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Terms of Reference

Project No	139 628
Project Name	Improving the Production and Dissemination of Statistics
Beneficiary	State Statistical Office of Republic of North Macedonia
Contracting Authority	The EU Delegation to the Republic of North Macedonia
Component	1 Further Alignment with the EU Standards in the field of macro-economic statistics
Position	Compilation of EDP notification tables expert
Type	Senior Non-Key Expert
Days Allocated	Up to 40 work days
Location	Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia
Start/End of Assignment	May 2019 – April 2021

1. Background

The purpose of the project is to further support the State Statistical Office (SSO) of Republic of North Macedonia in harmonization with acquis and upgrading its statistical and ICT infrastructure for increased efficiency of the statistical production and improved data quality in order to respond better to emerging challenges from the changing EU acquis.

Developing a statistical system compliant with the EU standards is a long-term task, requiring solid investments in establishing a political, institutional and financial framework to allow full harmonisation with the EU acquis and the implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice. Official statistics play a dual role in the Stabilisation and Association Process and in the EU accession process. First, Chapter 18 of the acquis defines the harmonisation of statistics with EU standards and rules, and has to be implemented in the pre-accession period. Second, official statistics serve other policy areas and chapters by providing the data from which policies can be developed, changes monitored and impacts assessed.

The SSO is responsible of coordinating the statistical system, producing statistics and managing the international relations in statistical sector. The SSO produces more than 70% of the official statistics. The SSO is an independent professional organisation whose competences and scope of work are regulated by the Law on Organisation and Operation of the State Administration Bodies and the Law on State Statistics. In accordance with the Law on State Statistics, the SSO, on the basis of scientific methods, provides users (legal and natural persons) with data on the economy, demography, social life, environmental protection and other areas. Official statistical data, as well as the time and content of all forms of dissemination, are protected from any kind of influence, and all users are treated equally.

The SSO adopted a new Rulebook on Internal Organisation of the Office in December 2015 in accordance with its competences defined by law and the Regulation on Internal Organisation of the State Administration Bodies ("Official Gazette" No. 93/00 and 14/02). According to the Rulebook, the Office performs its competences through 7 sectors and 39 departments, including regional offices. The



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organisational setup of the Office allows optimal management and monitoring of work processes and human resources management. The Office is managed by a Director appointed by the government. Serving in an advisory role is the Statistical Council, composed of 15 members, of which 14 are appointed by the National Assembly, while the Director of the Office is an ex-officio member.

The SSO carries out its work in accordance to the Strategic Plan 2018-2020 and the priorities set therein. The Strategic Plan contains the objectives, programmes, sub-programmes and activities which the Office plans to accomplish in accordance with the defined priorities in the process of harmonisation with European and international statistical standards and with the adopted quality management framework. For the period 2018-2020, the SSO defined the following priorities:

- Harmonisation of statistics in accordance with the standards of European statistics;
- Strengthening the coordinating role of the SSO in the national statistical system;
- Strengthening the cooperation with providers of data and holders of data set;
- Strengthening the cooperation and communication with users;
- Strengthening the institutional capacity of the SSO.

In terms of resources, the SSO's budget for 2018 is about EUR 2.95 million. The SSO has the following sectors/individual departments: Sector for National Accounts, Sector for Business, Agricultural and Environmental Statistics, Sector for Social Statistics, Sector for IT Support, Sector for Dissemination, Sector for Regional Departments of Statistics, Sector for Supporting Director's Work, Department for Human Resources Management, Department for Financial Affairs and Department for Internal Audit.

The SSO performs its role in cooperation with other authorised bodies that are also responsible for producing official statistics under the Programme of Statistical Surveys 2018-2022. The Programme is a by-law that determines the statistical surveys that are implemented within a certain period of time and specifies the authorised bodies that collect, process and disseminate statistics. The Programme of Statistical Surveys lists all statistical surveys that produce official statistics. The authorised bodies are: the National Bank; the Ministry of Finance; the Ministry of Interior; the Ministry of Justice; the Hydro-meteorological Service; the Institute of Public Health; the Pension and Disability Insurance Fund; the Employment Agency. In the Programme for 2018-2022, a total of 319 statistical surveys are included which are implemented by 9 authorised bodies and organised in 3 domains, as follows:

By authorised body		
Institution	No. of surveys	%
SSO	252	79,0%
National Bank	27	8,5%
Ministry of Finance	3	0,9%
Ministry of Interior	6	1,9%
Ministry of Justice	1	0,3%
Employment Agency	4	1,3%
Institute of Public Health	18	5,6%
Hydro-meteorological Service	3	0,9%
Pension and Disability Insurance Fund	5	1,6%



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By domain		
Domain	No. of surveys	%
Demographic and social statistics	102	32,0%
Economic statistics	201	63,0%
Environment and multi-domain statistics	16	5,0%

The National Bank conducts surveys in two areas: monetary and financial statistics, and external statistics. The Ministry of Finance conducts the statistical survey on generation of incomes and execution of expenditures with regard to the status of the deficit/surplus made in the State Budget, as well as the statistical survey on the central government debt (consolidated). The data on the status of the central government debt (consolidated) regarding the external debt section are provided from the National Bank, and those regarding the internal debt section from the database of the Ministry of Finance. On annual level, the Ministry of Finance also conducts a statistical survey on income generation and execution of expenditures of the General Budget (Central State Budget and the budgets of the local government units). Also, SSO is actively included in the Public Finance Management Reform Programme. Actually, the activities planned in the area of national accounts at the same time appear in the mentioned Programme and have been coordinated with the Ministry of Finance and National Bank.

In its regular work the SSO cooperates with other stakeholders and has signed memoranda on cooperation with them: Central Register, National Bank, Agency for Electronic Communications, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Ministry of Finance, Institute for Public Health and Office for Civil Registration, Public Revenue Office, Employment Agency, Pension and Disability Insurance Fund, Customs Administration and Community of Local Self-government Units. These memoranda cover topics linked with: format of data delivery from administrative data sources to SSO, content of data and periodicity for data delivery. Inter-institutional collaboration and analysis of administrative data in terms of assessing the statistical concepts and definitions have been crucial in the procedure for obtaining data from administrative sources. Variables included in administrative databases are delivered to SSO on a regular basis and are subject of additional statistical processing.

Along with the progress achieved, regarding the statistical infrastructure, the 2018 Country Report of the Commission highlights that the availability and quality of administrative data sources remains a problem. Furthermore, the Report highlights the need to prepare for a new population and housing census, partially based on administrative data, as well as to further align statistics with the ESA 2010 taking particular care of the delimitation of the general government sector as well as on transmitting a full set of tables for the Excessive Deficit Procedure to Eurostat.

National accounts are the most important element of macro-economic statistics. A big challenge for the national accounts in the recent years is the introduction of ESA 2010. Due to the complexity of this task, the work started in IPA Multi-Beneficiary Programme (MBP) 2011, has continued in IPA MBP 2012, IPA MBP 2014 and IPA MBP 2015 and needs to be continued in IPA MBP 2017.

In relation to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), it is being published quarterly, 70 days after the end of the quarter by expenditure approach at current and constant prices. Some of the expenditure categories are published on a very aggregate level. It is expected to improve gross capital formation, to calculate separately gross fixed capital formation and changes in inventories. Also, it is necessary to calculate Gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) by all types of fixed assets. The activities related to statistics will result in



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better responding to users needs, as well as in filling in the tables according to Eurostat's ESA 2010 transmission programme.

The importance of Government Finance Statistics and Excessive Deficit Procedure (GFS-EDP) data in the European context has grown in recent years. A highly developed set of rules and recommendations on accounting treatment, based on the ESA 2010 and the rules developed under the Excessive Deficit Procedure and laid down in the Manual on Government Deficit and Debt, is in place. The GFS data are to be supplied in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 549/2013, which prescribes both the methodology to be used as well as the data series to be transmitted. On 21st of July 2014, Eurostat sent a letter to all candidate countries asking them to report EDP data starting from October 2014, on a best effort basis, on a biannual basis (April and October), following the same frequency as for Member States.

IPA projects (IPA MBP 2007, IPA MBP 2011, IPA 2012, IPA MBP 2014 and IPA MBP 2015) have supported reform in this area including a twinning project that has recently ended led by the Italian National Statistical Institute (NSI) together with the Slovenian NSI.

2. Objectives and Description of the Assignment

2.1. Objectives

Improved alignment with the acquis in the field of macro-economic statistics, in particular:

- Current state of affairs in the domain of EDP statistics assessed;
- Data sources and methodology to compile EDP statistics, including back series, according to ESA 2010 and Manual on government deficit and debt requirements improved;
- EDP and selected GFS tables compiled, as well as related information for selected years or data quality improvement of already available EDP tables;
- Direct data sources for the reporting of quarterly non-financial accounts for the general government (ESA table 2500) developed.

2.2. Scope of work

The task is in team work with Key expert 1 and other NKEs to improve the existing methodology in the SSO according to the recommendations of ESA 2010 and Manual on government deficit and debt about quality of national accounts data, ESA 2010 and Manual on government deficit and debt methodology and data provided to Eurostat according to the transmission programme that defines the accounts and tables that are to be provided by all EU Member States according to specific deadlines. The accounts and tables should be available also to users in order to monitor economic convergence and successfully define the economic policies. / The work under the activity will focus on: strengthening the SSO's expert capacities that will bear the burden of the activities planned, preparation of Memorandum of cooperation with Ministry of finance, State Statistical Office and National Bank of the Republic of North Macedonia in the field of GFS and EDP, Preparation of EDP Inventory based on ESA 2010 and elaboration of a Manual on General Deficit and Debt (MGDD).



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The activities to be carried out include:

1. Analysis and presentation of the EDP notification tables – methodology, sources, completeness, recommendations based on ESA 2010 Manual on government deficit and debt
2. Analysis and presentation of the consistency between ESA 2010 Data transmission programme (Annex B, EU Reg. 549/2013) and EDP notification tables
3. Establishing EDP notification tables in accordance to ESA 2010 Manual on government deficit and debt – analysis and development of main data sources.
4. Preparation of a Memorandum of cooperation with Ministry of finance, State Statistical Office and National Bank of the Republic of North Macedonia in the field of Government Finance Statistics and EDP Statistics

3. Deliverables

The expected results of the assignment, in team work with Key expert 1 and other NKEs, include:

- ✓ Practical guidelines explaining necessary inputs, processing and outputs prepared.
- ✓ In relation to the activity in accordance to ESA 2010 Manual on government deficit and debt, assessment report including overview and analysis of the current methodological framework and data transmission aspects of the EDP notification tables and related questionnaire should be elaborated and presented.
- ✓ Development of a methodological knowledge for preparation and improvement of EDP notification tables.
- ✓ Preparation of the gap assessment report and action plan.
- ✓ Preparation of EDP Inventory based on ESA 2010
- ✓ Preparation of Memorandum of cooperation with Ministry of finance, State Statistical Office and National Bank of the Republic of North Macedonia in the field of Government Finance Statistics and EDP Statistics

4. Indicative work schedule

The assignment is expected to be performed in 4-5 full week (Monday-Friday) missions in Skopje in the period May 2019 – April 2021.

5. Required profile of the expert

General Professional Experience

Master's Degree in Statistics, Economics or another relevant subject
At least 15 years of general work experience
Good knowledge of English
Good communication skills

Specific Professional Experience

At least 7 years of experience in National Accounts in an EU Statistical Institution



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Good reporting skills

Experience in EU funded projects in the fields of National Accounts in EU pre-accession or EU member states will be considered an advantage

6. Logistics

6.1. Reporting

The Senior NKE shall work under the guidance and follow the instructions of the Key Expert 1 - National Accounts. All deliverables should be submitted to Key Expert 1 and the Project Director.

The NKE shall collaborate with the project team, other experts involved and representatives of the beneficiary institution, as relevant.

Each of the missions, its timing and duration shall be agreed with the Project Director and Key Expert 1 prior to each mission.

6.2. Working language

The working language of the assignment and the deliverables must be English.

6.3. Starting date

It is expected that the work will be performed in four-five missions and starting from June 2019 onwards. However, exact starting date will be agreed at a later stage.

6.4. Location/Place of assignment

The NKE have to deliver four-five missions in Skopje each.

6.5. Applications

Applications (EUROPEAID format CV in English) need to be submitted by e-mail to the Project Coordinator: Ms. Raya Litova at: r.litova@bim-bg.com no later than 14 June 2019.

References must be available on request. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

The Project is an equal opportunity employer.

All applications will be considered strictly confidential.

Advertised post is not available to civil servants or other officials of the public administration in the beneficiary country, Republic of North Macedonia.