

A Quarterly Newsletter published within the European Union's ENPI programme for Israel
EU Twinning Project IL/12/CRIS 2015/370-467

Enhancing Official Statistics

The EU-Israel Twinning Project on Statistics has completed its sixth project quarter and successfully fulfilled the first 13 indicators of achievement.

Since the last newsletter circulated nearly a year ago, great progress has been made in all four components with seven missions carried out at the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS) and three study visits were made to Denmark and the Netherlands, Italy and Poland. Between the missions, significant progress in the project's implementation has been made through constant dialogue between member state experts, ICBS experts and stakeholders from Ministries, the Public Council for Statistics and the research community ensuring successful embedding of the Twining Project within the ICBS.

The implementation period of the Twining Project prolonged by six months: The ICBS and Statistics Denmark agreed with the European Union Delegation to Israel to extend the implementation period by six months as well as adjusting indicators of achievement and activities based on lessons learned from the first year of the Twinning Project. The adjusted Twinning work plan was signed in August 2017 and the implementation period will now run until the end of August 2018.

Adjustment of the pool of experts available to the project: Based on knowledge gained from the study visits and dialogues with other EU Member States, the pool of experts available to the project has expanded with additional experts from the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT), Statistics Netherlands (CBS) and the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies in France (INSEE) in order to ensure that appropriate expertise will be available for the project.

A. Quality management of official statistics – Pilots for working procedures, methods and tools to assist quality management in ICBS completed: So far attention has primarily been given to quality management and the necessary supporting tools according to the requirements found directly and indirectly in the Code of Practice and to align the statistics produced with international standards.

For the rest of the project focus will be on establishing a national community of authorities that produce official statistical



A: Study Visit to the Netherlands – ICBS participants and Dutch experts at the study visit to the Netherlands
B: Activity D7 – Meeting between ICBS participants and experts from Statistics Denmark

information about Israel in order to enhance coordination and collaboration. As a first step, the National Statistician Prof. Danny Pfeffermann, invited senior representatives from governmental offices and other national authorities producing official statistics to a seminar on 16 November 2017. The purpose of the seminar was to promote cooperation between all the parties in the country engaged in collecting, processing and producing official statistical information. This collaboration will help improve the information available to the public.

B. Micro-data services to researchers – A dedicated Research Service Unit: In order to lead a more effective and user friendly research service at the ICBS, a manager was appointed to the new Research Service Unit within the International Relations and Statistical Coordination Department. This appointment is considered a significant first step toward developing a more effective research service and meeting international standards and best practices. However, additional staff is a prerequisite in order to ensure satisfying progress of development in a situation where the ICBS also experience a constant growth of data request from the research community. The new unit, will in the first implementation phase, focus on establishing additional research rooms, building a catalogue of available data, update guidelines and “leaning” the current working procedures while continuing their ongoing work of providing data for researchers.

C. Infrastructures for agricultural statistics – Funding for the first Agricultural Census since 1981 approved: A major step in this component was that the ICBS, in cooperation with the Ministry of

Agricultural and Rural Development (MARD), managed to obtain the necessary funding to carry out an agricultural census. This is an exceptionally important breakthrough as the last agricultural census in Israel was conducted nearly 40 years ago. In preparation, a steering committee for the census with representatives from ICBS, MARD, the Ministry of Finance, academia and the Farmers Association has been established. A pilot is planned for March 2018 and the actual census is planned to begin on July 2018.

D. Geo-spatial tools for improving the quality and the efficiency of field surveys – Specification for a Multi Survey System outlined: The ICBS Team worked intensively on specifying their vision for one Multi Survey System, an IT system that will combine all the needs of all collections stages and will incorporate GIS tools. The system will be a user friendly system that will be used at the different collection stages, by employees holding various positions- from enumerators to managers.

Project management

TWINNING PROJECT LEADERS

YOEL FINKEL (IL)
E-MAIL: YOEL@CBS.GOV.IL

JESPER ELLEMOSE JENSEN (DK)
E-MAIL: JEJ@DST.DK

RESIDENT TWINNING ADVISER (RTA)

CHARLOTTE NIELSEN
E-MAIL: CLN@DST.DK

RTA COUNTERPART

BATIA ATTALI
E-MAIL: BATIA@CBS.GOV.IL

RTA ASSISTANT

TAMAR RAND
EMAIL: TAMARRA@CBS.GOV.IL

Further information

Activity reports can be downloaded from the project's websites: www.dst.dk/israel and www.cbs.gov.il/twinning.html

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