

TWINNING NEWSLETTER

Support to the State Statistical Committee and the State Tax Service under the Ministry of Economy to strengthen collection, harmonization, analysis, publishing and dissemination of business statistics

Issue No.6, December 2021

Project News

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Project Overview

The EU funded Twinning Project (AZ/16/ENI/ST/01/19 (AZ/53)) is implemented by a consortium led by Statistics Finland with Statistics Lithuania (SL) and Statistics Netherlands (SN) acting as Junior Partners. Additional expertise will be given by Statistics Denmark and The Finnish Institute of Public Management Ltd (HAUS).

The main beneficiaries are the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the State Tax Service under the Ministry of Economy, and the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Development Agency. The overall objective of the Twinning project is to increase capacity among local operators to collect, process, harmonize, analyze, publish and disseminate business statistics measuring the performance of the private sector/SMEs in Azerbaijan.

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Activity 3.2.B "Inclusion of five new administrative data sources to SRSU software" was implemented on 12-15 October 2021. The on-site mission was carried out by experts of Statistics Lithuania (SL); Ms. Nadezda Fursova and Mr. Maksim Lata at the premises of the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The aim of the mission was the inclusion of five new administrative data (AD) sources into the production of official statistics and the analysis of these new AD sources and possibilities to integrate them into the Statistical Business Process. During the four-day mission, the short-term experts presented the Lithuanian model of their Business Register (BR), variables and coverage in the BR, compliance with international standards and main outputs of their BR. The experts and their BC counterparts discussed key features of procedures implemented to manage and update the statistical BR and reviewed sources used by SL for the construction, updating, and maintenance of the BR.

As a result of the mission, the experts developed a mission report where they have provided recommendations on how to further develop the process diagrams and documentation for Business Statistics production.



Activity 5.4.B was delivered by Ms. Ulla Virtanen from Statistics Finland and Dr. Michael Elgaard Nielsen from Statistics Denmark. The purpose of the mission was preparation and presentation of the renewed SME report with some twenty new indicators, graphics, infographics, and time series in close collaboration with the SSC staff. The STEs and BC counterparts discussed the data compiled with results for two years, table structures and contents and produced actual graphs for the existing indicators as well as new indicators. The STEs presented guidelines for tables, graphs, and descriptive/analytical texts.

As a result of this 4-day mission, the experts developed a mission report where they provided recommendations on how to manage further developments, changes, and work on using Administrative Data to replace some of the questions asked currently through surveys.

Activity 4.3.A: Target state production process for Structural Business Statistics (SBS) took place between 23-26 November 2021 in hybrid format. The activity was delivered by Jesper Moltrup-Nielsen (Statistics Denmark) and Guus van de Burgt (Statistics Netherlands). Due to travel restrictions, Mr. Burgt participated in the sessions remotely.

The purposes of the mission were to plan a standardized production process for SBS in Azerbaijan making more use of available administrative data and to provide recommendations for the standardization of tools used.

The experts introduced the General Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) and using this, proceeded together with the beneficiary country participants to plan the new production process. Imputation was suggested as a way to cover missing observations. In addition, statistical disclosure requirements were reviewed. The STEs shared their views on available software tools for use in the new production process and prepared and presented recommendations based on this mission for both the short and long term. The need for further work on imputation was prioritized by all participants and this will be the focus of the next mission.

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Representatives of the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the State Tax Service under the Ministry of Economy and the Small Medium-Sized Enterprises Development Agency participated in a **5-day study visit** organized and hosted by Statistics Finland from Monday 29th November to Friday 3rd of December 2021. The objective of this study visit was to enhance the capacity of these entities' management staff. The Director General of Statistics Finland, Mr. Markus Sovala, welcomed the representatives and discussed management experiences of Statistics Finland. During day 3 of the study visit, BC officials visited the Finnish Tax Administration. Tax officials of the Finnish Tax Administration made presentations regarding the income register, positive credit register and information services of the Finnish Tax Authority. On the last day of the study tour, Deputy Chairman of the SSC, Mr. Yusif Yusifov, gave an interview at the StatFin Studio. In his televised interview, Mr. Yusifov mentioned the importance of the twinning project for beneficiary authorities and highlighted the advantages of this study visit for future cooperation.



Activity 6.1.B: Training Workshop: Production Process for Business Surveys (BS) took place between 6-10 December 2021 in hybrid format. The purpose of the training was to improve the capacity and competence of the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the State Tax Service under the Ministry of Economy and the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Development Agency on statistical design, analysis, reporting and dissemination.

During 5 long days of training, the Short-Term Experts from Statistics Finland and Statistics Lithuania- Ms. Anna Potila-Kyläköski, Mr. Vilppu Salovaara and Mr. Tomas Rudys presented different BS data sources, practices in survey design, development of BS questionnaires, population and sampling frame design, and software and tools. The theoretical basis and demonstrations of SME data editing with R were also presented.



Activity 6.2.B: Training Workshop: Analysis and forecasting techniques for SME data and statistics took place between 13-17 December 2021 in hybrid format. The activity was delivered by experts from Statistics Finland- Mr. Timo Laukkanen, Mr. Samu Hakala and Dr. Henri Luomaranta. Due to COVID restrictions, Mr. Hakala and Mr. Luomaranta participated in the sessions remotely. The purpose of the training sessions was to improve the capacity of BC institutions' staff on statistical design, analysis, reporting and dissemination.

The short-term experts made presentations on data sources and compilation of SME data/Business Register, EU recommendations: data analysis and seasonal adjustments, SME forecasting and nowcasting techniques and models, microdata linking, output and input models in firm heterogeneity and Global Value Chain analysis. During the 5-days training BC participants were trained for use of analysis and forecasting techniques for SME data and statistics that meet Eurostat requirements and they shared views and experiences with the STEs.



The sixth project steering committee meeting of the twinning project was held in hybrid format with participation of senior and junior project leaders, European Union Delegation representatives, Project Administration Office staff, component leaders and BC stakeholders on the 14th of December 2021. Participants discussed project results and challenges. MS Project Leader Ms. Orjala mentioned that all remaining activities have been scheduled to be implemented as on-site sessions and study visits are planned to MS National Statistical Offices during the first months of 2022. Possibly travel restrictions may pose a threat to implementation of these activities and study visits.

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