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Eurostat's IPA strategy for 2021 – 2027

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0. Executive summary

The European Commission, through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), supports the statistical systems in the Western Balkans and Turkey to continue their alignment to the EU *acquis* in statistics, in view of future accession.

Although Eurostat's statistical cooperation with partner countries goes far beyond usage of the IPA funds, this instrument is nevertheless a very important piece in the wider statistical cooperation context.

The purpose of this document is to set out Eurostat's strategy on how to use the **IPA III** funds for statistical cooperation with candidate countries and potential candidates during the period **2021-2027**, taking into account that the implementation of IPA III may last until 2030 or even beyond.

The **goal** of the cooperation is that by the end of the IPA III programmes, the candidate countries will have become largely compliant with EU statistical legislation and if possible ready to close chapter 18 in the negotiations on EU membership; while for potential candidates it is to become largely compliant in most statistical domains. To achieve that goal candidate countries and potential candidates will need to (a) increase the production and dissemination of high quality statistical data; (b) implement the European statistics Code of Practice; (c) strengthen the administrative and management capacity of the national statistical systems, and (d) enhance regional statistical cooperation. Because of the overarching component the statistics, it has been included in the "Fundamentals" cluster of chapters, jointly with the rule of law, the judiciary, public administration reform, economic criteria¹.

In the period 2021-2027 the main focus is on **increased transmission of compliant statistical data to Eurostat** and on responding to demands for data for the main EU policies, such as the European Green Deal and the Digital Decade. Methodological work and use of new data sources in order to make statistical production more efficient are important parts of the strategy.

The strategy foresees continued use of **IPA multi-beneficiary programmes (MBP)** to ensure coordination among countries, the transfer of knowledge, the respect of common standards and the production of comparable statistics. The IPA MBPs are co-delegated by DG NEAR to Eurostat. These programmes are intended to complement other sources of funding in each country (national budgets, national IPA programmes and support from international institutions).

This strategy identifies the **tools** for statistical assistance in the framework of the IPA MBPs, which in general are applicable to all candidate countries and potential candidates: peer reviews, statistical projects, participation in ESS meetings, trainings, traineeships, provision of tailor-made expertise and support to the organisation of in-country, regional and international events.

¹ As the new revised methodology for accession is based on the principle of the "fundamentals first", accession negotiations start with the Fundamentals cluster which is the last to be closed

Furthermore, it defines how the programming of the next IPA MBP will be made in coordination with Eurostat technical units and also with the beneficiary countries.

Finally, the strategy describes the monitoring and evaluation process of the performance of the IPA MBP, and the coordination mechanism that is set up to avoid overlaps and ensure the best possible use of resources.

At the end of the document the strategy includes, in the Annex, the vision and mission of each of the candidate countries and potential candidates for the development of statistics for the period 2021-2027, as the document has been developed also through the work with seven partners.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set out Eurostat's strategy on how to use the **Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)** for the statistical cooperation with candidate countries and potential candidates during the period **2021-2027**, the same years covered by the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2021-2027. Although the budget years cover the period 2021 to 2027, the implementation of IPA III programmes² may last until 2030 or beyond. Eurostat has prepared its strategy in consultation with the representatives of the National Statistical Institutes (NSI) of the candidate countries and potential candidates, through a task force, as it was done in 2013 before IPA II started. In 2021, the countries recognized as candidate countries are Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey, while Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo* are potential candidates.

One major aim of the document is to have a solid background for programming of future IPA Multi-Beneficiary Programmes (MBP) with DG NEAR. The document can also support NSIs in their negotiations with EU Delegations about future national IPA programmes. The assessment of the IPA III programme scheduled midway through the programme might lead to the adaptation of the goals and the means needed.

All National Statistical Systems (NSSs) are under pressure to produce and disseminate high quality statistics, increase efficiency and reduce the burden on respondents. They are also facing an increasing demand for statistical data to be used for policy decision-making and strategic purposes. In addition, the enlargement process puts extra pressure on the NSIs of candidate countries and potential candidates as they have the leading role in providing relevant, accurate, reliable, timely, punctual, coherent, comparable, accessible and clear official statistics to support the enlargement process, move towards compliance with the EU statistical legislation and integrate in the European Statistical System.

Furthermore, this strategy aims to act as a reference document to facilitate statistical cooperation and collaboration mechanisms. It should help overcome challenges faced by the National Statistical Institutes of candidate countries and potential candidates to comply with the continuously evolving EU statistical legislation. It presents the areas where the candidate

² Link to the IPA III Regulation 2021/1529:
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32021R1529>

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

countries and potential candidates need support, the instruments that will be used for such support and the respective financing, as well as how the activities will be monitored and assessed. In addition the Annex presents the general statistical vision and mission of the candidate countries and potential candidates for the next medium term period (5-7 years), including the main strategic goals and through which means they will be achieved.

The strategy is intended for use inside the European Commission, in particular the Directorate General for Neighbourhood and enlargement negotiations and European Union Delegations. The document is also intended for use by the national authorities of the candidate countries and potential candidates, and by other donors.

2. Policy context

The current general policy guidelines of the enlargement process were set in the conclusions adopted at the **General Affairs Council in June 2019**⁴. They have been further specified in February 2020 by the Commission in its communication **‘Enhancing the accession process - A credible EU perspective for the Western Balkans’**⁵ and confirmed in May 2020 by the Council in the **Zagreb declaration**⁶. There is a commitment to enlargement, which remains a key policy of the European Union and continues to represent a strategic investment in peace, democracy, prosperity, security and stability in Europe. This was repeated in the **Brdo declaration** of 6 October 2021⁷.

The European Commission priorities also give a general guidance on the strategic areas, which further developments are expected and which have to be taken into account in the enlargement process. The current **Commission** has identified **six priorities for the period 2019-2024**: (i) A European Green Deal, (ii) A Europe fit for the digital age, (iii) An economy that works for people, (iv) A stronger Europe in the world, (v) Promoting our European way of life, and (vi) A new push for European democracy⁸. In particular, the two first Commission priorities, the European Green Deal and the Digital Decade, have a high level of ambition and impact official statistics at several levels. In addition, potential changes to EU priorities after 2024 may lead to new demands for statistics, currently unknown.

The programme for the internal market, competitiveness of enterprises, including small and medium-sized enterprises, and European statistics, 2021 – 2027 (Single Market Programme) lays down the priorities concerning European statistics and data needed for the purpose of carrying out the activities of the European Union for the period 2021-2027. It is both a programming instrument of a regulatory nature and an EU spending programme with an associated budget, different from the IPA programme and budget that covers actions to

⁴ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/18/council-conclusions-on-enlargement-and-stabilisation-and-association-process/>

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_20_181

⁶ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/43776/zagreb-declaration-en-06052020.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2021/10/06/brdo-declaration-6-october-2021/>

⁸ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024#relatedlinks>

implement the priorities. It is carried out by individual statistical actions, e.g. legislative acts adopted by the European Parliament and the Council^{9 10}.

Finally, the Eurostat Strategic Plan 2020-2024¹¹ outlines the strategy of Eurostat for the duration of the Commission's mandate and sets out the objectives to guide Eurostat's work in the years up to 2024. Eurostat Strategic Plan builds on the six headline ambitions mentioned above and on President von der Leyen's mission letter to Commissioner Paolo Gentiloni further specifying the role of Eurostat in the coming years: *"Independent, credible and high-quality European statistics will be an essential tool for your work. I want you to ensure that Eurostat remains the independent and trusted point of reference for statistics and data in Europe"*.

The enlargement process is closely followed-up by the Commission. Firstly, the **Economic Reform Programmes (ERPs)** are annually submitted by candidate countries and potential candidates to the European Commission. The structural reform agenda includes reforms to boost competitiveness and improve conditions for inclusive growth and job creation in the following areas: Energy and transport markets; Sectoral development; Business environment and reduction of the informal economy; Research, development and innovation and the digital economy; Trade-related reform; Education and skills; Employment and labour markets; Social inclusion, poverty reduction and equal opportunities. The European Commission and the European Central Bank (ECB) both make assessments of the ERPs that are submitted to the Council of the EU for direct discussions with the candidate countries and potential candidates.

Secondly each year the Commission adopts its **"Enlargement package"**¹², a set of documents explaining its policy on EU enlargement. Most importantly, this package includes a Communication on enlargement which sets out the way forward and takes stock of the situation in the candidate countries and potential candidates. In addition to the main Communication, the package contains the Reports in which the Commission services present their detailed annual assessment of the state of play in each candidate country and potential candidate and what has been achieved over the last year. These assessments are accompanied by recommendations and guidance on the reform priorities.

Thirdly, in 2020 the Commission adopted, and the Council of the EU endorsed, an **Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans**¹³.

Additional statistical activities stem from the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their related 169 targets, which are at the heart of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

⁹ For more details, see Annex II of Regulation (EU) 2021/690 establishing the Single Market Programme:

https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2021.153.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ:L:2021:153:TOC#d1e32-43-1

¹⁰ Even if any of the candidate countries and the potential candidates decides to associate to the SMP, in particular to the EU Statistical Programme, the financial instrument to support the enlargement policy activities will be IPA III. In that respect, the modalities of support might be affected depending on the decision of the countries.

¹¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/strategic-plan-2020-2024-eurostat_en

¹² https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/enlargement-policy/strategy-and-reports_en

¹³ https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/communication_on_wb_economic_and_investment_plan_october_2020_en.pdf

Development. This Agenda has given a new impetus to global efforts for achieving sustainable development. The EU, in coordination with its Member States, is committed to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to strive towards a sustainable future for all. The EU's answer to the 2030 Agenda is outlined in the 22 November 2016 European Commission's Communication "Next steps for a sustainable European future - European action for sustainability"¹⁴. Eurostat is monitoring the 2030 Agenda through a limited set of SDG indicators.

Finally, the COVID-19 crisis has highlighted the need for rapid provision of evidence (to underpin policy response and inform society), and triggered an agile response by the NSIs in the form of experimental statistics and innovative solutions for gathering and presenting recovery indicators.

The EU membership **negotiation process** is organised in 35 chapters and official statistics play a dual role in it. Firstly, statistics is covered by chapter 18 and the recommendations made in it have to be implemented in the pre-accession period; secondly, as statistics is a cross-theme activity that is integrated into several priorities, such as proper functioning of institutions, reform of public administration, economic governance, alignment to EU and international standards, it provides the data needed for assessing other chapters and policy areas. This dual role is particularly evident in the areas of economy, finance, agriculture, environment and regional policy where reliable and comparable statistics is a precondition for successful negotiations. Because of this overarching component, as mentioned, in the new revised methodology for accession, the statistics chapter has been included in the “Fundamentals” cluster of chapters, jointly with the rule of law, the judiciary, public administration reform, economic criteria. The new revised methodology for accession is based on a firm commitment to the principle of the “fundamentals first”: accession negotiations start with the Fundamentals cluster, which will also be the last one to be closed. Furthermore, statistics is key for monitoring macroeconomic stability, a welcoming business environment, functioning labour and financial markets, good levels and quality of education, infrastructure, innovation and economic integration with the EU and the world during the time until accession.

3. Objectives of the cooperation with candidate countries and potential candidates

The **ultimate goal** of the cooperation with candidate countries and potential candidates is that by the end of the IPA III programmes the candidate countries will become largely compliant with the EU statistical legislation and thus ready to close chapter 18 in the negotiations on EU membership, while for potential candidates it is to become largely compliant in most statistical domains. Candidate countries and potential candidate should progressively provide data to Eurostat using the same channels and with similar standards as the EU Member States. This goal cannot be achieved through external support alone; the countries have to take ownership of their gradual alignment with EU standards. It should be noted that, as the

¹⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1582887642463&uri=CELEX:52016DC0739>

EU *acquis* is a moving target, cooperation, which initially focused on development of technical capacity, has to switch to sustainability and to provide candidate countries and potential candidates with the means of achieving full compliance at the same pace as Member States and at the same time ensuring increased provision of better quality data.

The implementation of IPA II statistical projects showed that progress is substantial when comparing the situation seven years ago. Transmission of data to Eurostat has increased and whole statistical subject areas have been developed thanks to the support provided. Persistent support over time is key to keep momentum in the development of statistics and further alignment with the EU *acquis*. Even if substantial progress has been made, the experience has shown the need to apply conditionality: to give support only upon serious efforts by NSSs to make progress.

To achieve that goal candidate countries and potential candidates will need to (a) increase the production and dissemination of high quality statistical data; (b) implement the European statistics Code of Practice; (c) strengthen the administrative and management capacity of the national statistical systems, and (d) enhance regional statistical cooperation. In order to help them, support will be given in the following four areas:

a) Increase the production and dissemination of high quality statistical data

Social and technological improvements in societies lead users to demand more data of high quality to reflect reality, to describe new phenomena and to quickly react when a crisis, like COVID-19, emerges. Innovation and experimentation are key tools to cope with those challenges. Also, statistics are one of the most important sources for evidence-based decision making by policy makers at the regional, national, European and international level. It is also important to make statistical data openly available and guarantee equal access to statistics for all users, while ensuring data confidentiality.

Policy makers are faced with complex questions to answer and difficult decisions to take, so it is crucial to have a clear and detailed description of the economy and society; macroeconomic policies and structural economic and social reforms must rely on high quality statistical information. It is the role of NSSs to provide policy-makers with statistical information that is relevant, comparable, on time and accurate.

Increasing the production of high quality data with the limited resources of the NSSs can only be fulfilled by improving efficiency and by enhancing the use of administrative data sources and other (new) data sources, such as the data held by the private sector. NSIs should have the mandate and the capacity to influence the creation, maintenance and update of administrative data sources. The content and definitions used by administrative sources should be, as far as possible, harmonised and adapted so they are fit for statistical purposes. This allows for a reduction of the financial and response burden, for an increase of data quality and timeliness.

Candidate countries and potential candidates should in particular prioritise the statistical areas where there are opening or closing benchmarks in the accession process. Other statistical domains should continue their alignment with ESS standards, such as the European System of Accounts, the revision of the Industrial Classification of Economic Activities within the EU

classification (NACE), and keep the pace with the ESS changes. Although this applies to all statistics developed and produced by the ESS, some of them are particularly relevant: macroeconomic statistics (National Accounts, Government Finance Statistics and Excessive Deficit Procedure, Price and Trade statistics); social statistics (Labour Force Survey-LFS and Survey on Income and Living Conditions-SILC) and sectoral statistics (Agricultural Census, Environmental Accounts and Energy statistics).

In this context, population statistics are particularly relevant. Following the modernisation of social surveys, the **redevelopment of European statistics on population** comprising the population and housing census, demography and migration is ongoing. It builds up on the 2018 strategy for the post-2021 census and is in line with action points 7 and 8 of the Budapest memorandum¹⁵. It is planned that the Commission will propose a new framework regulation in mid-2022 with adoption by the legislators and implementation foreseen in 2023 and 2026. Furthermore, as the ESS is conducting the population and housing censuses in 2021/2022, the experiences and lessons learnt could be useful for the planned census in the candidate countries and potential candidates.

As user needs and priorities are continuously changing, to maintain the relevance of statistical data NSIs need to constantly **adapt to improve the methodology and production processes, and to introduce consultations and dialogues with users** as a regular activity as well as **better communication** of existing and new indicators. Globalisation, digitalisation, the European Green Deal and new economic activities, such as collaborative economy, are affecting all statistics and NSIs have to go beyond the traditional role of measuring the past to provide more now-casting and flash estimates. NSIs should enhance their methods to increase transparency and availability of data, including data clarity, data visibility, dissemination channels, and communication with users. **Information and communication technologies** applied by the NSIs should improve and allow them to cope with new requirements, including the response to challenging situations as the one created by the COVID-19 pandemic. The NSIs should start addressing issues related to access to data from both public and private sectors needed for compilation of official statistics, including their use in experimental statistics.

The expected results in this area are:

- increased use of cost-efficient methods such as the use of administrative data already available, use of privately held data, and combination of administrative data sources and survey data;
- improved availability and quality of statistical data in priority areas;
- increased and improved use of new digital data sources, technologies and innovative methods to better measure new phenomena and quickly react to new situations;
- improved information and communication technologies;
- increased trust and confidence in statistics;
- increased relevance and timeliness of statistical data;

¹⁵ [Budapest memorandum](#)

- improved communication and dissemination policy, including increased availability of metadata and access to micro-data for scientific research purposes;
- new methods for implementing population and housing censuses, including much wider use of registers.

b) Implement the European statistics Code of Practice

The European statistics Code of Practice (CoP)¹⁶ sets the standard for developing, producing and disseminating European statistics, along the lines of the institutional environment, statistical processes and statistical output. Statistical authorities, comprising Eurostat, the National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) and Other National Authorities (ONAs) responsible for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics, are strongly committed to quality – this commitment and high quality awareness are clearly expressed in the Quality Declaration of the ESS that is also included in the Preamble of the CoP, which provides the basic principles and criteria for establishing sustainable and credible national systems of official statistics.

Previous strategies have allowed several candidate countries and potential candidates to reach **a good level of implementation** of the European statistics Code of Practice. The new strategy will facilitate the efforts towards the **full implementation of the European statistics Code of Practice** while maintaining the level already achieved, thereby further increasing the professional independence of the NSIs, strengthen its coordinating role, the application of sound and quality statistical methods and advanced dissemination tools.

National Statistical Systems and compliance with the CoP in the candidate countries and potential candidates have been already assessed through sector reviews, adapted global assessments, light peer reviews and standard peer reviews¹⁷. To reassess the progress achieved in the implementation of the CoP, a **new round of peer reviews** is expected to be organised in 2023 and 2024, generally in the aftermath of the current round in the Member States. The same methodology as for Member States and the lessons learnt from the peer reviews in Member States will be applied in the region afterwards. In the meantime, the annual monitoring of actions related to previous Peer Reviews and Global Assessment recommendations should continue similarly to recent years.

Commitments on confidence in statistics are another tool intended as a means to involve national governments in the responsibility for the level of a country's compliance with the European statistics Code of Practice, thus establishing a link between the Code and the political level. As there are no rules on the form of the Commitment, countries are free to choose between different options, as long as the objective of raising public trust through a governmental commitment to provide the conditions for high-quality statistics and professional independence from any kind of influence is achieved¹⁸. Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia have already adopted a commitment on confidence in statistics.

¹⁶ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-catalogues/-/KS-02-18-142>

¹⁷ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/enlargement-countries/publications/reports>

¹⁸ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0278&qid=1632900208558&from=EN>

The expected results in this area are:

- ensured professional independence of the NSIs from political influence as well as from private sectors operators;
- improved quality management system and a quality culture;
- strengthened coordination role of the NSIs within the national statistical system;
- increased progress in the full implementation of the CoP while ensuring the level already achieved;
- preparation and eventual adoption of a commitment on confidence in statistics (for countries not having adopted one yet);
- monitoring of implementation of peer review recommendations.

c) Strengthen the administrative and management capacity of the national statistical systems

Besides the efforts made for achieving compliance with the EU statistical sector legislation, candidate countries and potential candidates should focus on increasing their capacity in the enlargement process to become an EU Member State taking on the **full responsibility of membership and progressively integrate in the European Statistical System**. Capacity development in terms of standards, management processes, data collection and processing, dissemination, infrastructure (legal, ICT technologies, buildings, human and financial resources) should be a continuous effort. National statistical systems (NSSs) need to reform and modernise their infrastructure including IT and adopt new developments in statistical production and in terms of the information technology. It is expected that the transmission of the data and metadata to Eurostat will be made using the same means as the Member States, currently eDAMIS and ESS Metadata Handler.

The **organisational capacity** of the NSSs should improve in order to enable them to implement the statistical production requirements and to make those improvements in a lasting and progressive manner. The primary vehicle to make better use of the human resources already in place in NSSs is to increase the managerial capacity. A more efficient use of the resources will increase the statistical production to meet the EU legislation in statistics.

NSSs will have to develop their own organisational structure through **change management** and eventually become not only fully capable of producing statistics in line with the EU legislation but also capable of fully participating as a peer in the development of European statistics. This means not only complying with the legal EU statistical requirements but also building up significant human capital in order to be able to make future contributions to the development of European statistics.

To make the organisation more adaptive in implementing change and making positive developments more sustainable, NSSs will have to **invest in people and in managers** in particular. Enhancing the professional capacity of the statisticians and upgrading the organisational and managerial capabilities will make improvements more permanent as more knowledge and skills are retained with the human capital. This investment will result in higher efficiency in the everyday running of NSSs and better use of their own resources.

Expected results in this area are:

- increased integration in the European statistical system;
- improved management and professional capacity.

d) Enhance regional statistical cooperation

In the Zagreb declaration, the EU fully supported the Western Balkans partners' pledge to inclusive regional cooperation and strengthening good neighbourly relations, including with EU Member States, and confirmed that the EU will continue to support regional cooperation. It reminded that, in order to fully exploit the potential of regional cooperation, a strong commitment by the entire region is needed.

Good **partnership and cooperation** are essential requirements to better answer to the current challenges of official statistics. The 'regional approach' applied in the last years in the candidate countries and potential candidates has been the basis for favourable and concrete outputs, further support to this approach is considered to be necessary to effectively maintain and develop key statistical areas and ensure sustainability of the results achieved so far.

Additionally, official statistics face today new phenomena such as big data and open data sources that present new challenges. While big data and open data sources present opportunities to better meet users' demands, they also raise legal, ethical, technical, and reputational issues. Using information from big data and open data sources and incorporating them into the statistical production process is not easy and requires the creation of common models, methodologies, legislation and standards. As most of NSSs of candidate countries and potential candidates share **common features**, the ways of coping with the problems generated by big data and open data sources are quite the same. Deeper regional cooperation facilitates the sharing of common mechanisms and experiences.

The expected results in this area are:

- closer relations and increased knowledge sharing among the NSSs of the region

4. Instruments and financing

To fulfil the objectives detailed above the assistance in the area of statistics uses a number of instruments designed either for a country alone (financed by IPA national programmes) or for a number of countries (financed by IPA multi-beneficiary programmes).

Even if in the context of IPA the main focus is on financing various types of relevant support, other activities help countries to fulfil the objectives as well. Complementary activities by Eurostat consist of data collection, donor coordination, compliance monitoring including feedback to the countries, the political process under the Stabilisation and Association Agreements (or similar) and invitation to meetings, such as the Policy Group for Statistical Cooperation (DGs of NSIs), and participation in the DGINS Conference and most of Eurostat's expert groups. In addition, support can also be provided by other organisations and individual countries.

a) Financing

The costs for implementing the necessary measures to implement the EU *acquis* on statistics are borne by very different sources, such as the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) programmes and the national budgets of the countries. The contribution of any IPA programme is relatively marginal when compared to the contribution of the national budget of each candidate country or potential candidate but both sources are needed to be able to implement this strategy. All the different sources are described below. For an efficient use of the various sources good coordination and proper information sharing among all parties involved is of paramount importance.

- **Multi-beneficiary IPA programmes**

The multi-beneficiary programmes (MBP) ensure coordination among countries, the transfer of knowledge, the respect of common standards and the production of comparable statistics. They also provide technical support in a large number of statistical areas to guarantee harmonisation of methodologies and introduction of new legislation. MBP on statistics closely model the working mechanisms applied in the relations between Eurostat and the Member States. Each MBP is built on the success, good practices and experience of the previous ones.

The multi-beneficiary programmes are implemented via *grants* and *service contracts*. An NSI being the beneficiary of a grant takes over increased responsibility to manage the funds provided by the European Commission. This is in line with the strategy to prepare the NSIs of the candidate countries and potential candidates for similar management arrangements and responsibilities after they become a member of the EU and the ESS.

Service contracts are mainly used to ensure transfer of know-how through the hiring of experts for implementing work and providing advice in specific statistical domains covered by the statistical projects, and to organise common workshops, training and traineeships for all the candidate countries or potential candidates.

The decision on whether to implement the cooperation programme via a grant to the NSI or not will depend on the statistical domain, on an assessment of the administrative capacity of each NSI, and on the maturity of the NSI to take over the enlarged responsibility to manage funds from the IPA programme in a sound and appropriate manner. The NSI needs to set up a suitable organisational structure and have necessary human resources to ensure a financially sound management of a grant.

The current MBP on statistics is included in IPA 2017 and will finish in 2021. From 2021 until March 2024, statistics will be covered by MBP IPA 2019. Both IPA 2017 and IPA 2019 have been developed under the framework of the IPA II Regulation¹⁹. The table below ‘Overview of statistical IPA MB programmes managed by Eurostat under IPA II’ presents a summary of statistical IPA MB programmes managed by Eurostat under IPA II.

¹⁹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32014R0231>

The Parliament and Council Regulation establishing the **IPA III**²⁰ provides for the continuation of statistical support through MBP as well as national IPA. An MBP on statistics under IPA 2022 for a duration of 48 months starting in 2024 has been proposed to DG NEAR by Eurostat. Eurostat will implement the multi-beneficiary IPA action under direct management. The indicative budget (15 MEUR TBC) of the multi-beneficiary IPA programme is intended to complement other sources of funding in each of the candidate countries and potential candidates. The distribution of the budget by country will be determined when planning the statistical multi-beneficiary programme, taking into account the specific needs. It is possible that an additional multi-beneficiary action under IPA III will be launched in the latter part of the strategy period to fill remaining gaps and to ensure that the priorities of the new European Commission in 2024 and new legal provisions in the EU legislation can be met by partner countries. This additional action may have a duration of three or four years.

Overview of statistical IPA MB programmes managed by Eurostat under IPA II				
Programme	Service contract (SC)	Grants	Amount, million EUR (of which grants)	Implementation period
IPA 2014 MBP	AL, BA, XK + grant countries	ME, MK, RS, TR	7.8 (2.5)	SC 01/11/2015 – 30/09/2017 Grants 01/10/2015 – 31/08/2017
IPA 2015 MBP	AL, BA, XK + grant countries	ME, MK, RS, TR	15.8 (6.0)	SC 01/04/2017 – 31/12/2019 Grants 01/07/2017 – 31/10/2019
IPA 2017 MBP	AL, BA, XK + grant countries	ME, MK, RS, TR, IMF ²¹	13.4 (5.9)	SC 01/01/2019 – 30/06/2022 Grants TR 01/05/2019 – 31/10/2021, ME, MK and RS 01/05/2019 – mid-2022
IPA 2019 MBP	BA, XK + grant countries	AL, ME, MK, RS, TR	9.8 (5.0)	SC 01/04/2021 – 31/03/2024 Grants 01/09/2021 – 31/03/2024

Abbreviations used in the table:

AL	Albania
BA	Bosnia and Herzegovina
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ME	Montenegro
MK	North Macedonia
RS	Serbia
TR	Turkey
XK	Kosovo
SC	Service contract (under IPA)

²⁰ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32021R1529>

²¹ IMF has received a grant under IPA 2017 MBP for support in the field of external sector statistics

- **National IPA programmes**

National IPA programmes address the specific needs of the countries to implement the EU legislation in practice. National programmes cover very country-specific actions of a wide range of topics and implementation of statistics at national level. In several countries, large amounts have been allocated from national IPA to pay for fieldwork of the population census, agriculture census and other large statistical exercises. Unlike the MBP IPA, national IPA can be used to finance procurement of equipment for the NSIs, such as computers or tablets.

To avoid overlapping and to reinforce cooperation, Eurostat will follow national IPA programmes on statistics. Eurostat country officers will be in close contact with DG NEAR, the EU delegation and the countries to ensure that coordination. In this context, there will be a regular exchange of information (including exchange of terms of reference of the contracts and concrete actions, as well as the deliverables submitted within the different projects), keeping Eurostat and the EU Delegations in the loop of the advances and problems encountered.

- **National budgets**

The main source of financing of NSIs is the budget provided by the government of the respective candidate country or potential candidate. However, for the countries that are in the process of aligning to the EU statistical *acquis*, it is key to obtain external financial support. After the end of the EU support, the national governments are expected to guarantee the sustainability of statistical production from their own budgets and in this way take ownership of the IPA support provided by EU.

- **Other sources of assistance**

Besides the EU, other bodies and institutions offer assistance to candidate countries and potential candidates. Switzerland and Sweden implement national projects in several of those countries and provide technical assistance through regional programmes.

The IMF delivers technical assistance in the field of economic statistics to the majority of candidate countries and potential candidates.

EFTA organises several seminars and training courses for candidate countries and potential candidates, also in cooperation with UNECE and Eurostat. Other UN agencies also provide continuous support in the region.

Several other donors, including other UN agencies and EU Member States, contribute to the development of statistics, focusing on technical assistance through bilateral cooperation.

b) Instruments

The following overview of instruments for statistical assistance in the framework of the **IPA multi-beneficiary programme** is in general applicable to all candidate countries and potential candidates:

- Peer reviews
- Statistical projects
- Participation in ESS meetings
- Training
- Traineeships
- Provision of tailor-made expertise
- Support to the organisation of in-country, regional and international events

The various types of activities are explained in more detail below.

- **Peer reviews**

This instrument provides a systematic and comprehensive assessment of how compliant a country's statistical system is with the European Statistics Code of Practice. Peer reviews indicate problems and drawbacks and make recommendations that ensure rapid responses to users' needs, increase the quality of statistics, improve the visibility of statistical offices and strengthen their coordinating role. The NSIs develop an action plan in response to those recommendations (see more details above in the section '[Implementing the European statistics Code of Practice](#)').

Sector reviews can also be organised, to analyse how compliant with the sectoral statistical legislation is the statistical production processes in specific sectors. The analysis will be made when a country wants advice on how to align important sectors of statistics with European standards.

- **Statistical projects**

Data collection as part of statistical projects is an important element of implementing new and existing statistical legislation. In this respect, statistical projects help, through assessments and advice from external experts, transfer of know-how and financial contributions to NSIs of candidate countries and potential candidates. Surveys provided for in new statistical legislation or, for a limited period, existing statistical requirements could be financed through this instrument. Statistical projects may also aim at drafting inventories of data sources, implementing methodological work, and drafting methodological and quality reports. Special attention needs to be paid to the sustainability of the projects and their complete compliance at the end, including transmission and publication of statistical data. IT standards must be covered in the statistical projects when needed.

To enhance the multi-beneficiary character of the statistical projects specific workshops may be organised where the beneficiaries from several candidate countries and potential candidates can discuss project-related issues and find solutions to common problems. Statistical projects shall be implemented primarily in the priority areas, where candidate countries and potential candidates need to make further efforts in implementing new sector statistical legislation and maintaining and increasing the level of compliance with existing legislation.

- **Participation in ESS meetings**

Eurostat organises technical meetings (working groups, task forces, training courses etc.) each year covering all areas of statistics; most of them are relevant for candidate countries and potential candidates. Participation in these meetings allows those involved to be acquainted with the existing statistical legislation and with problems and solutions for its implementation, to increase their professional capacity, to be aware of new developments and to provide input for new developments. It also prepares future potential membership in the EU. Since this type of assistance proved to be extremely useful over the previous years, it is desirable to increase participation of candidate countries and potential candidates in ESS meetings.

- **Training**

Statistics comprises many different fields. Harmonisation, the need for comparability, good knowledge and information about new methods and techniques are important for the production of high quality statistics. To improve specialised statistical knowledge Eurostat launched the European Master in Official Statistics (EMOS), a network of Master programmes providing post-graduate education in the area of official statistics at the European level²²; in addition, Eurostat supports statistical training and courses in the framework of the European Statistical Training Programme (ESTP)²³. Continuous training is essential for keeping up-to-date with the ever changing statistical tools, techniques and methods. Therefore, training in statistics is vital to meet the evolving challenges. Training can cover general methodological aspects of statistical domains and be addressed to specialists of several countries or can be tailor-made focusing on specific themes for the staff in a country. Well targeted IT training is essential for the candidate countries and potential candidates for developing production and dissemination of statistics.

In addition, management training is aimed at developing new strategies, defining a statistical infrastructure, handling user requests, implementing new initiatives, managing change and achieving the mission and the vision of NSIs. Management training covers both top and middle management. Furthermore, trainings on managerial and soft skills will lead to higher efficiency in everyday running of NSIs and better use of own resources.

- **IPA Traineeships**

This is a form of training where employees from beneficiary NSIs are seconded to Eurostat or to an NSI in a Member State or an EFTA country to study more thoroughly the functioning of the European Statistical System and existing EU legislation in different sectors, thus improving the professional capacity of the trainees. A traineeship usually lasts three months. In the previous seven year period, it was very successful and

²² https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cros/content/emos_en

²³ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cros/ESTP_en

appreciated tool for direct emersion in the ESS by staff of national statistical systems (i.e. not only from national statistical institutes) in various statistical domains.

- **Provision of tailor-made expertise**

Tailor-made expertise, provided through study visits and consultancies, is an essential tool for acquiring new knowledge. The aim of these tailor-made activities is to give an individual dimension to the multi-beneficiary approach by taking into account the specific needs of the country concerned. Study visits and consultations are an excellent opportunity for the candidate countries' and potential candidates' experts to see how the practical implementation of EU statistical legislation works, to learn more about concrete topics, and to study methods and best practices from NSIs of EU and EFTA countries. They also help establish close bilateral contacts and future partnerships.

- **Support to the organisation of in-country, regional and international events**

The organisation of in-country, regional or international events helps candidate countries and potential candidates to increase the statistical knowledge among the producers of statistics and improves statistical literacy of and relations with national users. It also enhances regional statistical cooperation and allows for the exchange of good practices and experiences. Example: Winter school in Serbia.

Following the general policy of the Commission and in connection with the Green Deal, a new approach to meetings and missions will be based on wider use of digital technologies. It is likely that for implementing the measures listed above, the number of missions in comparison to previous periods would be reduced. The experience gained during the COVID-19 pandemic has shown that virtual meetings are very efficient and could be, in some cases, as effective as physical ones.

c) Programming

As mentioned above, the thematic priorities for assistance in the IPA III regulation include also a reference to “improving the production of good quality statistics”. This will be included by Eurostat in programming documents concerning individual IPA programmes under IPA III, such as the IPA 2022 multi-country programme.

Once this process is over, Eurostat will have a clear picture of the available IPA funds and of DG NEAR's specific needs on statistics. At that stage, an internal consultation will be launched, to identify, jointly with Eurostat's technical units, the main fields in which support should be focused to help candidate countries and potential candidates to align with EU legislation. Once the list of Statistical projects (SP) is internally validated, it will be shared with the countries (during the PGSC meeting or through other fora/means), so that the countries can also check whether they have the human and economic resources to carry out the activities and ensure their sustainability. In addition, and depending on the available funds, Eurostat will offer the countries the possibility to ask for ad-hoc statistical projects. After receiving the commitment from the countries, Eurostat will be able to prepare the terms of reference for the grants and service contract to be launched under IPA MBP 2022. The new IPA programs would tend to be longer than so far.

As mentioned previously, it is possible that an additional MBP will be launched under IPA III. If this happens, the same consultation process will take place.

5. Monitoring, evaluation and coordination

a) Monitoring

Monitoring is based on specified measurable indicators and should provide information on progress in reaching the objectives. The purpose of monitoring is to improve project/programme/action design, efficiency and accountability.

The requirements to monitor the progress of IPA beneficiaries are set in the IPA Regulations and will gain more prominence in the coming **IPA III Regulation**. IPA III provides for regular monitoring of actions and reviewing progress made towards delivering results. Monitoring will be done on the basis of the indicators set out in that legal act. Three of the 11 **key performance indicators** refer to Eurostat as source²⁴. These indicators as well as indicators specific to the statistical IPA programmes (such as volume of data in Eurobase by country or amount of data sets transmitted to Eurostat) will be defined more precisely and included in the IPA programming framework and proportionate reporting requirements imposed on recipients of EU funds. The enlargement reports will be taken as a point of reference in assessing the results of IPA III assistance. The performance reporting system should ensure that data for monitoring implementation and results are collected efficiently, effectively and on time.

Monitoring can be internal (performed by Commission staff or implementing partners) or external (Results Oriented Monitoring). As defined in IPA III, the **Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM)** is a tool to report on the performance and results of EU funded projects and programmes. Using a highly structured, standardised methodology, independent ROM experts provide an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the project and formulate recommendations on how to improve effectiveness.

Regarding the **internal monitoring**, it is implemented by the beneficiaries and by the EU institutions. Monitoring covers progress made by the National Statistical Institutes regardless of whether improvements have been financed under multi-beneficiary IPA projects, national IPA projects, by bilateral donors, or under the state budget of the country concerned. It is not feasible to separate the effects of the various interventions on the improvement of the statistical institute.

Beneficiaries should closely follow the implementation of the project and have to deliver reporting documents and data. This contributes as well to capacity building of NSIs.

²⁴ The three KPIs from Eurostat are:

- 5. Expenditure on social protection as % of GDP (source: Eurostat) and Employment Rate of persons aged 20 to 64 and changes in the Gini coefficient of a beneficiary over time (source: Eurostat).
- 6. Digital skills (source: Eurostat).
- 8. Energy intensity measured in terms of primary energy and GDP (source: Eurostat). Share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption % (source: Eurostat).

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R1529&from=EN>, p. 26

Improvements on main economic and social statistical indicators are assessed in the **Progress report on the action plan on economic, monetary and financial statistics for the Western Balkans and Turkey**, which is annually adopted by the members of the Economic and Financial Committee Sub-Committee on Statistics and representatives of candidate countries and potential candidates.

In addition, as described above in chapter [2 – Policy context](#), each year the Commission adopts the "**Enlargement package**"²⁵, which takes stock of the situation in the candidate countries and potential candidates and presents detailed annual assessments of the state of play in each candidate country and potential candidate. These assessments are accompanied by recommendations and guidance on the reform priorities.

The main tool used by Eurostat to assess compliance per country and statistical domain is the compliance monitoring tool in **ESS Metadata Handler (ESS MH)**, formerly the SMIS+ tool. ESS MH in combination with the Statistical Requirements Compendium²⁶, published annually by Eurostat, allows for a detailed monitoring of each statistical domain covered by the EU legislation and by gentlemen agreements. In ESS MH experts in each candidate country or potential candidate assess the compliance of their statistics with the EU legislation. Afterwards the corresponding thematic unit at Eurostat adds an evaluation for the same statistical domains for each country, which is not necessarily identical to the assessment provided by the country.

Furthermore, statistical activities financed by IPA MBP, and in particular statistical projects, are subject to close **Eurostat monitoring**. Reports and deliverables are assessed by Eurostat technical units under the coordination of Eurostat's unit 'B3 - Enlargement, neighbourhood and development cooperation'.

Data transmission from candidate countries and potential candidates to Eurostat is important for measuring compliance in statistics. Availability in Eurobase of statistical data from candidate countries and potential candidates is a relevant indicator of compliance. Data transmission could be further assessed regarding the completeness, timeliness and other quality aspects. Based on the obtained information, Eurostat prepares a summarised index of compliance, which is widely used as indicator for statistics in IPA programmes.

b) Evaluation

In addition to monitoring progress, evaluation on the performance of the measures implemented is provided for in the IPA II Regulation and in the IPA III proposal. Evaluation aims to determine whether beneficiaries really have benefited from the programme.

Evaluations are planned on a multi-annual basis. A mid-term review of IPA II was carried out at the end of 2016. The evaluation report highlighted that IPA II has become more strategic than its predecessor. It has increased focus on performance and results, but there is room for improvement: in the quality of the indicators, in the development of monitoring and evaluation frameworks at local level and in the quality of data collection in beneficiaries.

²⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/enlargement-policy/strategy-and-reports_en

²⁶ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-manuals-and-guidelines/-/ks-gq-21-006>

As regards **IPA III**, the Commission will carry out an **interim and a final evaluation**. The monitoring will be done on the basis of the indicators set out in the legal proposal and in line with the provisions of the proposal for the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument²⁷. The evaluations will assess the effects on the ground, based on the relevant indicators and targets and a detailed analysis of the degree to which the measures can be deemed relevant, effective, efficient, provide enough EU added value and are coherent with other EU policies. The evaluations will include lessons learnt to identify any gaps/problems or any potential to further improve the actions or their results and to help maximise their exploitation/impact. The conclusions of the evaluations accompanied by observations will be communicated to the European Parliament and to the Council.

c) Coordinating bodies and donor coordination

- **Coordinating bodies**

The **Policy Group for Statistical Cooperation (PGSC)** is the main body for coordination of statistical cooperation with candidate countries and potential candidates. It is composed of Directors General and Heads of international cooperation units in the NSIs of candidate countries and potential candidates. It addresses MBP IPA programmes, inter alia.

In addition, in the frame of the IPA MBP statistical cooperation programmes, **coordination workshops** are organised at the beginning, in the middle or towards the end of the implementation of the IPA MBP service contracts, counting on the participation of the Heads of international cooperation departments of all seven partners. The aim of these workshops is to discuss the on-going activities jointly with the partner countries and the contractor, in order to analyse the problems encountered in the implementation of these activities and to find solutions.

- **Donor coordination**

Donor coordination is of paramount importance in order to ensure the efficient use of funds and to avoid duplication of efforts. The European Commission, the other donors and the beneficiaries have responsibilities in achieving these objectives. Donor coordination should boost aid effectiveness, efficient use of funds and foster statistical capacity building in enlargement countries.

Article 5 of the Regulation establishing IPA II and chapter II of the Commission proposal for a Regulation establishing the IPA III set out the commitment of the Commission and the countries to cooperate in ensuring coherence and avoiding duplication between the assistance provided under IPA Regulations and other assistance provided by the Union. In this line, Eurostat coordinates the activities of various donors in the area of statistics by means of an **annual Donor Survey**. All donors active in candidate countries and potential candidates, implementing agencies (Member State NSIs) and beneficiaries are asked to report statistics-related projects to Eurostat, if possible already at the project identification stage. The report on the Donor Survey results is discussed at the annual meeting of the

²⁷ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2018%3A460%3AFIN>

Management Group for Statistical Cooperation (heads of cooperation departments of NSIs).

In addition, Eurostat closely cooperates with DG NEAR and the EU Delegations in the candidate countries and potential candidates to avoid overlapping and increase efficiency in the implementation of statistical projects.

Annex - General statistical vision and mission of the candidate countries and potential candidates for the next medium term period

Whereas the main body of the document is focused on Eurostat's approach, this annex presents the general statistical vision and mission of each of the candidate countries and potential candidates for the next medium term period (5-7 years), including the main strategic goals and through which means they will be achieved.

The authors of the national contributions are National Statistical Institutes of the candidate countries and potential candidates.

Institute of Statistics of Albania

The mission of the Institute of Statistics of Albania (INSTAT) is to provide transparent, neutral and timely statistics that help the user to judge on the developments of the transformation processes within the country.

INSTAT, as the main institution of producing official statistics and coordinator of the national statistical system, aims to provide reliable and comparable data, adapting methodologies and adding a list of statistical indicators.

Values where INSTAT focuses its work are based in three main pillars:

- Professionalism:
 - Reliability
 - Objectivity
 - Cooperation and Communication
 - Identification with INSTAT
 - Being user-oriented
 - Being quality-oriented
 - Orientation to solutions
 - Initiative
 - Accountability
- Integrity:
 - Respect towards each other
 - Dignity
 - Equality
 - Respecting different thinking
 - Supporting one another
 - Exchange of knowledge
- Motivation:
 - Involvement in processes
 - Flexibility
 - Giving feedback
 - Stability

The main challenges of INSTAT for achieving strategic objectives and successful implementation of statistical activities as a whole are foreseen to be:

1. **Culture of Change and Development:** INSTAT should use communication and motivation instruments to employees in order to increase awareness of development and innovation.
2. **Efficient policies and strategies:** INSTAT should build standards by applying regulations, guidelines, manuals, and other formal incentives to guide the institution towards achieving strategic objectives.

3. **Institutional and organizational level:** INSTAT should work to build adequate management systems, vertical and horizontal interaction among sectors to achieve short, medium and long term goals by using the resources available to the institution in the most accessible way.
4. **Communicating with the users.** Users of official statistics are clients of products provided by INSTAT. The institution will continuously work to increasingly align the users' expectations and satisfaction with official statistics, strictly respecting statistical principles and international standards.

The Consolidated legal basis is considered one of INSTAT strengths. Given the experience so far and the international expert evaluation reports, mainly of Eurostat, it is concluded that the current law on official statistics is a strong legal basis to guarantee the normal functioning of INSTAT. The Law on Official Statistics provides for the implementation of the basic principles of official statistics, human and financial resources management and reliability in statistical confidentiality. Meanwhile, the new Program of Official Statistics 2017-2021 approved by the Assembly is the proper development mechanism as it specifies the activities and priorities of the next five years to be met by INSTAT and other statistical agencies. Other advantages are described as below;

- Supporting the governmental institutions, which has enabled the strengthening of inter-institutional relations, providing the necessary administrative data and timely and quality performance of statistical activities.
- Professional experience. INSTAT enjoys considerable experience to ensure sustainability in the conduction of the activities and their qualitative accomplishment.
- Positive reputation. Based on the professional skills of the staff, INSTAT enjoys the respect of the users, which has brought not only the increase of their number, but also the increase of the demand for statistics. INSTAT enjoys good reputation also to donors, who contribute to the development of infrastructure and the quality of statistical products.
- Professional and motivated staff. INSTAT staff enjoy professional capacities not only in the statistical field but also in supporting areas such as information and administrative technology. Also, almost all staff has very good knowledge of English.
- Compliance and implementation of international statistical standards. A considerable part of INSTAT statistics is produced respecting the principles of European statistics, methodologies and professional standards.
- Good relations with similar institutions of the countries in the region and beyond. In the framework of the European integration processes, and taking advantage of the experiences provided by Eurostat and other foreign experts, INSTAT and statistical agencies have managed to strengthen inter-institutional relations, both national and international.
- Awareness of the quality standards of official statistics. With the right managerial direction as well as benefiting from Eurostat monitoring processes, the Statistical Institute and other statistical agencies are aware of the establishment of monitoring systems and the use of appropriate instruments in order to increase the quality of production of official statistics.

Memorandums of Understanding. In order to increase the inter-institutional cooperation and the range of administrative data needed for the production of official statistics, INSTAT has signed memorandums of understanding with the institutions that can provide these data. Memorandums, apart from expressing the will for cooperation between the parties, contain the categories of data to be transmitted as well as the way they are transmitted. In addition, the memorandums provide for the establishment of technical working groups, which will cover tasks related to monitoring the performance of the activities specified in the document. Also the contact points out the encountered problems that hinder the implementation of the agreements and provide the appropriate proposals for avoiding future obstacles.

MAIN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF THE INSTITUTION OF STATISTICS

The National Statistical System, according to the Law on Statistics, is the set of institutions and organizations exercising the activity within the Republic of Albania, which collect, process and publish official statistics according to the Program. INSTAT enjoys the legal mandate to be the leader of this system in the interest of the development of official statistics and the implementation of the five-year program, while respecting the international professional standards. With the changes made to the Law on Statistics in 2013, INSTAT has formalized its position as coordinator of the National Statistical System. To carry out this role, the institution needs to work towards improving its image as a professionally independent institution, which aims to provide transparent, coherent and quality statistical products to users. On the other hand, the institution should be positioned at the highest hierarchical level to ensure the proper functioning of the National Statistical System, monitor the activity of statistical activities covering the institutions and organizations involved, and provide the appropriate recommendations for the follow-up of the methodologies and the most recent European statistical standards.

Being the main producer of official statistics in the country and fulfilling the role of NSS (National Statistical System) Coordinator, the institution needs development strategies in itself, on medium and long terms, in order to guarantee statistical quality expectations in several plans: image of the institution, public confidence in the data it produces, improving professional capacities and enhancing cooperation with the data holders, statistical users and the media. In the long term, taking into account the country's development vision and other national and sectoral strategic plans, by 2030 INSTAT will actively intervene in the development and improvement of certain aspects of statistical output which will directly affect performance of the institution and the quality of statistical output.

The main strategic objectives of 2030 of the institution are:

Objective 1: Timely and quality output and distribution of statistical data in the economic, social, demographic and environmental fields at the central and local level.

Objective 2: Use of appropriate data sources and instruments to improve the production and quality of indicators and statistical services.

Objective 3: Professional and organizational improvement of the National Statistical System.

Objective 4: Development of innovative ITC systems for statistical processing, data exchange and communication.

In order to ensure the successful fulfilment of these major objectives, during the medium term 2018-2020, INSTAT was focused on the fulfilment of a number of objectives and sub-objectives.

Objective 1. This objective has a direct impact on fulfilling the user expectations for official statistics in decision-making purposes, policymaking, research or orientation, as well as public confidence in the quality of produced statistics. In addition, achieving this objective enables the improvement of the image of INSTAT as a professional public institution, which serves both as an attraction for young statisticians who seek career opportunities in this field.

Objective 2. The increase of administrative data sources directly affects not only the coherence and quality of the statistical product, but also the reduction of the costs of providing these data. INSTAT will aim at the continuous coordination of administrative data providers in order to improve the quality and the way of transmitting them to the statistical producer. In order to ensure the quality and

continuous transmission of administrative data, while respecting the principles of statistical confidentiality, INSTAT will aim at improving the data transmission infrastructure and their administration.

Objective 3. Strengthening NSS is one of the main recommendations of Eurostat for Albania. Initially, INSTAT intends to prepare the full legal framework for the functioning of this system and further use of formal instruments for enhancing cooperation among official statistics producers. An institution that enjoys the right professional and monitoring capacities guarantees the monitoring quality and the proper orientation of other official statistics production facilities. Although this objective extends in a long term, INSTAT will aim to continuously improve the professional capacities of NSS statisticians through the organization of training activities, supported by the state budget or donors. In the following years, INSTAT will aim not only at increasing the cooperation between statistical agencies in terms of unification of methodologies, standards and data transmission, but also among institutions that collect data for statistical or not statistical purposes. INSTAT will continuously propose bilateral or multilateral draft-memorandums of understanding for the provision of timely and appropriate data. Strengthening the role of INSTAT as an active member of the statistical system in the country, in the region and in the international arena. To build a sustainable NSS capable of applying the modern international standards, INSTAT intends to intensify relations not only with similar institutions of EU member states and the United Nations, but also with the international organizations to which they adhere. By becoming a part of these organizations and playing an active role in fulfilling the mission they have, INSTAT will be able to be updated with the best applied methodologies and best practices. The inter-institutional relationship with similar institutions of other countries is a necessary mechanism to maintain coherence and enable the application of the latest standards of statistical production and to benefit from the experiences of the respective institutions by avoiding the encountered obstacles and solving the problems.

The Institute of Statistics also plays a key role in the integration process due to the ever-increasing demand for statistical indicators in different areas. As a result, INSTAT is part of the Inter-institutional Working Group on European Integration in most of the Acquis chapters, while it is responsible for Chapter 18 "Statistics". In this regard, the role of INSTAT becomes increasingly important for the opening of negotiations for EU membership

Objective 4. Increasing the demand for statistical data in combination with limited financial and human resources requires a continuous modernization of IT systems, enabling data to be produced efficiently and in an integrated way. In order to ensure an efficient organization and a modern working environment, IT infrastructure, processes and tools are needed. In accordance with the Code of Practice, high priority will be given to the security of the information. INSTAT will continue its commitment to modernizing data collection and statistical production processes. To optimize production processes, each process section of the chain needs to be analysed and evaluated. Developing and using a central integrated IT system for data management and metadata that will enable synergic work will be a challenge for INSTAT in the coming years. In order to ensure that production process elements meet the required quality standards, INSTAT should focus on the development of quality management systems, focusing particularly on internal quality audits and the methodology used for measuring indicators.

Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA 2030

Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina is characterized by regional decentralisation that reflects the administrative-territorial organisation of the country, and significant functional centralisation.

The Law on Statistics of BiH defines statistical institutions as "competent authorities" for the organisation, production, and distribution of statistical data, and they are, as follows: at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the competent authority is Agency for Statistics of BiH, and at the Entities' level – the Institute for Statistics of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Institute for Statistics of Republika Srpska. The Central Bank of Bosnia and Herzegovina is the official producer of statistics at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina and it is responsible for monetary statistics, balance of payments, and financial statistics.

At the state level, the Agency and the CBBiH are the only official producers of statistics of BiH. Entity statistical institutions, apart from being producers of entity statistics, are also producers of Statistics of BiH as they provide the Agency with the data necessary for the implementation of the Statistical Program of BiH.

Mission

Our mission is to produce and disseminate credible, reliable, timely, and high-quality official statistics needed for decision-making and informing the public on the issues relevant for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Vision

By strengthening professional and infrastructural capacities and adopting and applying best statistical practices, the Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina will achieve full harmonisation with international statistical standards and principles by the end of 2030.

Main strategic goals and the way of achieving them

The strategic document “**Strategic Development of Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2030**“ sets out three main directions of development of official statistics, based on the following:

- a. the needs of users,
- b. improvement of statistical business processes, and
- c. development of sustainable institutional environment

a) The needs of users

The need for information of the society as a whole, as well as political and economic actors, are constantly increasing. Globalization has resulted in the restructuring of social relations, so the statistical institutions are required to find new methods of measurement, a clear and credible interpretation of the results of statistical surveys.

In the coming period, activities will be undertaken to find more appropriate administrative sources to reduce the burden of data providers and achieve general cost rationalization. In addition to the existing cooperation agreements, it is necessary to conclude further ones with all potential owners of administrative data sources. Before using administrative data sources, it should be examined whether the concepts and definitions used in administrative sources correspond to the required statistical purposes.

The main strategic goal in the area of macroeconomic statistics is further harmonization of the System of National Accounts with international standards. Within macroeconomic statistics, the focus will be kept on the continuous harmonization of data on economic activities and related statistics. The full implementation of the EU transmission program, in terms of data coverage and timeliness of data

releases, will enable the comparison of all macroeconomic indicators with the EU Member States and other countries.

Although recently official statistics was based exclusively on traditional data sources, modern technological trends have turned many aspects of life into digital data and thus opened up new possibilities for the development of official statistics. Big Data will be introduced as a source of data as needed, and statistical institutions in BiH will jointly decide which technology to use for easier data exchange.

In the upcoming period, numerous activities are planned to fulfil the conditions for the transition from the traditional to the register-based population and housing census after the 2020 round. Further on, the work will be intensified on activities concerning the improvement of data quality, aiming to achieve complete coverage of external migration statistics and asylum statistics, residents' permits, and illegal migration.

Expected results: improvement of demographic, social, macroeconomic statistics, as well as statistics in the area of agriculture, energy, transport, science, ICT, and the environment; development of dissemination and communication with users, increasing confidence in statistical data; increased use of secondary data sources in statistical production, with the increase of the number of statistical surveys conducted by applying new technological solutions.

b) Improving statistical business processes

We will improve quality management. We will monitor and coordinate the implementation of the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice and will demand full compliance of official Statistics of BiH with these principles. Developing a new legislative framework is considered a necessary solution given the need to introduce new measures and instruments for harmonizing the system of official statistics and the functioning of official statistics of BiH through harmonization with the European legal framework. The change of legislation in the area of statistics should be based on the solutions listed in the EU regulations, taking into account the specifics of the official statistics system of BiH.

In recent years, technological progress and users' requirements have changed significantly, which unavoidably reflected on the nature of statistical surveys, so that in addition to high quality of official statistics, new challenges arising from changed approach to the production of official statistics are also presented.

That is why, in the coming period, work will be done on re-designing the information and communication framework, by developing new techniques for collecting, processing, publishing, and documenting the results of official statistics. The use of new data sources, as well as the continuation of work on the use of administrative data, requires the development of new methods in data collecting, processing and analysing in order to ensure quality in line with the principles of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Expected results: continuous growth of implemented activities in line with the defined principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice; the new Law on Official Statistics establishes a more flexible framework for the functioning of Statistics of BiH; better availability of official statistical data in Eurostat statistical databases.

c) Development of a sustainable institutional environment

Committed to increasing the efficiency of the process, we will improve the management of the Agency and adjust the organisational structure during the strategic period. We will ensure more active and constructive cooperation with the public and private sectors by expanding the use of new data sources. This will contribute to reducing the burden of statistical reporting and providing statistical data to users in a faster and more convenient way.

By developing confidence in Statistics of BiH, we will improve the availability and raise awareness of the services we offer, and strengthen inter-agency cooperation at the national and international levels.

When it comes to human resources, special attention will be paid to providing the knowledge and skills needed to work in a modern statistical institution, appropriate work organization, and leadership.

By cooperating in the international environment, the official statistics of BiH will be a partner in the development of statistics at the European and global level. We will focus our activities on the development of new knowledge and methods and on the exchange of good practices. We will try to be included in as many international activities as possible, as this is an opportunity to gain experience in international cooperation, strengthen the team and project work capacities, learn about the challenges of multiculturalism, expand views beyond the local environment and gain in-depth and new knowledge.

We will continue to participate in technical assistance projects and cooperate with statistical offices of other countries. The implementation of the defined measures and the achievement of adequate results are possible only if adequate financial resources are available; thus, the priorities in the implementation of the planned goals will also be adjusted to the financial possibilities. Funds for operational type tasks are ensured by current annual budget funds. In addition, we are committed to seeking additional funding for development projects, and to using donors' and other resources to continue with the development in line with strategic goals.

Expected results: Reorganisation of the organisational structure in line with the new challenges; Strengthening the knowledge and skills needed for work in a modern statistical institution; participation in international assistance programs for the development of official Statistics of BiH; strengthening cooperation with statistical offices of neighbouring countries; developing relations with academic institutions and the scientific research community

Kosovo Agency of Statistics

Vision

The vision of the Kosovo Statistical System is recognition as a trusted, unfailing provider of statistics and for KAS to be the lead standard-setting statistical institution of Kosovo. This shall be achieved through a permanent dedication to improvement of methodology, standards and statistical presentation in line with the needs of key national and international users of Kosovo statistics.

Mission

The mission is to meet user needs for qualitative, reliable and objective statistical data. Data shall be made available in a timely fashion and presented in ways that facilitates planning and development efforts on national, municipal and settlement levels.

The statistics system shall regularly supply government institutions, research communities and academic institutions, the international community, the business community, civil society and the general public with qualitative statistical information. The system shall comply with the Law on Official Statistics of Kosovo and employ modern management practices in line with international standards.

General Overview

KAS sees the IPA Strategy 2021-2027 as a great opportunity to enrich and implement the official statistics program. The Programme of Official Statistics (POS) governs the objectives of the statistical system as outlined by the Law on Official Statistics (Law 04/L-036). Paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Law establish the principles and quality standards upon which the statistical system rests.

The new POS is a five-year plan 2023-2027 for the development of the statistical system in Kosovo including strategic priorities and objectives. The plan is process and results oriented and based on user needs, allocated resources and accompanied by a performance assessment framework (PAF) intended to supply the planning process with annual performance information. It will hence be monitored with the possibility of re-assessing strategic priorities every year.

The overall policy objective of the plan is to achieve a sustainable and reliable statistical system for Kosovo. It shall cater to national and international demands and standards and work towards improvements in productivity and production quality. Specific objectives for the statistical system follow from the overall objective and fall in two broad areas:

- Organizational and
- production efficiency including Improving Quality

Productivity is at the heart of the plan. This means that the plan aims to improve working processes and internal communications in the system to allow for a more efficient utilization of resources. It will also establish what changes are necessary for the system to expand both within and outside the present production range. What is required will include training and human resource management needs, IT and support systems, and overall management development.

Core objectives 2023-2027 in this area are (organizational dimension):

- To re-organize the Head Quarter Office of KAS to strengthen its planning process
- To achieve long-term and sustainable productivity gains in the range of 3-4 % annually
- To strengthen inter institutional coordination

Production quality and utility

A basic notion is that the quality and utility of a modern statistics system can only evolve through close and constructive user interaction. The plan will aim to expand the range and quality of statistics production based in the first instance on such interaction. This demands changes in working practices towards, among other, a better and more systematic interaction with users and coordinated donor cooperation (KAS partners) to improve quality.

Core objectives 2023-2027 in this area are (production efficiency dimension):

- To document methods and process descriptions in annual planning
- To improve production quality through user interaction and training
- To improve the reliability and utility of statistics production
- To expand the range of production in line with the priorities of the POS
- To increase alignment to Acquis

The Annual Programme on Official statistics (APOS), serves as a tool to implement the above mentioned objective. Fulfilling this objective will allow KAS to:

- i) improve production quality and range within existing human resources and budget
- ii) progress efficiently towards EU standards
- iii) develop the new data sources

Sectorial Statistics in broad lines for the next five years

I National accounts

1. Regional accounts

1.1 SUT (Supply and Use Tables): Preparation and transmission of supply and use tables in previous years' prices. Expected outputs: Extended compliance with ESA 2010 /Y 2024.

1.2 GDP on PPP not calculated: Due to the many requirements about the GDP based on PPPs, National Accounts is asking for the support on this new component (to create frame for deflation of GDP by PPP) Following the PPPs work plan, KAS is planning to compile the GDP based on the PPPs, in 2025. For this purpose, there is a need to do the surveys on: equipment goods, construction, salaries, hospitals, rents, education, energy, which has not started yet and no plan in a short term. To start with all these surveys, technical assistance is more than welcome. Actually price statistics are in the process of implementation of PPP - consumer goods.

2. Government deficit and debt statistics

Compilation and transmission to Eurostat of all Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP) tables and time series required.

3. Annual government finance statistics

Compilation of the complete set of GFS tables and time series.

4. Non-observed economy (NOE)

Measurement of the non-observed economy by NACE activities, integration of NOE results in National Account system and transmission of the results to Eurostat.

5. Quarterly government finance statistics

5 Shortening the deadline as required by Eurostat by developing a regular system of GFS data.

II. Social Statistics

1. Implementation of the European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) in 2025

2. Implementation of Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS) in 2025

3. Implementation of Job Vacancy Survey (JVS) in 2023

4. Population registers

Managing and updating the population register and implementing methods to produce statistical outputs of sufficient quality that meet priority information needs of users.

5. Implementation of the new regulation for Labour Force Survey (LFS) in 2022, the regular ad hoc modules for the Labour Force Survey (LFS) in 2023 and onwards and of monthly employment and unemployment data in 2023 and onwards

6. Implementation of the Labour Cost Survey (LCS) in 2021, the Labour Cost Index (LCI) in 2023 or 2024 and the Structural Earnings Survey (SES) in 2023

7. Implementation of the Statistics on income and living condition (SILC), Household Budget Survey (HBS) and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in 2023

III. Agriculture statistics

1. Economic Accounts in Agriculture and Regional accounts

Production of the first, second and final 2023 EAA estimates

2. Forestry Statistics

KAS will continue the cooperation with Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development and Forestry Agency of Kosovo in order to get this administrative data for forestry and check the feasibility of a survey on the forestry sector.

3. Construction and Demolition Waste (CDW)

KAS will continue the cooperation with municipal authority in order to get this administrative data for construction and demolition waste and check the feasibility of a survey on construction and demolition waste.

4. Agriculture Census or Farming Structure Survey (2023/2024)

5. Division of the Agricultural Economics Survey into the Crop Survey and the Livestock Survey as separate surveys (2022)

IV Information Technology

1. Upgrading of the IT system for production and dissemination of EU compliant statistics

Statistical Office of Montenegro

1. Inclusiveness and preparation process

The strategic planning system in Montenegro is based on the Decree on methodology and procedure for drafting, aligning and monitoring of the implementation of strategy documents, which lays out the minimum quality criteria for all strategy documents adopted by the Government of Montenegro. Setting up a functional system of strategic planning is aimed at establishing clearer horizontal and vertical relations between the existing strategy documents, in order to improve their quality, but also to achieve more efficient implementation of the strategy documents, to enhance inter-sector cooperation and to set up a sustainable mechanism for monitoring their implementation.

Statistical office of Montenegro in preparation of the Strategy for the Development of Official Statistics 2019-2023, followed the Decree which is accompanied and further elaborated by the Methodology for the development, drafting and monitoring of implementation of strategy documents, implemented by the Secretariat - General of the Government – Department for Coordination, Monitoring of Alignment and Implementation of Strategies.

The Strategy for development of the official statistics for the period 2019-2023 determines the development directions and goals of the official statistics of Montenegro. It is prepared by the Statistical Office is prepared as a coordinator of the official statistics system in cooperation with other producers of official statistics. The purpose of this document is to define the long-term operational goals of the development of the statistical system of Montenegro, which will fulfil the strategic goal of the statistical system, which is to provide all users with quantitative and representative information on economic, demographic, social and environmental conditions in Montenegro, in accordance with the internationally defined methodology and the highest professional standards.

2. Coordination

The official statistics system includes the following producers of official statistics: the Central Bank of Montenegro, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Science, Tax Administration of Montenegro, Customs Administration of Montenegro, Public Health Institute of Montenegro, Capital Market Commission, Pension and Disability Insurance Fund and Fund for Health Insurance. The Statistical Office is the main holder and disseminator of statistical data, as well as responsible expert holder, organizer and coordinator of the official statistics system and represents the official statistics of Montenegro in the international statistical system.

In order to coordinate the official statistical system more effectively, increase the use of administrative sources and reduce costs in the Statistical Office, the *Department for Coordination of Statistical Data Sources* was established. The primary role of the Department is the coordination of the statistical system, i.e. cooperation with other producers of official statistics, cooperation with institutions of administrative sources of data and cooperation with the business sector, all in order to increase the quality of the source of data needed for the production of official statistics.

3. Strategic objective

The Strategy for the Development of Official Statistics for the period 2019-2023 contains seven operational objectives with accompanying indicators and activities leading to the achievement of the defined goal, as well as the Action Plan defining the dynamics of the implementation, the manner of reporting and the competent authorities for the implementation of the strategic goals. The education of

statisticians, as data scientists, innovative solutions, using new data sources, further harmonization of official statistics with international standards and the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice are challenges that represent developmental strategic goals defined by the Strategy for the Development of Official Statistics in the next five-year period. The education of statisticians, as scientists who work with data, innovative solutions, using new data sources, further harmonization of official statistics with international standards and the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice are challenges that represent developmental strategic goals defined by the Strategy for the Development of Official Statistics in the next five-year period.

STRATEGIC GOAL

The goal of official statistics is to provide all users, quantitative and representative information on economic, demographic, social and environmental conditions in Montenegro, according to the internationally defined methodology and the highest professional standards.

VISION

The vision of the statistical system of Montenegro is the production of coherent, relevant and objective results of official statistics, based on international concepts, methodologies and a strict data protection regime.

MISSION

The mission of the statistical system of Montenegro is:

- to provide adequate, relevant, reliable and timely results of official statistics in order to facilitate planning and decision-making within the Government of Montenegro and the community;
- to ensure that the production and dissemination of official statistics is in accordance with scientific principles, professional ethics and international standards.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

1. Establishing continuous dialogue with data users and developing partnerships;
2. Education of statistics as scientists working with data;
3. Further harmonization and innovation of official statistics with international standards/recommendations;
4. Creation of new data sources for the production of official statistics;
5. Further implementation of the Code of Quality for official statistics;
6. Development of an IT integrated system for collecting, processing, publishing and documenting the results of official statistics;

Development of dissemination and communication of data in accordance with the needs of the digital society.

4. Outstanding challenge

The key risks identified by the EC - EUROSTAT, recorded in the Progress Reports for Montenegro for the period 2014-2018, are:

- the need for a significant increase in the human and financial resources of the Statistical Office (existing capacities, regardless of the good results of the previous period, will not be able to meet the requirements of significantly increased demand by the National Strategy for Sustainable Development by 2030 and the Montenegro's Program of Accession to the European Union);
- further harmonization with ESA 2010 standards, including public finance statistics and
- lack of business space (risks of inadequate business space that affect the further process of statistical production: (i) inability to provide work space and reduced productivity of employees due to inadequate working conditions; (ii) security risks of access to the building, and hence individual data due to the lack of adequate storage archives, (iii) technical shortcomings that limit the modernization of the process of production of official statistics, and the application of technical and other safety standards to be applied in the keeping, storage and treatment of confidential data).

Due to the lack of human, financial and spatial capacities, the risk of failure to fulfil obligations has increased both in Chapter 18. Statistics, as well as in other chapters for which the official statistics data are necessary. Within its dual role, the Statistics Office is committed to providing official statistics relevant to national policy making and monitoring, as well as policies defined at the EU level. Within its dual role, the Statistical Office is committed to providing official statistics relevant to national policy making and monitoring, as well as policies defined at the EU level.

A double role requires additional work and investment by the employees of this body, which additionally burdens the dynamics of regular work. The Statistical Office is currently performing its dual role with half of the workforce needed to carry out regular work, which indicates a high risk of maintaining the current one and achieving further progress.

5. Key Priorities

The strategy defines the strategic goal, mission, vision and seven operational goals of the statistical system of Montenegro. Operational goals are accompanied by indicators and activities, which lead to the achievement of the strategic goal. An integral part of the Strategy for the Development of Official Statistics for the period 2019-2023 is the two-year Action Plan for the period 2019-2020, which defines the dynamics of implementation, the manner of reporting and the competent institutions for the implementation of operational objectives.

The planned development of official statistics in the next five-year period is estimated based on the needs of national and international users of the results of official statistics, as well as the obligations defined in the process of accession to the European Union. The development planned by the Strategy for the development of official statistics for the period 2019-2023 is necessary and possible, and its realization depends on ensuring the necessary human, spatial and financial resources.

State Statistical Office of the Republic of North Macedonia

INTRODUCTION

As an institution responsible for production of the largest part of official statistics in the country and as a coordinator of the entire statistical system, the State Statistical Office of North Macedonia (SSO) accomplishes its strategic determinations by respecting the principles of official statistics of the United Nations and the European Statistics Code of Practice, as well as the national Law on State Statistics and the Five-year Programme of Statistical Surveys.

The vision and mission of the State Statistical Office for production and dissemination of objective, timely and reliable statistical information are contained in the Strategic Plan for development of the State Statistical Office for the period 2021-2023, and it is updated every year.

The activities performed by the State Statistical Office enable the institution to respond adequately when facing future challenges, and above all, they enable strengthening of the capacities of the institution in the process of pre-accession negotiations with regard to Chapter 18 – Statistics. North Macedonia progressively increases the collection of data and their transmission into the European Statistical System within the EU accession process.

MISSION

The State Statistical Office produces and disseminates official statistical data on the Macedonian economy and society as a basis for the process of decision making based on relevant information.

VISION

Our vision is to be recognised as a professional and efficient institution that provides high-quality and internationally comparable statistics in line with user needs.

VALUES

The values of the State Statistical Office are:

- Professional independence
- Competence and professionalism
- Impartiality and objectivity
- Commitment to quality
- User orientation
- Statistical confidentiality
- Continuous professional development of employees.

PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE

For the period 2023-2027, the State Statistical Office defined the following priorities:

1. Integration of the Macedonian Statistical System in the European Statistical System
2. Strengthening the institutional environment and statistical infrastructure
3. Developing strategic partnerships
4. Quality management

1. Integration in the European Statistical System

Objectives:

- Alignment of official statistics with the Statistical Requirements Compendium;
- Providing statistical data to support the process of negotiations of North Macedonia for EU membership;
- Producing high-quality statistics in line with the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice.

2. Strengthening the institutional environment and statistical infrastructure

Objectives:

- Strengthening professional independence;
- Strengthening the coordinating role of the Office in the statistical system;
- Improving teamwork, internal communications and knowledge transfer;
- Innovation and development.

3. Developing strategic partnerships

Objectives:

- Maintaining established strategic partnerships
- Developing cooperation and partnerships at all levels and with different stakeholders.

4. Quality management

Objectives:

- Continuous application of the quality principles (Quality Assurance Framework - QAF)
- Implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice and the general rules of quality management.

MEANS TO ACHIEVE PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE

- Regular involvement of SSO staff in planned activities.
- Regular involvement of SSO staff in Peer Review exercises, Eurostat working groups, Trainings, Traineeships, Tailor-made expertise and in-country, regional and international events, Statistical Projects and
- Supply of required expertise and software for the Statistical Projects, where needed

Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia

General statistical mission and vision for the next medium term period

Mission of the official statistics

The principal mission of the official statistics is to provide relevant, unbiased, reliable, timely and internationally comparable indicators, results and information of the official statistics. Owing to the coordination of responsible official statistical producers the published official statistics results can meet the requirements of decision-makers, researchers and other users. Furthermore, those results can be used to monitor and direct policies in the economy and society, as well as policies linked to the process of the accession of the Republic of Serbia to the European Union. Methodological and organizational knowledge, statistical standard, modern technologies, improvement of production processes, optimal resources use, protection of statistical confidentiality, moderate burden on data providers and data accessibility to all users under equal conditions are necessary prerequisites for data collection and processing, as well as for official statistical results compiling and dissemination.

Vision and values of the official statistics

The official statistical system of Serbia, by building professional and infrastructure capacities, by adopting and implementing good statistical practice, should achieve a high level of harmonization with international statistical standards as well as a high level of quality of published statistical data and acquired confidence of data providers and users.

The realization of the mission and vision of the official statistics is based on the following values:

- quality of produced and published official statistical results and information, by using the best international experiences in the field of the methods of data collection, processing and dissemination, and by implementing the principles of efficiency, user-oriented and permanent enhancement of human potentials;
- trust between all the participants in the statistical system, i.e. data users, providers and official statistics producers, and
- constant cooperation of official statistics producers in the country and abroad.

Main strategic objectives

The main strategic objectives define priority actions and the results that should be therefore achieved by the official statistics:

1. Finalization of a complete harmonization of statistical standards and practice with the European Statistical System and the European Union

The main strategic objective is to finalize full harmonization with ESS and EU requirements in terms of statistical indicators, release deadlines and applied methodologies.

In this way the requirements for the official statistics will be met in the process of accession to the EU, both within Chapter 18 - Statistics, and within other ones. In this process it is necessary to use positive practices of other countries official statistics.

This objective, in line with the ESS Vision 2020 covers the following key domains: raising the quality of statistical processes and data by using and modernizing as much as possible information and communication technologies; statistical monitoring of the globalization phenomenon from the

economic and financial aspect, meeting a growing amount of needs for statistical data on national and regional levels; cost-efficiency for data collection and reducing the burden on data providers - larger use of administrative sources and statistical methods and models for the estimation of statistical results and provision of quality and timely statistical indicators required for decision-making and successful management of the economy at all levels.

Besides the development of methodologies and adoption of new standards, it is necessary to further develop statistical registers, as a framework for the selection of statistical units and broader use of sampling methods. To rely more on administrative data sources it is necessary to increase the influences on methodological solutions in important administrative registers and databases. The development of analytical work will follow the path of standardizing procedures, equalizing the level of data processing, monitoring and measuring results quality, reporting, etc.

The prerequisite for a successful realization of this strategic objective is the existence of a good quality and organized official statistics system, headed by an independent statistical institution with a clearly defined role of coordinator and national representative in the EU statistics, i.e. Eurostat.

2. Improvement of the quality of official statistical results, ensuring a high level of international comparability

Harmonized methodological solutions will be applied in existing statistical indicators and standard European solutions will be used in new ones, providing thus mechanisms for forming them by conducting existing and new surveys and using administrative data sources. It is necessary to continue the activities in development and quality management, and in introducing a standard quality report. Fulfilling international standards means that information about the data (metadata), including data on applied definitions, classifications, coverage, calculation method and comments about their quality and potential use restrictions, should accompany the data. This will be made possible by continuing to develop the system of compilation of reference metadata and quality report (RZSMETA), improving quality report and raising the level of standardization and quality of the system of general metadata. Official statistics will strictly implement the protection of individual data and have a dialog with data providers in order to reduce the burden on them as to data provision, as well as to strengthen their trust, which is a prerequisite of improving the quality of official statistical results. Educating data providers and users by official statistics producers should contribute to higher importance of statistical data and their adequate use. Better dissemination will make the results of the official statistics to be more accessible to all user at the same time and under equal conditions.

3. Ensuring the independence of the official statistics and improving coordination within the official statistics system

The SORS, in the official statistical system, represents a responsible professional stakeholder, manager and coordinator of the system. For that reason, one must guarantee a long-term institutional independence and that will be aligned with EU recommendations so that the official statistics and its stakeholder should be objective and impartial, i.e. independent towards the stakeholder of the current policy, but maximally providing professional support to this policy. Constant building of the coordination role of the SORS and mutual co-operation of responsible official statistics producers are of special interest for the coherence and completeness of the system and implementation of standard classifications and definitions in creating statistical indicators. In the next period, activities will be focused on the preparation of the national code of good practice of the official statistics, and later on also on providing support to its use in the whole statistical system. The SORS will work in the next period on establishing a national coordination council of the official statistics (coordination council), which will unite the representatives of all responsible official statistics producers in Serbia. The SORS will continue to use intensively administrative data for the production of official statistics due to the cost-effectiveness of data collection, smaller burden on data providers and timely provision of a large

amount of statistical indicators at an as much as possible lower level of the territory and Classification of Activities (CA).

4. Development of the system of support to decision-making and other modern information solutions adapted to the needs of different types of users

The Decision Making Support System - DMSS is a new concept of devising on analytics focused on optimal satisfaction the needs of government bodies and other subjects involved in the decision-making process. In order to provide the users with information that will clearly present the economic situation in Serbia, the SORS has created a decision-making support system. The system implies the collection of various indicators, enables decision-makers in clear and easily understandable manner to recognize and consider the phase in which is the economy. The introduction of the Decision Making Support System at local level and of the platform for cooperation with the users of statistics at local authorities' level is focused on the development of methodological, organizational and applicative solutions for decision-making support at the levels of municipalities and towns. On that account, expert teams for support to local authorities will be created and a partnership cooperation will be organized with local institutions, with the involvement of regional departments of the SORS.

Further development of the statistical portal of open data and the integration with the national portal of open data enables a fast and efficient access to data for the broad public. Data visualization, the introduction of sustainable development indicators and the promotion of the portal will contribute to the interaction with the community that uses those data. The development of the national portal for following the indicators will make it possible to have access at one place (one-stop-shop approach) primarily to indicators for following the Sustainable Development Goals - SDG and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as to indicators relative to other global strategies. The dissemination database of indicators will be continuously up-dated, and continuous training of internal and external data producers and users will be conducted.

5. Provision of adequate resources for the functioning and development of the official statistical system

Generally, solving the human resources issue is the key to the achievement of the set-up goals, thus it is very important that the SORS has an influence, as much as possible, on its resolving. It is necessary to engage as quickly as possible new staff. It is necessary to continue the intensive training of staff in the field of statistics and computing, primarily in order to apply new methodological solutions, international statistical standards and to increase analytical capacities and vocational training of staff to create and analyse the influence of various policies. Use of assistance in acquiring knowledge through seminars, training, summer schools and assistance in producing certain procedures should be intensified. One should certainly have in mind that the activities for the achievement of the strategic goals are very demanding in terms of necessary financial funds, infrastructure and modern technology.

6. Information and communication technology

Further development of an ICT package for integrated data processing, completely developed in the SORS, is a priority in this area, with a focus on the application of new innovative solutions, improvement of international technical co-operation along with establishing new partnerships and on the participation in international projects.

7. European integrations and international statistical co-operation

The process of European integrations of Serbia and development activities of the official statistics aim at ensuring in the next period harmonization of the ESS, i.e. harmonization of the standards, classifications and methodologies in order to obtain comparable indicators, as well as to have even more included in international statistical co-operation of all responsible official statistics producers, coordinated by Eurostat on European level and by the SORS on national level.

Turkish Statistical Institute

STATISTICAL VISION AND MISSION, MAIN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF TURKSTAT

The general statistical vision and mission of TurkStat have been drawn up by means of the Third Strategic Plan of TurkStat which covers the period of 2019-2023. These concepts are presented in accordance with the document.

According to this plan, our mission is:

To produce and disseminate statistics which are qualified, timely, reliable, objective, consistent with the international standards, responsive to the requirements and priorities of national and international users; and to provide co-ordination between the public institutions involved in the production process of official statistics.

The Vision:

To establish a user focused and sustainable statistical system based on international standards.

Strategic Goals and Objectives

The strategic objectives have been grouped under four goals in order to further improve statistical production and dissemination processes, increase the user satisfaction, develop institutional capacity, strengthen the coordination role of the Institute and increase the institutional recognition.

Mainly result-oriented strategic objectives have been established in accordance with the structure of the medium-term strategic goals. The activities to be carried out in order to achieve strategic objectives and the performance indicators have been determined on the basis of the Plan period.

Accordingly, these goals and objectives are listed below.

Goal1: To produce and present a variety of high quality statistics to meet user needs in international standards

Goal1/Objective1: The statistics being produced in line with needs in a comparable, consistent, timely manner will be improved, new statistics will be produced where necessary and its sustainability will be ensured.

Goal1/Objective2: The user-focused feature of the website and other dissemination systems will be improved.

Goal2: To improve the statistical production process

Goal2/Objective1: Administrative registers will be used in the production of statistics on five subjects at least.

Goal2/Objective2: The use of big data and large data will be expanded, the alternative data collection and analysis methods will be put into practice.

Goal2/Objective3: The statistical production process will be standardized.

Goal3: To improve the institutional capacity

Goal3/Objective1: The strategic management approach will be developed and promoted.

Goal3/Objective2: The institutional resources will be improved in accordance with the new circumstances of the era, the priorities and needs of the Institute.

Goal4: To strengthen the coordination role of the Institute, to improve general perception towards the Institute and to increase statistical literacy

Goal4/Objective1: The coordination role of the Institute will be strengthened within the Turkish Statistical System.

Goal4/Objective2: The sharing of knowledge and experience gained by the Institute will be enhanced at international level.

Goal4/Objective3: General perception towards the Institute will be improved and statistical literacy will be enhanced.