix, Statistics Denmark

23-26 August 2016

Final version



National Statistical Service  
Republic of Armenia



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## List of Abbreviations

EU	European Union
NSS	National Statistical System (of official statistics)
NSSRA	National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia

## 1. General comments

This mission report was prepared within the Twinning Project “Strengthening of the National Statistical System of Armenia – Phase II”. This was the seventh activity in component 1 and the actions planned for this activity were carried out as scheduled.

The purposes of the mission were:

- Quality management and quality assurance framework
- Discussions on the GSBPM
- Establishment of a quality unit

The MS expert would like to express her sincere thanks to all officials and individuals met for the kind and open support and valuable information which she received during the stay in Armenia, and which highly facilitated her work. The views and observations stated in this report are those of the MS expert and do not necessarily correspond to the views of EU, NSSRA or Statistics Denmark.

## 2. Assessment and results

The first day of this mission was used with Ms. Anahit Safyan and the Quality unit. An assessment of the current situation in the NSSRA was discussed. The NSSRA has come a long way in establishing a quality management system. Since the last Twinning project quality declarations for 138 statistical products have been prepared and can be found on the web page of NSSRA. Description of the production processes for 138 statistics have been prepared following the setup of the GSBPM. A quality management unit with three people has been established.

On the second day the MS expert gave a presentation on the quality framework of the European Union and specifically that of Statistics Denmark. In this presentation the ESS Code of Practise was presented and brought in context with the ESS Quality Assurance Framework and also the Danish internal quality audits. The local Danish framework was presented. In particular the organisation of the quality management was discussed. The principle of this organisation is illustrated in figure 1.

Since 2015 Statistics Denmark has had a Directors group for Quality, Metadata and Statistical Methods. Under this Directors group are three working groups – one on quality, one on metadata and one on statistical methods. The working group on quality is lead by the Quality coordinator of Statistics Denmark and the five members are appointed by each of the five directors – one from each department. These members are heads of divisions or deputy heads of divisions. The tasks for the Directors group is to set a strategy, give principles for the work and decide on plans on an overall level. The work of the Working group will be to set out guidelines, tools, plan courses and give help and advise. The subject matter divisions are still responsible for the processes and output and to follow guidelines and advise given.

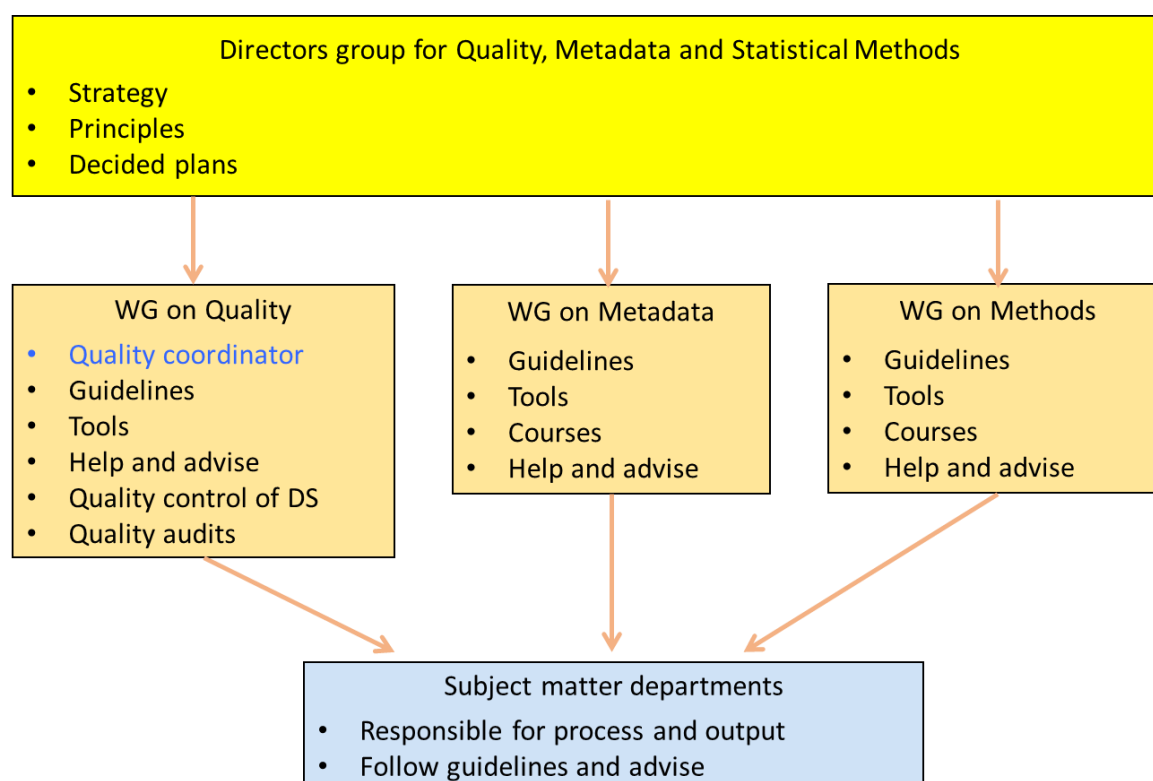


Figure 1

The principles for the internal quality audits conducted in Statistics Denmark was also discussed. The principles for these audits are illustrated in figure 2.

Statistics Denmark started conducting internal quality audits in 2015 after having conducted a pilot on three statistical products in 2014. The start has been slow – three statistics in 2015 and six are to be audited in 2016. The audit is based on the ESS CoP. The audit starts with a self assessment form – which is the indicators of the CoP from principle 4 and on. The statistical divisions are given the ESS Quality Assurance Framework as a guide to understanding what can be done on the product level to live up to the indicators of the CoP. An audit meeting is held with the head of the division and the person responsible for the everyday running of the statistics on the one side and the Quality coordinator with two experts – one senior and one junior on the other side. In this meeting the aim is to get an understanding of the production processes of the statistics – using the GSBPM as a frame and to clear out any unclear issues from the self-assessment. After this meeting an audit report is drafted pointing out some strengths and weaknesses from the self-assessment form and from the experts team understanding of the production process. On the basis of this recommendations to improve are given. After this the expert team and the head of division and the responsible for the running of the statistics meet to ensure that recommendations are not given on the basis of misunderstandings. When the report is final, the statistical division will present an action plan based on the recommendations given. Both the report and the action plan is then sent on to the Directors group. The action plan is followed up on by the Quality coordinator every three months.

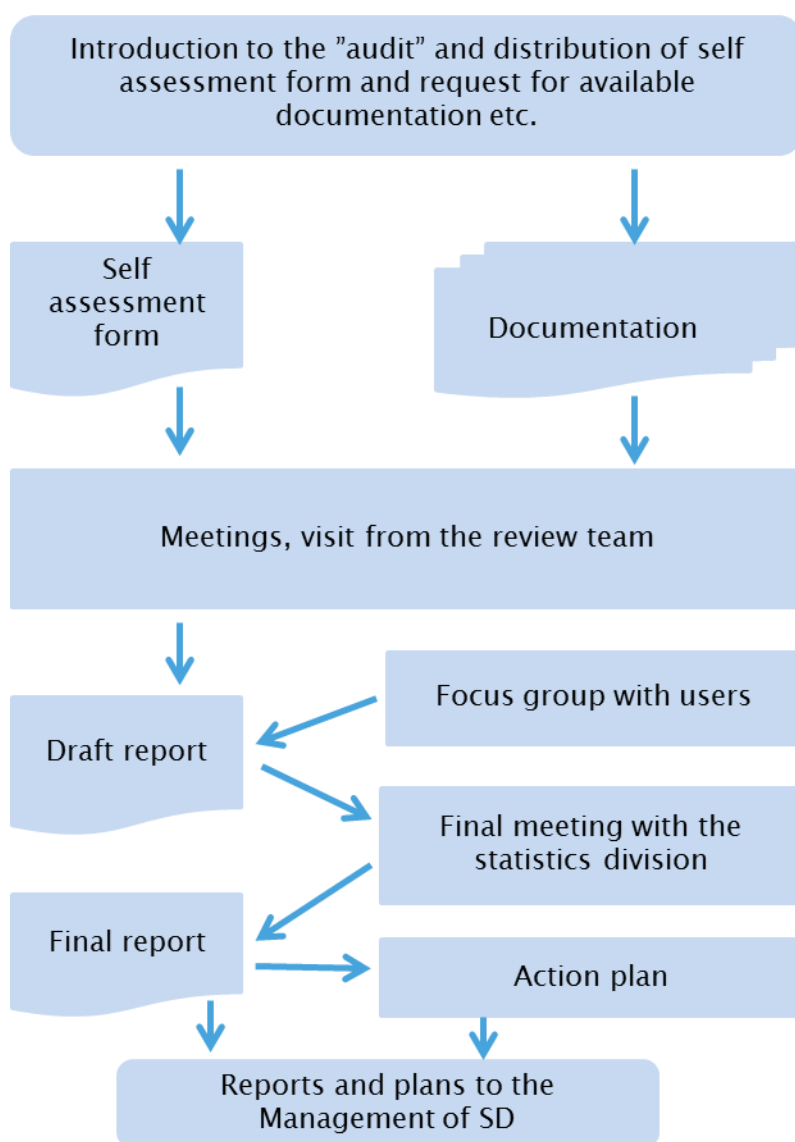


Figure 2

The quality declarations of statistics Denmark was also discussed. Statistics Denmark has chosen the software Colectica based on DDI to manage metadata. The quality declarations were the first to enter, but a present project in Statistics Denmark is now working on including metadata on classifications and variables in Colectica. The management of Statistics Denmark has decided that any new dissemination of a statistical product should be followed by a new version and update of the quality declaration. A quality assurance procedure has been set up so that quality declarations need to be approved by the quality coordinator before they can be disseminated.

A presentation was also given on GSBPM and GAMSO. GAMSO is not in use in Statistics Denmark, but GSBPM has been used in the organisation since 2009. It is not yet used by all statistical units, but it is spreading. The GSBPM is actively used in the internal quality audits and statistical products that does not yet have process documentation following the GSBPM will get as one recommendation to prepare this. It was discussed what NSSRA should do next in connection with GSBPM. There is in the NSSRA already descriptions of production processes following the GSBPM for 138 statistical products. These descriptions are in words. It will be an advantage for NSSRA to go the next step and introduce the process descriptions with diagrams in a visual way. This can be illustrated by an example from a Danish statistical product shown in figure 3.

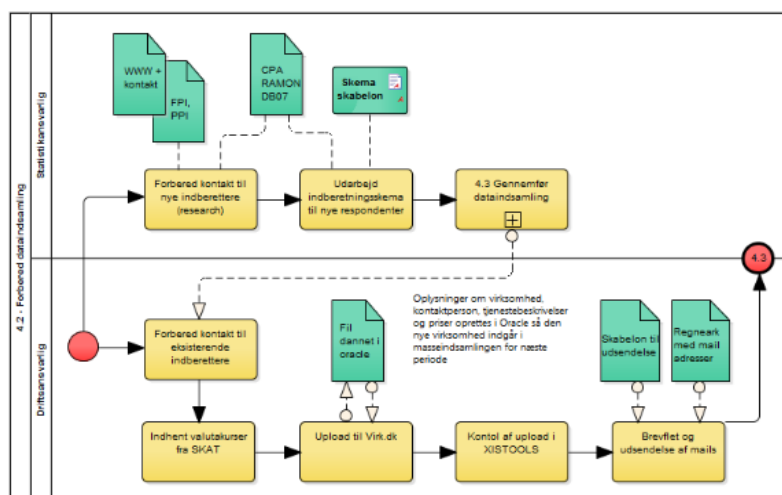


Figure 3.

The text in figure 3 is in Danish, but it should anyhow illustrate the principles of the visual description in GSBPM. The “swimming-pool” shows the total activities connected to process 4.2 (set up collection). In this “swimming-pool” there are two “swim-lanes” one for each actor or function in this process – one for the responsible for the everyday running of the statistics and one for the unit taking care of printing and sending material out to respondents. The yellow boxes illustrate different activities and the green boxes show different input for the activities (list of addresses, template for questionnaire etc.).

On the third day the MS expert made a presentation on quality assurance framework and on GSBPM for the heads of units in NSSRA. Although there was not much discussion the nods of the audience and small comments indicated a familiarity with both the quality assurance framework and the GSBPM and an understanding of the importance of quality management.

On the fourth day a follow up was made with the Quality unit. An introduction to the Danish system for describing variables for statistical products (TIMES) was given. Hereafter some examples on the implementation of the GSBPM was given. This was both in the form of document structures and process documentation made into HTML solutions – even one example of how the actual production is run through this HTML solution.

The day and the mission ended with a meeting with the President of NSSRA Mr. Mnatsakanyan. In this meeting the MS expert presented the conclusions of the mission and the recommendations on the further work with quality management in the NSSRA.

### 3. Conclusions and recommendations

The MS expert is impressed by the state and the dedication of the quality work in NSSRA. It is clear that the importance of quality is well known by all statistical units. It is also clear that the NSSRA as an institution is ambitious regarding their quality work, but seek guidance and sparring on how to further improve the quality work in the organisation and which steps of the development to take in which order.

The following recommendations were given:

- Keep on updating and improving quality declarations
- Be ambitious but don't take the mouth too full (stepwise improving)
- Transform the 138 process descriptions into visual process descriptions (“swimming-pools”)
- Plan training courses on quality issues

- Translate the Quality Assurance Framework into Armenian and introduce it to the organisation
- Perform two pilots of internal quality audit following the Danish model
- Seek international training for the quality unit staff

The following road map and time plan was given:

- Prepare the process documentation (“swimming-pool and –lanes”) for the electricity transportation statistics together with Karin Blix  
**Deadline:** 15. November 2016
- Prepare process documentation according to GSBPM with diagrams (swimming-pools) for 5 statistical products  
**Deadline:** Mission 1.8 (April 2017)



## **Annex 1: Terms of Reference**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **EU Twinning Project AM/14/ENP/ST/15**

**23-26 August 2016**

#### **Component 1: Statistical Information Dissemination System**

##### **Activity 1.7: Quality assurance**

#### **0. Mandatory results and benchmarks for the component**

Mandatory results:

- Statistical Information Dissemination System improved (July 2017)

Benchmarks:

- Statistical Information Dissemination System in place(July 2017)
- Statistical Information Dissemination System Strategy paper developed and adopted by the State Council on Statistics(July 2017)
- User satisfaction survey questionnaire updated, tested and published at the NSSRA web-site(July 2017)
- Staff of NSSRA trained on issues related to the Statistical Information Dissemination (July 2017)

#### **1. Purpose of the activity**

- Quality management and quality assurance framework
- Discussions on the GSBPM
- Establishment of a quality unit

#### **2. Expected output of the activity**

- Recommendations on quality management assurance, on GSBPM implementation and on a quality unit in the NSSRA

### **3. Participants**

#### **NSSRA**

Component leaders

- Mr. Stepan Mnatsakanyan
- Ms. Anahit Safyan
- Ms. Ruzanna Shaboyan

Other staff

- Mr. Artur Amirkhanyan
- Ms. Anahit Grboyan

#### **MS expert**

Ms. Karin Blix, Expert, Statistics Denmark

#### **Other stakeholders taking part in the activity**

Workshop with the Heads of Units

## Annex 2. Programme for the mission

<b>Time</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Purpose / detail</b>
Tuesday, noon (23/8)	NSSRA	Meeting with RTA	To discuss the programme of the week
Tuesday, afternoon (23/8)	NSSRA	Meeting with BC Component Leader and BC Experts	Assessment of current situation and presentation by BC of the expected outcome of current mission  Presentation of European quality standards
Wednesday, morning (24/8)	NSSRA	Meeting with BC Component Leader and BC Experts	Discussions on Quality assurance framework
Wednesday, afternoon (24/8)	NSSRA	Meeting with BC Component Leader and BC Experts	Discussions on GSBPM in details and GAMS0 in general
Thursday, morning (25/8)	NSSRA / <i>Meeting room</i>	Workshop	Meeting with the Heads of Units (workshop)
Thursday, afternoon (25/8)	NSSRA	Meeting with BC Component Leader and BC Experts	Preparation of final conclusions, road map and Mission Report
Friday, morning (26/8)	NSSRA	Meeting with BC Component Leader	Presentation of MS Experts' findings and agreement on the reached conclusions
		Ad-hoc meetings	Final clarifications with BC Experts, preparation of report and presentation for BC Project Leader
Friday, afternoon (26/8)	NSSRA	Debriefing with BC Project Leader	Conclusions and decisions and their consequences for the next activity and the implied work programme for BC Experts

## **Annex 3: Persons met**

### **NSSRA:**

- Stepan Mnatsakanyan, President of the NSSRA
- Anahit Safyan, Member of the State Council of Statistics
- Georgi Torosyan, Division of Transport and Communication Statistics
- Anahit Harutyunyan, Division of Trade and Other Statistics
- Anna Antonyan, Division of Food Security Statistics
- Anahit Nazaryan, Division of Construction Statistics
- Aram Qyoseyan, Information Resources Management and Technologies Department
- Gohar Nshanyan, Statistical Information Dissemination and Public Relations Division
- Anna Tokhatyan, Population Census and Demography Division
- Hasmik Yeghiazaryan, International Statistical Co-operation Division
- Diana Martirosova, Household Surveys Division
- Lusine Markosyan, Household Surveys Division
- Anahit Grboyan, Quality Management division
- Artur Amirkhanyan, Quality Management division
- Laura Grigoryan, Agriculture Statistics Division
- Nvard Grigoryan, Business-register, Sampling and Classifications Division
- Mnatsakan Khachatryan, Business-register, Sampling and Classifications Division
- Mariam Yeritsyan, Price Statistics and International Comparisons Division
- Gayane Petrosyan, Price Statistics and International Comparisons Division
- Zaruhi Avetisyan, Price Statistics and International Comparisons Division
- Anna Hakobyan, Social Sphere and Nature Protection Division
- Susanna Hunanyan, Labour Statistics Division

### **RTA Team:**

- Peter Bohnstedt Anan Hansen, Resident Twinning Adviser
- Sona Mirzoyan, RTA Assistant
- Anush Poghosyan, RTA Language Assistant