BNSI's participation in European programmes and projects

European Commission's projects for providing
expertise and technical assistance within the European Neighbours Policy

Active implementation of the second Twinning project with the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan

During 2016 successfully continued the work on the second twinning project with the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan AZ/14/ENP/ST/32 "Support to the State Statistical Committee in harmonisation of the National Statistics System of the Republic of Azerbaijan in line with European standards". It is implemented by a consortium between the Federal Statistical Office of Germany - DESTATIS (Lead Member State Partner) and the National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria (Junior Member State Partner). The overall objective of the project is the improvement of quality, availability and compliance of official statistics of the Republic of Azerbaijan with European standards in key domains conducive to effective and efficient policy making. The duration of the project is 24 months and the total value amounted is EUR 1 178 763. The twinning project activities are concentrated in five components:

1. Statistical Quality Management System
2. Geographical Information System (GIS)

Support to the State Statistical Committee in harmonisation of the National Statistics System of the Republic of Azerbaijan in line with EU standards

Project funded by the EU

DESTATIS
wissen.nutzen.

3. Statistics on income and living conditions (SILC)

4. Statistics on disabled and invalid persons

5. Tourism statistics.

Bulgaria is actively involved in project management through its Resident Twinning Advisor and junior project manager, as well as the implementation of planned activities by 10 experts from the National Statistical Institute.

Throughout the year 13 expert missions on all project components are conducted. Most of the missions for providing expert assistance to Azerbaijani colleagues are made in the field of the tourism statistics.
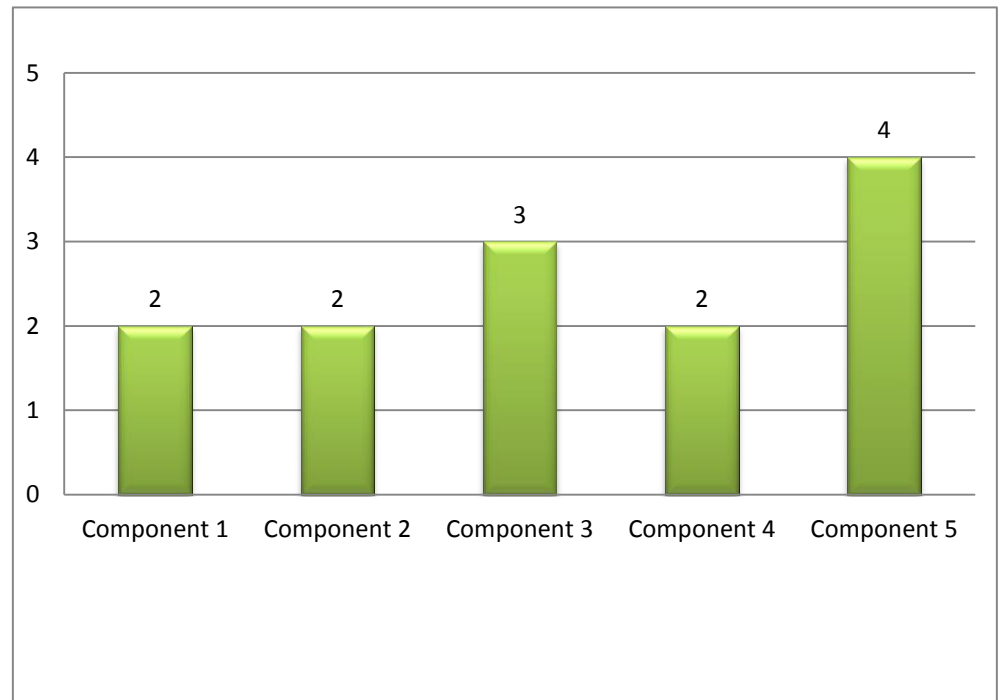

Figure 1. Expert missions during 2016

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Regarding to the management of the twinning project six activities, including a Kick-off Meeting, four meetings of the Steering Committee and a study visit to Bulgaria were accomplished.

In the period from June 27 to July 1, 2016 the BNSI hosted a study visit between the management teams of the twinning projects. It was attended by the German team and Bulgarian team as well as all Bulgarian short-term experts. The delegation from beneficiary institution is headed by Mr. Tahir Budagov, the Chairman of the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The aim of the visit was to exchange experience and share good practices in the management of twinning projects. During the five days visit the current project status and the implementation of the activities were discussed and the future missions and activities for visibility and dissemination of the project were planned.

„I am impressed by the collaboration between the three institutions and I am confident about the benefits of this visit, namely acquaintance with the experience of the National Statistical Institute."

Ringo Raupach
Member State Project Leader

„This trilateral meeting has essential role for the smooth running of all project activities and contributes to expanding cooperation between the BNSI, the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan and DESTATIS."

Sergey Tsvetarsky
President of the BNSI and Junior Member State Project leader

„The current twinning project has great significance for development of Azerbaijani statistics in line with European standards."

Tahir Budagov
President of the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan

During the study visit a second Action plan was signed for the period 2016-2018 in the framework of ongoing Agreement for bilateral cooperation in

the field of statistics between the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the National Statistical Institute of the Republic of Bulgaria.

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In 2016 the National Statistical Institute hosted **four study visits under the twinning project** whose goals were Azerbaijani statisticians to get acquainted with the native experience and practices in different statistical area. A total of 19 experts from the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan participated in the study visits.

Study visit in the field of statistics on income and living conditions

The first visit on topic "Application of the SILC methodology and use of its data for poverty analyses" was in the period 6 – 10 June. The mission is part of Component 3 "Statistics on income and living conditions". During the training the Azerbaijani colleagues got acquainted with key elements of the SILC survey: processing of metadata and forming of target variables; indicators database and variables description; sample frame and sample design; non-response adjustment and adjustment to external sources (calibration). The experts from Regional Statistical Office - Yug and Regional Statistical Office - Severoiztok presented their experience and practice in the organization and conduction of the "Statistics on income and living conditions" survey. The Bulgarian team is headed by Bogdan Bogdanov PhD., Deputy President of the BNSI and Component 3 Leader and is consisted of experts from Statistics on Living Conditions Department.

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Study visit in the field of tourism statistics

In the beginning of July (4 – 8 July) was held study visit under Component 5 "Tourism statistics" within the twinning project. The topic of the training

was "Best international practices and improvement of Tourism statistics". The five days visit started at Head Office of BNSI with overview of the system of National Accounts in Bulgaria and its relations with Tourism Satellite Accounts as well as presentation of Information system „Tourism". The statisticians from the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan got acquainted with the methodology, organization, conduction of interviews with respondents of Domestic survey on tourist trips and tourism-related expenditures carried out by National Statistical Institute. Part of the training was held at Regional Statistical Office - Severoiztok where on the spot the work of the interviewers in survey on tourist trips and tourism-related expenditures in district Varna as well as the usage of CAPI interview were demonstrated. The Bulgarian team is headed by Ms. Diana Yancheva, Deputy President of the National Statistical Institute and short-term experts on twinning project. Experts from Statistics on Tourism and Business surveys Department and Non-financial National and Regional Accounts Department also participated in the training.

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Study visit in the field of statistics on disabled persons

In the period 17-21 October BNSI hosted study visit on topic "European Health and Social Integration Survey". The mission is part on Component 4 on the project "Statistics on disabled and invalid persons. The aim of the study visit was statisticians at Social Statistics Department and Population Statistics Department from the Republic of Azerbaijan to get acquainted with the methodology and toolkit of harmonized surveys for compiling and producing statistical indicators on disabled persons and the surveys methodology of "social model" for disabled persons. To the experts from the Republic of Azerbaijan were presented following main topics: European Health and Social Integration Survey; 2011 Population Census - Bulgarian experience in usage the census as data source for statistics on disabled persons; Employment of disabled people - Labor Force Survey

2011 ad-hoc module; The European System of Integrated Social Protection Statistics (ESSPROS) - structure and used classification. During the five days training the colleagues from the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan visited Regional Statistical Office – Severoiztok where they got acquainted with the organization and conduction of households' sample surveys and ad hoc module on employment of disabled people in LFS at regional level. An expert from National Health Data and E-health Directorate at the National Center for Public Health and Analysis at the Ministry of Health took part in the training and presented the Information system "Persons with a primary disability, type and degree of disability". On behalf of BNSI experts from Demographic and Social Statistics Directorate and Regional Statistics and Monitoring Indicators Department participated.

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Study visit in the field of quality management

At the end of October (24-28 October) was held the last planned study visit under the twinning project which is part of Component 1 "Statistical Quality Management System". The topic of the training was "Quality indicators and preparation of self-assessments" and its goal was – familiarization in details with Bulgarian experience and practice in statistical quality management. To experts at Quality Management and Metadata Department and Price Statistics Department from the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan were presented the following themes: Quality reports; IT tools for producing and storage of the national reference metadata structure (SIMS, ESMS and ESQRS); BNSI and National Statistical System self-assessment experience (e.g. DESAP); Confidentiality management. Part of the five days mission were visits at Regional Statistical Office – Yugoiztok and Regional Statistical Office – Yug where the implementation of Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM), the statistical quality management and control as

well as the dissemination of statistical products and services at regional level were demonstrated. On behalf of BNSI experts from the following departments participated in the training: "General Methodology and Analysis of Statistical Surveys", "Relations with Users and e-Services", "Education and Culture Statistics", "Annual Business Statistics" and "Consumer Prices, Housing prices and PPP".

Bilateral cooperation

Training of junior statisticians from the Republic of Azerbaijan

In December 2016 was conducted the first of its kind training course of 12 junior expert from the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The training was organized jointly by the Centre for Statistical Studies at the University of National and World Economy and BNSI's Methodological and Training Center Directorate. It is implemented in the framework of ongoing Agreement for bilateral cooperation in the field of statistics between the National Statistical Institute of the Republic of Bulgaria and the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The course "Introduction to theory and organisation of statistical surveys" was held during the period 5-14 December 2016 at the BNSI Training and Qualification Center in the village of Slivek, Lovech district. The aims of the course were acquaintance with the main concepts of statistical theory as well as the organisation of some statistical surveys in accordance with EU standards in the field of statistics. The theoretical part of the training was focused on the nature and types of statistical surveys as well as the main characteristics and types of sampling surveys. The second part of the training was oriented toward the practical aspects of statistical surveys conducted in Bulgaria in the field of demographic, macroeconomic and

Participation in missions within TAIEX

business statistics as well as some new methods for data collection, including Big Data. The course ended with a final test and certificates for the participants which were handed by the president of the National Statistical Institute. Mr. Tsvetarsky gave a BNSI's plaque for very good performance of Mr. Emil Mammadov, leading adviser at Quality of Life Statistics Department.

„The established good cooperation between BNSI and the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan was a necessary condition for the successful implementation of the training. The course is pilot. It is designed and organized specifically for Azerbaijani statisticians. Forthcoming its enlargement and improvement in order to provide an opportunity for statisticians from different expert level to increase their knowledge and professionalism and to get acquainted with Bulgarian experience in the production of official statistics."

Sergey Tsvetarsky
President of the BNSI

Participation in missions within TAIEX

Providing expertise in the field of environmental statistics

In the period from 24 to 28 October 2016 experts from BNSI participated in a mission to provide technical assistance in the field of environmental statistics upon request by the State Statistical Service of Ukraine. The aim of the expert mission was to support Ukraine statistics in production of EU-compatible environmental statistics, particularly waste data. During the visit Mr. Stefan Tsonev, Head of Environmental and Energy accounts Department, and Mr. Petar Petrov, State expert at the same department presented the European legislation on waste statistics.

They explained to the statisticians from State Statistical Service of Ukraine the methodology used by the National Statistical Institute for calculating and disseminating data on waste generation by sector. During the mission the Bulgarian best practices for monitoring waste production and treatment were presented.

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Providing expertise in the field of tourism statistics

Within the four days mission (28.11-01.12) Bulgarian experts provided technical assistance in the field of tourism statistics on Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. The mission objective was to support the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in production of EU-compatible tourism statistics, particularly Tourism Satellite Accounts. Ms. Lidiya Sandeva, State expert at Statistics on Tourism and Business surveys Department, and Ms. Margarita Tsvetkova, State expert at Non-financial National and Regional Accounts Department presented to the Palestinian colleagues the European legislation on tourism statistics and national accounts; the methodology used by the BNSI for calculating and disseminating data on Tourism Satellite Accounts; the Bulgarian best practices for compilation of TSA tables. As a result from the training the system of TSA, including the data sources and methodology used to compile TSA in Palestine was reviewed and recommendations for improvement according EU legislation were given.

Participation in missions within TAIEX

European Commission | TAIEX

Grant agreements of the European Commission

European Commission | eurostat

Grand agreements of the European Commission, awarded to the National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria

In 2016, BNSI successfully completed the implementation of 13

projects and continued implementation of the 7 European projects funded through grants from the European Commission and co-financed from the state budget and started in previous years in the field of macro-economic statistics, social statistics, business statistics and multi-sector statistics. During the year, BNSI applied and signed grand agreements with the European Commission for 13 new projects, which are intended to be implemented in the period 2016-2019. The projects are included in the Annual work programme on Eurostat for 2016 and they are pursuant to Regulation (EC) № 99/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European Statistics Programme for the period 2013 – 2017.

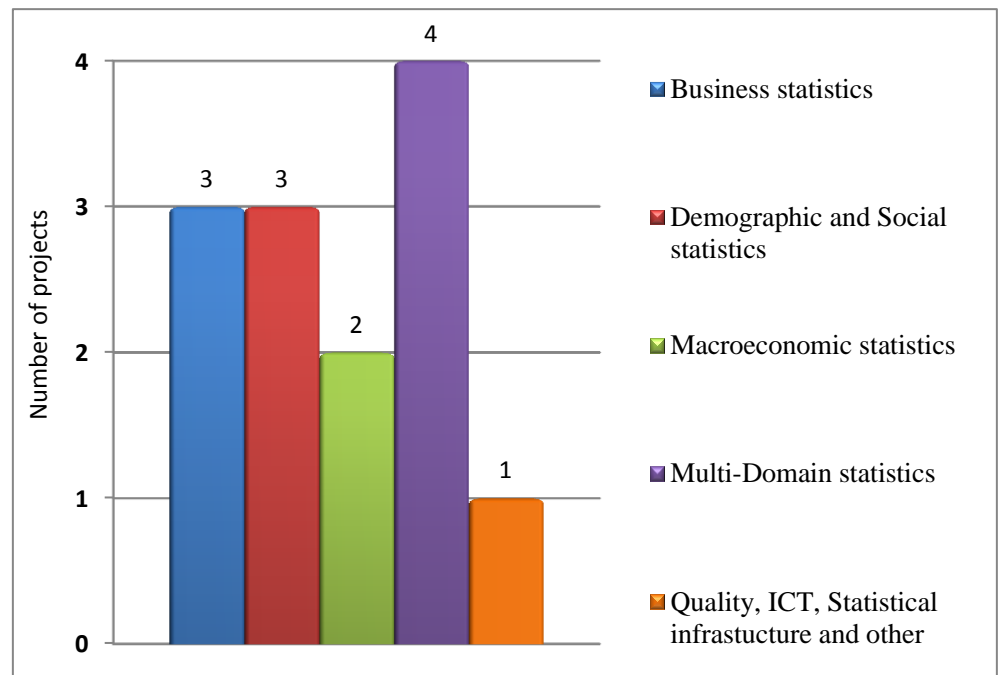**Grant agreements of the European Commission**

Figure 2. Completed projects in 2016 by statistical domains

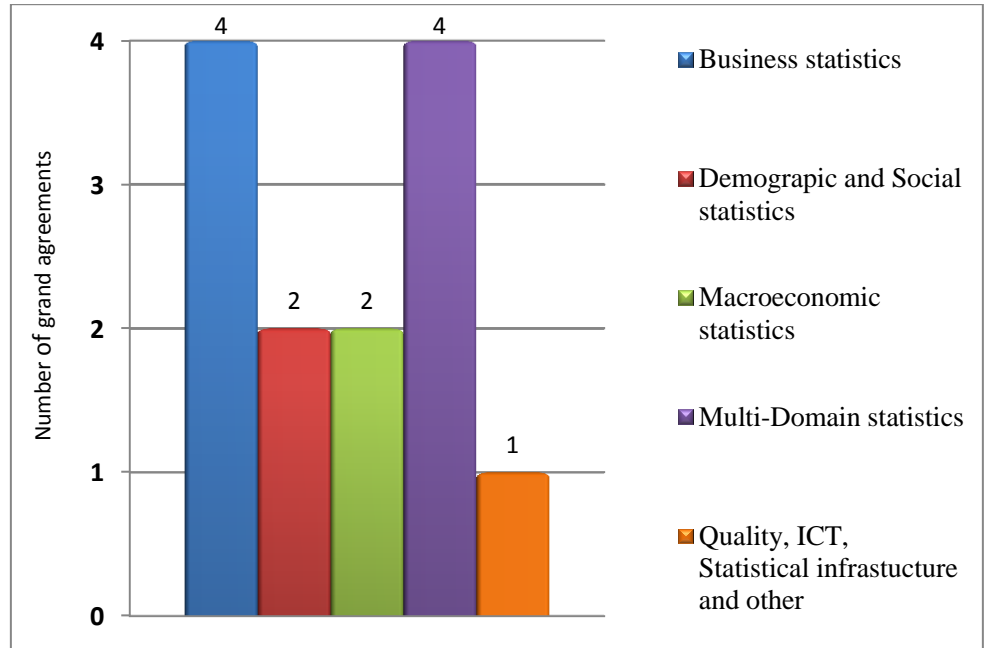**Grant agreements of the European Commission**

Figure 3. Signed grand agreements in 2016 by statistical domains

Summary table of BNSI's project funded under grants of the European Commission can be found at the following link:

http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pages/International/1.%20%D0%A2%D0%B0%D0%B1%D0%BB%D0%B8%D1%86%D0%B0%201.pdf

Projects in the framework of European Statistical System Vision 2020

ESSnet project on Big Data

ESSnet Big Data is a project within the European Statistical System, jointly undertaken by 22 partners (20 national statistical institutes and two other statistical authorities) and it is about techniques for collection and processing of Big Data sources and dissemination of the obtained results. The overall objective of the project is to prepare the ESS for integration of big data sources into the production of official statistics. The project has started in February 2016 and its duration is 28 months. It consists of 10

work packages – 8 work packages organized by different sources of Big Data, Work package "Coordination" and Work package "Dissemination". The specific objectives of the work packages are related to analysing the results obtained from Big Data sources; developing a methodology for using Big Data in statistical practice and measuring the quality of collected data; identifying, defining and implementing IT infrastructure for processing and storing Big Data; legal issues related to access and use of Big Data sources within the ESS; exchange of information between the official statistical system and the scientific community. **The National Statistical Institute** is an active partner country in the **Work package 2** "Webscraping/Enterprise Characteristics" and **Work package 9** "Dissemination". The aim of Work package 2 is to extract information from the Internet about the characteristics of enterprises through a combination of different techniques (web scraping, text mining and machine learning), as thus the Statistical Business Register will be updated and "enriched". The challenge is to evaluate the quality (accuracy) of the results at micro- and macro level. The BNSI worked on the implementation of three tasks: access to Big Data sources, processing of data from the Internet, testing the "new" methods and techniques according to new data sources. During 2016, the National Statistical Institute developed software for searching the URL addresses of enterprises and a list of these addresses for about 10 000 enterprises. The work on the project continues with development and testing of techniques for extracting information from the websites of these 10 000 enterprises about carrying out e-commerce and/or their presence in social networks. It's envisaged in 2017 in Sofia to be organized a final seminar for dissemination of the project results. The BNSI will host the seminar and will participate actively in its organization and implementation.

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ESSnet project „Digital communication, User analytics and Innovative products" (DIGICOM)

A project "Digital communication, User analytics and Innovative products" is one of the key projects of the European Statistical System and it covers two of the five key areas of the ESS Vision 2020 – identifying user needs and cooperation with stakeholders and dissemination and communication of European statistics. Work on the project started in 2016 and is expected to end at the end of 2019. Participants in the project are Eurostat and 18 national statistical institutes. The main goals of the DIGICOM project are to create new, innovative dissemination products, tools and services for statistical purposes within the European Statistical System, which can be agile and responsive to the users' needs. The work on the project will be focused on the following main areas:

- User analysis

- Establishment of platforms for social networks for users of statistical information

- Creating new key digital products

- Easy access to data, (linked) open data, advanced visualization tools, innovative interaction with users and dissemination

- Development of communication and marketing strategy

- Identifying ESS policy concerning "branding" of European statistics.

The National Statistical Institute participates in management and monitoring of a total of four work packages of the project: User analysis; Innovative and sharable products and tools; Open data dissemination; Communication and promotion.

Contacts: