

**TWINNING CONTRACT**

**Support to Statistics**

**Kosovo**



**MISSION REPORT**

**on**

**Activity 2.6.6: SUT activity VI.**  
**Continued support to the compilation of national accounts in Kosovo.**  
**Special focus on SUT**

**Component no 2 National Accounts**

Mission carried out by  
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22 February – 04 March 2016


***IPA 2012***

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## List of Abbreviations

CPA	Statistical Classification of Products by Activity in the European Economic Community
HBS	Household Budget Survey
KAS	Kosovo Agency for Statistics
NACE	Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community
NPISH	<u>N</u> on- <u>P</u> rofit <u>I</u> nstitutions <u>S</u> erving <u>H</u> ouseholds
PRODCOM	List of PRODUcts of the European COMmunity
SBS	Structural Business Statistics
SUT	Supply and Use table
ToR	Terms of Reference

## Executive summary.

The purpose of this mission was to finalize the Supply and Use table project within the national accounts component of the Twinning Project „Support to Statistics”. According to the ToR the aim of the project was described as a feasibility study, but the Danish experts have seen the purpose of project as aimed at capacity building as well as practical work on supply and use tables for 2013 based on the available data sources.

After having made decisions on the classifications that would be used in the SUTs, an Excel-workbook containing the „SUT- environment” was created. An existing macro-sheet containing Visual basic programs for management and balancing the SUT-data was adjusted to work on the new SUT-environment”. In the earlier missions source data was processed and brought on a standardized form that could be inserted into the Excel-workbook with help from the Excel macros.

Some data sources were available from the start of the project. Two important new statistics, the SBS-statistic for 2013 and a new Prodcom Statistic for 2014 were expected to be ready after the summer holidays in 2015. When they became available it was revealed that their use would require some more work than originally expected.

The PRODCOM statistic required some additional coding and The SBS statistic needed some further validation, before it could be used to establish targets for industry-outputs and –inputs. Members of the staff in the national accounts section in KaS carried out the necessary coding and corrections in cooperation with the Danish experts. The experience from this exercise can probably be useful for the collection of these statistics in the future.

Due to the earlier delays the work with source data required some use of time during the present mission. During the mission the last missing data were entered into the SUT-environment. As the remaining work could be considered to take some time, the mission was extended to two weeks. The work with source data did, however, require much of the time, and it was not possible to finalize the balancing of the SUT within the available time.

Nevertheless we succeeded in using some of the time for exercises in balancing supply and use with participation of most of the national accounts staff. A number of product balances have now been balanced by a combination of manual corrections and automatic balancing. The SUT for 2013 can probably be fully balanced within a relatively short time, if members of the KaS staff work together on the remaining problems, using e-mail to exchange worksheets containing manual corrections. The final balancing will, however, require assistance from the Danish experts. We consider this solution as the correct way to finish the project.

Our experience is, that if the capacity building shall have a lasting effect, a follow up mission within the next year would be very useful. It should be investigated whether such a mission could be possible.

## 1. General comments.

This mission report was prepared within the Twinning Project „Support to Statistics”. It was the seventh mission to be devoted to compilation of Supply and Use tables for 2013 within Component 2, National Accounts, of the project. The previous mission ended fourteen days earlier and the present mission was aimed at finalization of remaining work on source data and on balancing of supply and use within the SUT framework.

The concrete objectives of the mission were:

To finish data entry into the Excel-framework that contains the SUTs:

- The use of SBS-data for 2013 had been made difficult by a number of more or less systematic errors in the original coding of the data. Within some areas such errors still needed to be corrected before SBS-figures could be used to establish targets for total output for these industries.
- The activities of some NPISHs had not yet been fully described in the previous mission. These units would need to be classified by NACE.
- The first provisional version of the targets for column totals would need to be revised and completed with values for construction, trade and NPISH activities.
- When outputs from wholesale- and retail trade by 4-digit trade industries are available, they should be distributed by products as basis for estimation of initial percentages of wholesale- and retail trade margins.
- The available information on product structures for industry inputs would need to be supplemented by suggestions showing other possible inputs in each industry.

To balance supply and use of products in the SUT-framework:

- To update the data and formulas that the SUT-framework uses in the calculation of trade and transport margins, taxes less subsidies on products and VAT for all cells on the uses side.
- To adjust the use of each product to the available supply of that product.
- To reveal the cases where supplies or uses of specific products were missing or underestimated and find solutions to such problems.
- To make adjustments to the initial assumptions on total output or input where needed or otherwise to bring the actual values close to their targets.
- To end up with a set of SUT's where differences between total supply and total use of trade and transport margins can be removed, and where tax-, subsidy- and VAT-values correspond to the values provided by official data.

The mission was extended to two weeks. During the first week the work concentrated on solving the remaining problems with source data with participation of a single Danish expert. Some of these remaining problems followed delays caused by the need to validate the results from the SBS- and PRODCOM-statistics before they could be used for national accounts purposes.

During the second week, work focused on finding solutions to problems in the balancing with participation of two Danish experts. During the last week we managed to practice balancing of product balances with participation of the staff of KaS' national accounts section. The balancing was still not completed, but it should be possible – with some assistance during the final phase of the balancing - to finish the task within a few weeks.

Despite the fact, that the ToR describes the SUT project as a “Feasibility study”, we have aimed at producing balanced SUTs for 2013 based on the best possible source data for this year. The SUTs that are produced in this way can probably be improved as better source statistics become available. It may

be appropriate to wait at least one year before the results are used as a new benchmark for the current national accounts. If it should be possible for KaS to repeat the SUT exercise for the year 2014 with more reliable SBS-data, there may be a strong case for a rebasing of the national accounts series to the new benchmark.

The consultants would like to express their thanks to all officials and individuals met for support and engagement in the project. The work carried out by members of the staff of KaS' section for national accounts has been essential for the result.

**The views and observations stated in this report are those of the consultant and do not necessarily correspond to the views of EU, KAS or Statistics Denmark.**

## **2. Assessment and results**

### ***2.1 Data-sources.***

The first step in the project was to make decisions on the classification that should be used for products, industries consumption groups and other final uses. These classifications should be well-defined as aggregations of official international classifications and it should be possible to establish correspondence tables between the classifications used in source data and those used in the SUTs. The work on correspondence tables could be started early in the project. In the Kosovo case some data sources needed to populate the SUT-system were available at the start of the project:

- Agriculture
- VAT-statistics
- SBS-statistics for 2012
- Imports and Exports of goods
- The household budget survey
- Input and output for general government as well as the detailed product-structure of government inputs.
- Taxes and subsidies on products distributed by the products defined for the SUT.

Other important data sources, the SBS-statistic for 2013 and a new PRODCOM statistic were expected to be ready after some months. While the sources that were available at the project start did not cause problems worth mentioning, the two new statistics required considerable corrections before they were useable.

### ***2.3 SBS-statistics for 2013.***

In practice the details of the SBS-statistic for 2013 was available to the consultants in the mission in October 2015, when its headings had been translated from Albanian into English. The statistic was the first attempt to use a new questionnaire that included a relatively large number of questions relevant to its use for national accounts. However, due to its collection during the summer-period, the response rate was rather low. In the version we received, figures for the missing units had been imputed based on available official data. A closer look at the content revealed that a large share of the records contained errors that would need to be corrected before it could be used. Among the typical errors can be mentioned: Many respondents obviously did not understand the distinction between goods and services from own production and, on the other hand, goods for resale. Sales and purchases in manufacturing were frequently reported as goods for resale even though it seemed clear that they should belong to own products and raw materials. The opposite could, however, also be the case.

- Opening and closing inventories were often placed as goods for resale even though the unit did not report any trade activity or vice versa
- In many cases either opening or closing stocks were reported while the other was missing.

- Similarly there were many cases with manufacturing output that had no corresponding use of materials and of resales that had no corresponding purchase of goods for resale.
- Many units showed wages and salaries that clearly exceeded their gross value added.
- Other units with high values for gross value added had no reported wages and salaries. Some enterprises may employ family members alone, but it seems to be an incredible explanation in many cases.
- The SBS-questionnaire contained rather detailed questions on the various activities within each enterprise as well as the enterprises' product mix of outputs and inputs. Generally these questions had poor response-rates, and we did not try to use them. Instead we relied on the results from the PRODCOM statistics for 2014.

A complete new round of validation seemed unrealistic if the SBS should be ready for use when needed for this project. Instead we focused on those errors that would be most disturbing for the values needed for the SUTs. Missing purchases were imputed based on average ratios within groups of similar enterprises. Misplaced values were moved between goods for resale and own-products/purchases of materials. Missing opening or closing stocks were assumed to have values closer to the value of the corresponding recorded closing or opening inventory. The distinction between trade-activity and own production of goods and services was given special attention because of the influence it has on the sizes of total trade-margins. As experience accumulated it became possible to write Excel-macros that repeatedly performed the most common corrections to the enterprise-data. In the end the results from the SBS showed levels of industry output- and input that seem reasonable in comparison with VAT-statistics and the existing current national accounts.

Where information on wages and salaries is present in the SBS it has been validated by comparison to official sources and is generally considered to be reliable. At first sight this could seem to indicate an underreported GVA in such cases, unless the deficit can be explained by enterprises that are closing down or receive other subsidies to production. As a general rule GVA should cover compensation of employees, other taxes and consumption of fixed capital.

A closer look reveals that industries which contain units with significant deficits typically also contain units without any recorded compensation of employees. One possible explanation of the missing wages and salaries could be that compensation of employees should have been imputed in such cases. Another possibility is, however, that wages and salaries from official sources are reported as belonging to a single unit in cases where they ought to have been distributed to a number of affiliated units. It seems realistic that output from some industries needs a supplement for underreporting. However it seems that one should be cautious and chose a pragmatic solution where supplements are introduced in those industries where the industry-total for wages and salaries also seem high compared to GVA.

### ***2.3 PRODCOM statistics.***

As mentioned in earlier reports the new PRODCOM statistics for 2014 was available since the mission in October 2015. At that time the industry-outputs had been coded by CPA while the reported industry-inputs were only described by texts in the Albanian language. As the information from SBS on product-structures for industry-outputs and -inputs turned out to have a low response-rate, the results from PRODCOM became of crucial importance for the SUT project. PRODCOM's input side by the classifications used in the SUTs was coded by members of the national accounts staff. An attempt to use the same codes as already used to code PRODCOM's output side revealed that many products with the same description had here been given different product codes. To make sure that such inconsistencies were removed the coding of outputs were also corrected by members of the national accounts staff.

The need for resources for this unforeseen did delay the work on the SUT-project, but has the result that we now have a version of PRODCOM that seems reliable. The revised coding uses the classifications needed for the SUTs. It is not as detailed as the original CPA-coding, but it should nevertheless provide a good starting point for coding of PRODCOM in the future.

## ***2.4 Suggestions concerning collection and processing of industrial statistics in the future.***

Our experience from the work with SBS and PRODCOM gave us opportunity to summarise some suggestions for future collection of these statistics:

- Questionnaires must of course contain the questions that are necessary for national accounts purposes. When a statistic is new some extra effort can be needed to teach respondents the meaning of concepts used in the questionnaire. An example is the distinction between on one hand, goods from own production/materials, and on the other hand, goods for resale.
- There was a general feeling that it may be appropriate to improve the knowledge of interviewers to make sure that they understand and can explain concepts and distinctions referred to in the questionnaires.
- Questions concerning details that - even though very useful – can only with difficulty be answered by the majority of respondents should as far as possible be avoided.
- SBS could primarily focus on collection of data on totals without detailed distribution by products. PRODCOM should focus on how sales and purchases are distributed by products.
- Validation should preferably take place when the questionnaires are received. Many of the errors found in SBS 2013 could have been detected by use of a few logical tests performed at the time of data-entry.
- As resources are limited, further search for errors should focus on the big and important units. The few, most important, units should be contacted if there is doubt whether questions has been correctly understood.
- Obvious errors in responses from small enterprises could probably in most cases be corrected automatically using methods similar to those used to correct SBS for 2013.
- It is important that data collected from different sources refer to the same well-defined units. The existence of the new common business register can improve comparability between source data considerably. Ideally the relations between units used in administrative sources and the units in the business register should also be well-defined.

## ***2.5 Output and input for NPISHs.***

Work on non-profit units was started during the previous mission. A spreadsheet containing calculations for NGO's from the existing national accounts was used as starting point. It was revealed that while the cost of administration had been included in these units' production value, the cost of programmes and work in the field had been omitted in many cases. At the start of the present mission the industry classification of many units still awaited a final solution

Now each unit has been classified by a 2-digit industry-code. A number of NPIs that serve businesses have been classified as market producers. Output of units belonging to the NPISH sector has been coded as various kinds of sales revenues and/or final non-profit output. The results have been brought on the standardised form and entered into the interior of the SUT-framework.

Intermediate consumption and compensation of employees have been estimated for each unit and the resulting totals for inputs have been added to the target values for intermediate consumption of the relevant industries.

## ***2.6 Output and input in General Government.***

The data from government accounts contains a detailed coding of the costs belonging to COFOG categories. The correspondence between this coding and the classifications used in the SUTs was described and used to convert government data into the standardized format for data-inputs to the SUTs already in the December 2015 mission. During the present mission a few corrections to the industry classifications were introduced with the effect that some production is moved to industry 91, „Library, archive, museum, culture”.

## ***2.7 Household final consumption.***

Data from the household budget survey were originally available with coding by COICOP-groups. A correspondence table between this coding and the product classifications used in the SUTs was drawn up in the national accounts section in KaS and the HBS was brought on the standardized form for data inputs to the framework during the missions in June and October 2015. As the totals from the original grossed up HBS were considerably lower than expected, the HBS-figures were grossed up to the levels from the current national accounts before they were entered into the SUT-framework as initial data for household consumption. Given the uncertainty the initial values can change as result of the balancing process.

## ***2.8 Comparison of source data for industry-totals.***

During the previous missions spreadsheets were drawn up for comparison between the values found in the existing national accounts, the VAT-statistics, the SBS statistics, government accounts and agricultural data for 2013. The first version of target values for industry outputs and –inputs have been modified, primarily as result of corrections to the SBS data. It has now been possible to add initial targets for construction and trade.

Figures from a new data source have been added to the sheet that shows information behind the decisions on the target-levels. During the present mission the new business register for Kosovo - that is another result of the twinning project - became available. It contains values for turnover and wages and salaries by industry.

The target values that are used as a starting point will probably still change as a result of the balancing process. For some industries the value of output will probably be increased to cover underreporting, but the precise supplements will reflect imbalances revealed during the process.

## ***2.9 Determination of initial trade-margin percentages.***

The output from trade is now based on SBS and is here available with a distribution by 4-digit NACE industries. The output from each industry has been distributed by the products that can be assumed to be traded through this industry. The distributions are adjusted to take into account that many products are traded through more than one 4-digit trade industry. Finally trade margin percentages were calculated for each product by comparison with the value of the product that can be assumed to be traded through wholesale- and/or retail trade. These trade margin percentages are entered into the SUT-framework where they are used by the formulas that calculate wholesale- and retail trade margins on each individual cell of the use matrix.

## ***2.10 Product structures of industry outputs and inputs.***

The SUT-framework now contains a complete supply matrix. As mentioned above some outputs can still be expected to be adjusted to the eventual changes in industry-totals.

An initial use-matrix has also been entered into the system. It contains the known values of inputs in agriculture, general government as well as values based on the uses side of the PRODCOM statistic and household consumption based on the HBS. Final use of non-market outputs of NPISHs and general government are also known from the calculations of non-market output. The “known” values do not, however, correspond to all available supplies, and suggestions for the use of other products have been added to the initial version of the use-matrix. Many of the “suggested inputs” are removed again during the balancing of each product-balance.

## ***2.11 Balancing supply and use.***

Within the present mission the SUT-framework had finally been populated with initial data and the balancing of supply and use could finally begin. In the previous missions a space had been reserved on the computer network. The network now contains directories where Excel-workbooks with calculations of data inputs are stored. Another directory contains the Excel workbook with the SUT-framework and the macro sheet that contains the Visual Basic macros used to extract, modify or adjust product-balances automatically. People working on the balancing will usually work on a local copy of the SUT-framework, but it is possible to enter corrections directly into the central version of the framework.

Most of the national accounts staff was present during the balancing exercises that we managed to complete. A number of products were selected. The products were extracted to spreadsheets that gave an overview of the initial version of the relevant product balances. In each case it was discussed whether some uses of the products should be deleted, if other uses of the product should be added or if some uses should be given a higher or lower value. Where changes were found appropriate, the corrections were applied to the sheet's supply at basic prices or use at purchasers' prices. Values that should not be corrected manually were removed from the sheet (or changed to a comment by adding an asterisk in front of the identification). Values in the layers for trade margins, taxes less subsidies and VAT were in most cases erased from the sheet, as their calculation should be left to the formulas provided by the system. Explanations for the choices of corrections were added as comments in the correction sheet and it was finally saved as documentation of the reasons for the choice of values.

When the manual corrections to product balances had been added, supply and use do not necessarily balance. It is usually sufficient to reduce the differences between supply and use to small values. The remaining adjustments are made automatically by a macro that is invoked from a form that appears when a button in a toolbar is pressed.

The available time did not allow all products to be balanced during the mission. It should, however, be possible for members of the staff to continue the work.

Some specific product balances need to be given special attention. During the mission we looked at cattle, dairy products and the use of energy. The Danish experts plan to finish the work on complicated product balances. Correction sheets can be exchanged by e-mail and entered into the central system in KaS.

The following phases will also require assistance by the experts. When the products have been balanced there some column-totals will differ significantly from their targets. It will probably be necessary to move use of specific products between industries or other uses before a final automatic balancing can take place. The last phase will be the final balancing of supply and use of trade and transport margins. It is typically done with the help from macros that can adjust selected areas of the system to column- and row totals.

### **3. Conclusions and recommendations.**

Despite the fact that the ToR refers to the SUT-project as a feasibility study, the Danish experts considered the aim of the project to include both capacity building in KaS and the compilation of a supply and use tables for 2013. Due to earlier delays, the plan for finalization of the SUT had to be modified more than once, and the present mission did not leave sufficient time to finish the balancing of the SUTs. However, we believe that combined efforts of the experts and the KaS staff can produce a finalised set of tables within a relatively short time. The staff in KaS should also have a written description of how to carry out the final balancing. We think that this will be the appropriate way to finalize the project.

As a feasibility study the project has already been successful. We have managed to convert the available data sources into a form that can be used to produce a finalized SUT-system. The process has demonstrated a number of weaknesses in the collection of statistics. The new SBS- and PRODCOM statistics may still be considered to be of an experimental nature. It is obvious that the results from the project will be somewhat uncertain, and that there is room for improvement. The unexpected work on PRODCOM and SBS will, we hope, contribute to improvements to the quality these very important statistics in the coming years.

Among the weaknesses must be mentioned that it is difficult to assess the magnitude of underreporting in statistical and administrative sources. Ideally one should also add a supplement for activity in units that are not covered by any of these sources. At this moment a systematic approach to inclusion of this undervaluation does not exist in Kosovo.

It should be mentioned that national accounts in KaS has a very limited staff. The loss of two persons who contributed significantly to the successful coding of source data must be said to represent waste of capacity building. While we are probably able to produce a finalized version of the SUTs for 2013 soon, the real success of the project will be if the production of SUTs can continue in the future. We have experienced that continuation of the work can typically require at least one follow-up mission within the following year. If a mission of this kind can be arranged it may have a decisive effect on capacity building.

## Appendix 1: Terms of reference:



### EU Twinning Project KS12 IB ST 01 Support to Statistics

#### Terms of Reference:

**Component 2: National Accounts**

**Activity 2.6.6: SUT activity VI.**

**Continued support to the compilation of national accounts in Kosovo. Special focus on SUT**

#### Scheduling:

**Tor –ready date: 12 February 2016**

**Start / end of activity: 22 February – 4 March 2016**

**Reporting time: 11 March 2016**

#### Mandatory result of the component:

Mandatory Result	Intervention logic	Benchmarks	Sources of information	Assumptions
2.3.1	<p>Initial support to implementation of Action Plan for National Accounts</p> <p>Continued support to implementation of Action Plan for National Accounts</p> <p>Final Support to implementation of Action Plan for National Accounts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mission report uploaded on project homepage</li> <li>• Selected areas of the National Accounts updated according to ESA2010</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Twinning quarterly reports</li> <li>• Mission Report</li> <li>• Updated action plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient absorption capacity</li> <li>• Low turn-over of staff involved in implementation</li> <li>• Staff works on project related tasks in between missions</li> <li>• Access to accurate primary statistics</li> <li>• A detailed Terms of Reference is developed in a timely manner detailing tasks (input),</li> </ul>

				expected output, participants of the activity and agenda
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### **Subject / purpose of activity: 2.6.6 activity**

Support to the compilation of national accounts in Kosovo. Special focus on Supply and Use Tables (SUT). This mission is a continuation of Mr. Søren Larsen's mission 2.6.5 in January 2016. As this is the last mission on SUT as possible the work on SUT will be accomplished within this mission.

The 2.6.5 mission concluded that:

*After the PRODCOM statistics have been brought up to a standard that is appropriate for use in the compilation SUTs the attention turned to those parts of SBS that are needed for calculation of figures for trade and construction. Again a considerable effort was needed before values for purchases of goods for resale and intermediate consumption had been imputed for the numerous enterprises that did not respond to the questionnaire. Specifically within the trade-industries these imputations are important. The VAT-statistics alone could not provide us with information on output or input if we did not have knowledge on the shares of purchases that are used for goods for resale and intermediate consumption respectively.*

*During the work with details in the SBS it became obvious that the turnover of many enterprises must be underreported. A plan has been drawn up for adjustments to the output totals of several industries. Some extra work on this issue will need to be carried out by the consultant in the weeks before the next mission.*

*Due to earlier delays, the plan for finalization of the SUT still requires that outstanding issues are solved in a relatively short time. After the previous mission it was recommended, that the first of two missions in February 2016 – the present mission – was arranged as early as possible. After this mission we need as much time as possible to prepare the SUT-data for balancing of supply and use before the following mission, and that as much time as possible is set aside to finalization of the SUTs.*

### **Expected output of activity 2.6.6:**

Mission report describing results of coding and processing of data to be used for SUT

Recommendations for finishing of the SUT in KAS

Description of work done during the mission and work that needs to be completed after the Twinning project

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**Description of the background for the activity**

The 2012 Adapted Global Assessment report (AGA) prepared by Eurostat states the following about National Accounts (p.53-54): In 2010 KAS prepared with IPA support an “Action Plan for compiling and publishing comprehensive statistics on National Accounts and labour market”. That Plan is in principle a useful instrument to organize the future development of National Accounts together with the development of standards and sources that are needed for the enhancement of coverage and improvement of National Accounts data.

The Twinning Project has already had several activities in Component #2 National Accounts including a fact finding mission on SUTs.

**Activities to be undertaken in preparation for the mission:**

- Previous mission reports on NA component. All published at [www.dst.dk/kosovo](http://www.dst.dk/kosovo)

**The expected activities are:**

- Further development of detailed plan for future actions on SUT by the twinning program
- Finishing coding of data (if possible)

**Expected output:**

- Mission report – according to template
- Detailed plan for further activities to be completed in component 2 by the twinning program
- List of actions to be taken after the Twinning

**Annex 1. Agenda, February 2016**

Day	Place	Time	Event
1	KAS	10:00	KAS: Overview of what has been accomplished since the previous mission 2.6.5, February 2016
		10:45	Coffee break
		11:00	Discussion on plans for this week
		12:00	Lunch break
		13:30-15:30	Hands-on SUTs data
2	KAS	09:00-16:00	Hands-on SUTs data
3	KAS	09:00-16:00	Hands-on SUTs data
4	KAS	09:00-16:00	Hands-on SUTs data
5	KAS	09:00-16:00	Hands-on SUTs data
6	KAS	09:00-16:00	Hands-on SUTs data
7	KAS	09:00-16:00	Hands-on SUTs data
8	KAS	09:00-16:00	Hands-on SUTs data
9	KAS	09:00-16:00	Hands-on SUTs data Discussion on recommendations A plan for next mission and what to do before next mission Report writing
10	KAS	10:00-12:00	Report writing Debriefing Experts, BC Project Leader, Component Leader, and RTA