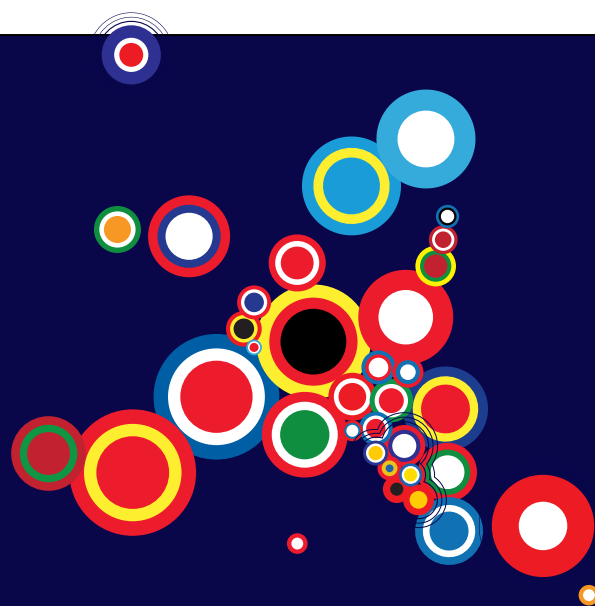




# INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA II) 2014-2020

## MULTI-COUNTRY Statistics



### **Action Summary**

The Action aims to support the IPA II beneficiaries in the process of harmonisation with EU standards by aligning their present methodologies and output with the EU *acquis* in statistics and gradually integrating them into the European Statistical System.

In addition the Action targets specifically at improving the overall availability of timely and comparable data.

<b>Action Identification</b>	
<b>Action Programme Title</b>	IPA II Annual Multi-country Action Programme 2015
<b>Action Title</b>	Statistics
<b>Action ID</b>	IPA 2015/037-898.01 /MC/Statistics
<b>Sector Information</b>	
<b>IPA II Sector(s)</b>	9. Regional and territorial cooperation
<b>DAC Sector</b>	16062
<b>Budget</b>	
<b>Total cost</b> (VAT excluded) <sup>1</sup>	EUR 16.3 million
<b>EU contribution</b>	EUR 16 million
<b>Management and Implementation</b>	
<b>Method of implementation</b>	Direct management
<i>Direct management:</i>	DG ESTAT, Unit A3 (in cross sub-delegation)
<b>Implementation responsibilities</b>	Claudia Junker, Head of Unit
<b>Location</b>	
<b>Zone benefiting from the action</b>	Western Balkans and Turkey
<b>Specific implementation area(s)</b>	Western Balkans and Turkey
<b>Timeline</b>	
<b>Deadline for conclusion of the Financing Agreement</b>	N/A
<b>Contracting deadline</b>	31/12/2016
<b>End of operational implementation period</b>	31/12/2020

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<sup>1</sup> The total action cost should be net of VAT and/or of other taxes. Should this not be the case, clearly indicate the amount of VAT and the reasons why it is considered eligible.

## 1. RATIONALE

The IPA II beneficiaries have to upgrade their statistical systems with a view to accession. The degree of compliance varies considerably between the individual enlargement countries, as they have different starting points, but they need to improve the statistical capacity, especially with a view to produce timely, relevant and comparable data common to them. In addition they have to align their present methodologies and output with the EU *acquis* in statistics, taking forward their integration into the European Statistical System.

### PROBLEM AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Statistics is an important source for an evidence-based decision making process by policy makers at national, regional, European and international levels. Policy makers in the enlargement countries but also within the EU need more and better quality statistics to support evidence based policy making and planning. The beneficiaries of this action are asked to provide these data in good quality. The statistical systems in the enlargement countries need to be based on the European Statistics Code of Practice which provides the basic principles and criteria for establishing sustainable and credible national systems of official statistics.

It is equally important to make statistical data openly available and guarantee equal access to statistics for all users. To make statistics a better tool for policy purposes, every National Statistical Institute (NSI), as the main coordinator of the national statistical system, has to focus its efforts on the following: production of data (improving the coverage of statistical information), dissemination policy (improving the availability and visibility of data), and quality policy (produce high quality data).

The capacity of the NSIs to produce good coverage statistical information in a comparable way and based on high quality standards is still insufficient in most IPA II beneficiaries, despite the progress made also with the support of IPA II assistance. Further development of national statistical systems to a level comparable to the one in the current Member States and their integration into the European Statistical System (ESS) remains the ultimate objective.

The IPA II beneficiaries are not at the same level of development and are progressing towards an efficient and modern statistical system at a different pace. In most of them the basic principles are being followed and the institutional framework for producing statistics is in place. However, considerable efforts are needed and should focus on enhancing the availability, quality and comparability of statistics in a timely manner, especially in the areas that are indispensable for the accession process and in relation to the accession negotiations. From an institutional point of view, strengthening the organisational capacity of NSIs is of importance for producing more and better statistics. Better organisational capacity will make improvements more permanent as more knowledge and skills are retained with the human capital.

The stakeholders most affected are the NSIs and their partners in the national statistical system, together being responsible for the production of official statistics in the countries. Other government bodies, as well as policy DGs in the European Commission, are also stakeholders as they need high quality statistical data for each IPA II beneficiary in order to monitor policy decisions and to negotiate the accession to the EU in the respective chapter. Cooperation between producers of official statistics within the national statistical system needs to be enhanced.

## RELEVANCE WITH THE IPA II MULTI-COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER AND OTHER KEY REFERENCES

The Action addresses the need to meet several priorities set out in the Multi-Country Indicative Strategy Paper (MCSP) 2014-2020<sup>2</sup>:

It helps the strengthening of democratic institutions and contributes to the **public administration reform** (PAR) by offering assistance to the NSIs of the enlargement countries. It assists them in adhering to the European Statistics Code of Practice, which provides the basic principles and criteria for establishing sustainable, transparent and credible national systems of official statistics.

The new approach to **economic governance** with a focus on tackling the economic fundamentals allows enhanced strategic and targeted support for national reform priorities. The IPA II beneficiaries will be asked to prepare annual National Economic Reform Programmes and bi-annual Competitiveness and Growth Programmes. These programmes need to be based on reliable statistical data to develop appropriate policy frameworks.

The Action will also indirectly contribute to the priority areas of **employment, education, social policies, transport, energy and environment**, by increasing the capacities of IPA II beneficiaries to provide reliable and comparable statistical information in these areas.

More importantly, the Europe 2020 strategy and **the South East Europe (SEE) 2020 strategy** will be served by assisting the beneficiaries to produce the indicators which are necessary to measure the achievement of headline targets set out by these strategies.

The current Action is based on the *Strategy for Statistical Cooperation 2014-2020*, elaborated jointly between all the stakeholders and endorsed by the Management Group for Statistical Co-operation (MGSC) on 20 March 2014. This Strategy is meant to be a framework for developing sustainable and reliable statistical systems capable of producing statistics in accordance with the EU *acquis*. The main goal of the strategy is to support the process of harmonising national statistical production with the EU *acquis*, bearing in mind that this is a strategy for seven different beneficiaries and that the EU *acquis* in statistics is evolving and constantly changing. The strategy ensures efficient use of resources by focusing cooperation on those areas where improvements are most needed and by helping to make the achievements sustainable. It also highlights key areas of statistics which are of common interest and in need of development and describes the impact that good quality statistics can have on the development of good policies. The reference timeframe for this strategy corresponds to the EU multi-annual financial framework 2014-2020.

Finally, the Action complements the national IPA II action programmes, by offering a range of smaller pilot projects in areas not covered by the larger projects, which are funded through the national IPA II programmes.

## LESSONS LEARNED AND LINK TO PREVIOUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Multi-beneficiary statistical cooperation action programmes have proven to be a particularly useful tool in:

- Harmonising the statistical methodologies and outputs with the EU requirements;
- Sharing best practices;

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<sup>2</sup>C(2014) 4293, 30.06.2014

- Changing the working culture towards a more open adaptation of EU standards;
- Creating networks of experts among the enlargement countries but also with the Member States' experts;
- Integrating the IPA II beneficiaries into the European Statistical System.

One of the key lessons learnt is that developing reliable statistics is a long process that cannot be completed in the framework of one single action programme. It takes a long time from setting up the correct institutional framework and appropriate legislation on statistics through developing methodologies and policies for disseminating the data, treating confidential data and ensuring data quality, to finally delivering reliable and comparable statistics. Experience shows that this process requires continuous support.

In this context cooperation with the beneficiaries and recent developments in the European Statistical System have demonstrated a very clear need to focus assistance and support on some important principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice, namely the principles of professional independence, impartiality, objectivity, quality commitment, relevant and easy access to data. This may in part also take the form of moral support but assistance is required as well through raising of awareness and training.

Another lesson learnt from previous action programmes is the need to coordinate effectively the different types of assistance activities. The combination of multi-country and national IPA II action programmes and other sources of funding (either from government or from other international donors such as the UN or the IMF) can be extremely efficient by exploring complementarities and synergies if coordinated well, but can create problems in absorption capacity if there are overlaps of content among the different action programmes. Partly for this reason Eurostat has developed an annual donor coordination survey on statistical support which provides an overview of the activities ongoing in each beneficiary in the field of statistics. The latest survey, which was completed in February 2015, shows that several donors and international organisations are active in the region. This includes Sweden, Switzerland, Italy, the United Kingdom, Norway, France and the USA as well as EFTA, the Council of Europe, the IMF, the OECD, the World Bank, UNDP and other UN organisations. The European Commission is the largest donor in the region, providing significantly more support than all other donors together.

Past experience suggests that the sustainability of results is hampered by the high staff turnover in the statistical services of the region, which affects all the beneficiaries to some extent. To prevent the loss of institutional memory and know-how due to staff leaving the services, there is a need to assist the NSIs to develop a reliable system for the transfer of knowledge within their offices.

Feedback from previous action programmes has also demonstrated that the participation of the beneficiaries in the development and discussion on the EU *acquis* from an early stage onwards is beneficial and helpful as the direction of development is known and problems in the Member States with its implementation are identified as well as networks with experts from the Member States are built.

## 2. INTERVENTION LOGIC

### LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	
To support the process of harmonisation of the beneficiaries statistical production for future EU membership by aligning their present methodologies and output with the EU <i>acquis</i> in statistics and taking forward their integration into the European Statistical System.	Progress in the development of the statistical systems as witnessed by peer reviews and other kinds of assessment	Mid-term evaluation report of the <i>Strategy for Statistical Cooperation 2014-2020</i> ; Chapter "Statistics" of the Progress reports	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
1 – Improve compliance with the EU <i>acquis</i> in statistics 2 – Make statistics a better tool for policy purposes 3 – Further integrate the NSIs into the ESS 4 – Progress in implementing the European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP) 5 – Strengthen the management capacity of NSIs	Compliance level indicators as set out in the <i>Strategy for Statistical Cooperation 2014-2020</i> , <i>compliance rate</i>  Progress in the implementation of the CoP	Peer reviews reports, sector assessment reports	Commitment of national authorities to the process.
RESULTS	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
1) improved availability, quality and comparability of statistical data in selected statistical areas; 2) Increased trust and confidence in statistics expressed by policy makers; 3) Increased relevance and timeliness of statistical data for policy makers. 4) Increased knowledge about the EU <i>acquis</i> , European statistics and their compilation methods, standards and terminologies; 5) Improved cooperation between ESS and NSIs of enlargement countries; 6) The professional independence of the NSI is ensured; 7) Strengthened role of NSIs as coordinators of the official statistical system	1) New statistical datasets covered; volume of data transmitted in good time to Eurostat, 2) Results expressed in user satisfaction surveys; Number and extent of error corrections; 3) Information on the methodology and quality of outputs is publicly available, including to policy makers; Instructions and guidelines on the dissemination processes are publicly available; Release calendars on publications and press-releases are publicly available, updated and kept; 4) Number of staff trained; Number of Eurostat meetings attended; Number of traineeship programmes organized; 5) Number of projects the NSI has participated in; Number of study visits from enlargement countries to Member States; Number of committees, task forces, high level meetings attended; Volume of contributions/presentations of enlargement countries to conferences, meetings and statistical work (e.g. the census) in the context of ESS. 6) The existence of clear rules for the appointment, dismissal and length of mandate of the Head of the NSI in the statistical law or other relevant legal acts; 7) The existence of legislation that stipulates the rights of the NSI regarding the coordination of and influence over official statistics and the access, creation, improvement or discontinuation of administrative registers.	Compliance monitoring reports of Eurostat (SMIS+)  Peer review reports Sector assessment reports User satisfaction surveys carried out by the NSIs Data inclusion report of Eurostat	Cooperation of official statistics providers in the beneficiaries. Parallel implementation of necessary national IPA II action programmes on statistics. Sufficient support to NSI provided by Government institutions.
ACTIVITIES	MEANS	OVERALL COST	ASSUMPTIONS
Pilot projects Participation in meetings within the ESS Training Traineeships Study visits and consultancies Peer reviews / Sector assessments	Service contract Grants	EUR 16 million (EU contribution)	Availability of experts and good cooperation between all stakeholders. The necessary human and technical resources are provided by the national authorities.

## **ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION**

### **Results**

The main result is the availability of reliable, timely and comparable (produced according to EU standards) data to be used by policy makers on national, regional and European level.

### **Main activities**

The main activities will be pilot projects, participation in meetings within the ESS, training, traineeships, study visits and consultancies, peer reviews and sector assessments.

The pilot projects will cover several statistical areas, such as macro-economics, business statistics, social statistics, agricultural and environment statistics, multi-domain statistics and statistical infrastructure.

### **Risks and pre-conditions**

In addition to the assumptions listed in the Logframe, there are certain risks that need to be addressed and pre-conditions that need to be met for the success of the Action. A pre-condition is to establish a system for knowledge transfer within the offices and an appropriate human resource policy to ensure more attractive career options for statisticians to slow down the rate of turnover.

Another pre-condition is that a system of efficient coordination among different donors needs to be in place to avoid inefficiencies in action implementation. Eurostat is constantly monitoring the various donor activities in the region through the annual donor coordination survey, and keeps close contact with other donors through coordination meetings.

Finally, there is a risk that the professional independence of the NSI is harmed by different outside factors. Therefore it is crucial for a successful implementation of the action that the governments guarantee the professional independence of the NSI. This can be achieved by implementing the European Statistics Code of Practice, especially its Principle 1 on professional independence.

## **3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

The action will be cross sub-delegated to DG Eurostat for contracting and implementation. Four of the beneficiaries of this action will receive direct grants, signed by the national statistical institute in each beneficiary. Depending on the set-up of each national statistical system, other producers of official statistics may be included as partners in the direct grants.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Unit A3, "Statistical Cooperation", in Eurostat focuses its work on following the developments in each of the enlargement countries on a regular basis, including in statistics, and in contributing to bilateral meetings within the Stabilisation and Association Process, such as the Enhanced Permanent Dialogues or the Sub-Committee Meetings on statistics. International co-operation departments and project implementation units of the beneficiaries will take the leading role in the implementation process. Eurostat is supported in the implementation by the two main bodies for coordination of statistical cooperation with third countries. One body is the Management Group for Statistical Cooperation (MGSC) where NSIs of the Member States are the main participants, and beneficiaries participate as observers. The MGSC also serves as the Working Group for statistical cooperation and one of its main agenda items each year is donor coordination. The second body is the Policy Group for Statistical Cooperation (PGSC) which is composed by the Director General and the heads of cooperation units in the NSIs of the IPA II beneficiaries. The PGSC serves as the sector group for statistics and a forum to discuss strategic issues related to the multi-country programmes.

## **IMPLEMENTATION METHOD(S) AND TYPE(S) OF FINANCING**

The action will be implemented through:

### 1) Direct Grant:

Grants will be provided to the National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) of Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro. Through these grants the beneficiary NSIs shall be directly responsible for the implementation of the activities foreseen in this Action. Eurostat uses a call for application addressed to NSIs of the countries listed here below as they have a *de-jure* and *de facto* monopoly to carry out the statistical activities included in this action document, in line with the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation. They are, according to national statistical laws, the institutions inside the public administration of IPA II beneficiaries responsible for collecting, producing and disseminating official statistics. The NSIs may be supported in this undertaking by other services of the public administration but the final responsibility for the official statistical information lies with the NSIs.

The grant beneficiaries will contribute 5% co-financing to the eligible expenditure. The indicative EU contribution will be granted to each beneficiary in accordance with their individual needs. The total available amount for the four grants together is EUR 6 million. The final distribution between the beneficiaries will be decided during the evaluation of the applications, based on the actual needs. These needs depend on the specific circumstances in the beneficiaries, in particular as regards the costs and workload involved in implementing the pilot projects. The grants will cover technical assistance, pilot projects, and provision of tailor made expertise.

### 2) Service Contract

Following a restricted tender, a service contract of EUR 10 million maximum will be concluded to provide technical assistance to the beneficiaries. This service contract will mainly provide support to the implementation of pilot projects, participation in the ESS meetings, traineeships, provision of expertise, etc. for those beneficiaries of the action not benefitting from grants. In addition to that, the service contracts will include a set of common pilot projects, the provision of external technical expertise in selected areas, the organisation of workshops, study visits, provision of consultancy services, and the implementation of peer reviews/sector assessments/global assessments for the seven beneficiaries of the action. As in the past, this external technical support is organised via a service contract rather than being included in each individual grant. This guarantees the nature of a multi-country programme, ensures an efficient approach and facilitates monitoring and evaluation.

## **4. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

Performance will be measured against the indicators set out in the logframe matrix. The main means of measurement is the level of compliance with the EU *acquis* in the area of statistics by each beneficiary.

## **METHODOLOGY FOR MONITORING (AND EVALUATION)**

The level of compliance with the EU *acquis* in statistics can be estimated in various ways such as legal compliance or technical / methodological compliance, but central to the concept of compliance measurement is the availability of statistical data in accordance with the frequency, timeliness, quality and formats as defined in the relevant regulations. The estimation of the compliance levels is based on various sources of information and on a selected list of statistical domains. The criteria for selecting the statistical domains are linked to the particular relevance for the EU policy, i.e. the Europe 2020 indicators and the Macro-economic Imbalance Procedure, to the importance of the statistical domain for each national statistical system as such and for policy monitoring (national accounts, labour



market, environment, agriculture). The selection of statistical domains has been done on the basis of available knowledge and in agreement with the beneficiaries.

In total there are 30 statistical domains used for the estimates of compliance level. In each domain, the year of expected compliance was translated into a degree of compliance by the cut-off dates for monitoring.

The impact of the action translated into the progress made by beneficiaries in the development of their statistical system will be measured through different tools, such as peer review reports, compliance measurement reports, mission reports, and annual progress reports.

The expected results corresponding to specific objectives of the action are assessed by Eurostat's annual compliance monitoring reports (SMIS+), sector assessment reports, peer reviews and studies on the data inclusion of beneficiaries into Eurostat's output database.

These monitoring and evaluation tools allow a consistent and realistic assessment of the state-of-play of beneficiaries in various statistical areas, a timely identification of weaknesses and strengths in areas concerned and of possible remedies and finally contribute to better adjusting technical assistance provided under IPA II programme.

The data will be monitored on annual basis and checked against the targets set in 2017 and 2020.

**INDICATOR MEASUREMENT**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Baseline (year) (2)</b>	<b>Milestone 2017(3)</b>	<b>Target 2020 (4)</b>	<b>Final Target (year) (5)</b>	<b>Source of information</b>
Compliance rate (beneficiaries' data validated and published by the European Commission)	16% <sup>3</sup>	42%-48% <sup>4</sup>	70%-82%	It is not possible to estimate the final target.	Eurostat calculations
Progress in the implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP) (number of peer reviews conducted in beneficiaries and percentage of recommendations in the peer reviews which were implemented)	0	5 out of 7 peer reviews conducted	7 peer reviews conducted and 40% of improvement recommendations implemented	80% of recommendations implemented	Eurostat

The target for 2017 is an average level for all the beneficiaries and presents an estimation that can change over time depending on the number of the new regulations being adopted in the meantime and moreover, the compliance of each individual IPA II beneficiary may be higher or lower. The target level for 2020 follows the same limitations and may have to be adjusted over the years.

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<sup>3</sup> Expert estimates.

<sup>4</sup> Calculated on the basis of a sample of data availability in Eurobase.

## **5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

Statistics is a special area that affects many other policy areas by providing the figures that policy makers use to develop policies. There are very important links to key areas such as the macro-economic imbalance procedure, the excessive deficit procedure, the Europe 2020 headline targets or the South East Europe (SEE) 2020 strategy. The Western Balkan countries have committed themselves by formally adhering to the SEE 2020 strategy. Moreover, NSIs need to coordinate other producers of statistics as well, such as the national bank, ministries, agencies, etc. In that respect, the programme will lead to improvements not only for the statistical offices but also for the main partners involved in producing official statistics. Hence the capacity of the statistical systems will be enhanced.

### **ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (AND IF RELEVANT DISASTER RESILIENCE)**

Not applicable.

### **ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY (AND IF RELEVANT OTHER NON-STATE STAKEHOLDERS)**

The action consists of support to official statistics, which, by its nature, is done by public bodies. However, an increased availability of official statistics will also benefit civil society.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING**

Reliable and accessible gender segregated statistics are critical to allow monitoring of gender equality development and facilitate the design of appropriate policies and measures. The action will therefore contribute to instruments for gender equality development.

Furthermore, the principles and practices of equal opportunity will be guaranteed as to ensure equitable gender participation in the action.

### **MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS**

Based on the fundamental principles of promoting equality and combating discrimination, the participation in the action will be guaranteed on the basis of equal access regardless of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

## **6. SUSTAINABILITY**

The programme will result in strengthened capacity for statistical production, ensuring the availability of timely and good quality statistics that are comparable with the statistics of EU Member States. The increased professional independence, improved coordinating function of the national statistical offices and the increase in production capacities are the best guarantees for the sustainability of the Action. Furthermore, the beneficiaries are committed to take up the results achieved by the programme and develop them further. However, institutions in the region are still fragile and exposed to high staff turnover, a lack of certain skills and a lack of financial and IT resources. Moreover, the EU *acquis* is constantly evolving and hence requires continuous support, as it is also granted to the Member States of the European Statistical System.

## **7. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY**

Communication and visibility will be given high importance during the implementation of the Action. All necessary measures will be taken to make public the fact that the Action has received funding from the EU in line with the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions. Additional Visibility Guidelines developed by the Commission (DG NEAR) will have to be followed.

The implementation of the communication activities shall be the responsibility of the contractors, and shall be funded from the amounts allocated to the Action.

Visibility and communication actions shall demonstrate how the intervention contributes to the agreed programme objectives and the accession process. Actions shall be undertaken to strengthen general public awareness and promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

The European Commission shall be fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities.

Any notice or publication by the NSIs concerning the Action, including those given at a conference or seminar, will specify that the Action has been supported by EU funding. Any publication by the NSIs, in whatever form and by whatever medium, including the internet, will include the following statement: “This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of the NSI and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.”

## **LIST OF ANNEXES**

- 1. Description of Institutional Framework**
- 2. Reference to laws, regulations and strategic documents**

## **ANNEX 1**

### **Description of the Institutional Framework**

All IPA II beneficiaries have similar national statistical systems. The lead institution is the national statistical institute. Partners in the production of official statistics are ministries and other official bodies, for example ministries of finance and agriculture, customs authorities and the central banks. The production of official statistics is regulated by national laws on statistics.

The IPA II beneficiaries have relatively centralised statistical systems with a major part of official statistics being produced by NSIs. There are, however, other important providers of official statistics such as central banks, ministries and other public bodies. In all enlargement countries, the NSI is the coordinating body of the statistical systems, but this role needs to be further strengthened.

A basic legal framework for statistics exists and is constantly being improved in all countries. It ensures that the basic principles of professional independence, mandate for data collection, confidentiality, impartiality, relevance and reliability of statistics are observed. In practice, the majority of the principles in the European Statistics Code of Practice are applied. The implementation of these principles is important in order to achieve credibility of statistical information and confidence among key stakeholders. Persistent efforts to maintain and increase this confidence will be needed in this area in the coming years.

A planning and programming system is in place and it is based on multi-annual statistical programmes and annual implementation plans. Country Strategy Papers concerning statistics are in place pointing to the major statistical areas to be developed in the medium and long term. Methods of monitoring programme implementation are still in an initial phase. Some countries have adopted quality policies and started to develop their own in-house system for quality management and reporting. The management skills of top and middle management, in particular in planning processes, are improved as part of a quality framework, but nevertheless, there is still room for further improvements.

The coordination role of NSIs as the national focal point for developing and implementing methodology and classifications and collecting, producing and disseminating statistical data has been strengthened. Cooperation with users and training of users on how to find and interpret official statistics has improved. There are established partnerships with main stakeholders such as ministries of finance, central banks or tax authorities. These partnerships are managed via signed protocols, agreements or memoranda.

Staff within the NSIs is mainly trained with the support of international experts and through participation in international meetings, workshops and seminars organised by the international community. As the countries are at different levels of development, strong regional cooperation especially in the frame of common projects, has contributed considerably to transferring knowledge among NSIs.

Most NSIs are facing understaffing and insufficient financing. This is aggravated by budget restrictions triggered by the recent economic crisis. Starting from a low level, capacity was strengthened with recruitment of new staff. This increase in staff number needs to continue to allow NSIs to improve the scope, the timeliness and the quality of statistics. Some NSIs have tried to develop measures for the flexible use of existing human resources.

## ANNEX 2

### Reference to laws, regulations and strategic documents

#### *Reference list of relevant laws and regulations*

The EU *acquis* in statistics consists of more than 60 basic legal acts most of which are Council and Parliament Regulations. There is a much larger number of implementing acts, most of which are Commission Regulations. Key legal acts include:

- Regulation (EU) 236/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council.
- Regulation (EC) 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European statistics ("Statistical Law").
- Commission Decision 2012/504/EU of 17 September 2012 on Eurostat
- Regulation (EU) No 1383/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 amending Regulation (EU) No 99/2013 on the European statistical programme 2013-17
- Regulation (EU) No 99/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 January 2013 on the European statistical programme 2013-17
- Commission Regulation 831/2002 on access to confidential data for scientific purposes.

#### ***Reference to AP /NPAA / EP / SAA***

*AP = Accession Partnership*

*Accession Partnership with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia:*

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:080:0032:01:EN:HTML>

*Accession Partnership with Turkey*

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:051:0004:01:EN:HTML>

*NPAA = National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis (for Candidates), National Action Plan (for Potential Candidates)*

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia:

National Strategy for European Integration

<http://www.sep.gov.mk/en/content/?id=13>

National Programme of Turkey for the Adoption of the EU *Acquis*. December 2008:

<http://www.abgs.gov.tr/index.php?p=42260&l=2>

*EP= European Partnership*

*Albania: Council Decision of 18 February 2008*

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:080:0001:01:EN:HTML>

*Bosnia and Herzegovina: Council Decision of 18 February 2008*

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:080:0018:01:EN:HTML>

*Montenegro: Council Decision of 22 January 2007*

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:020:0016:01:EN:HTML>

*Serbia: Council Decision of 18 February 2008*

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:080:0046:01:EN:HTML>

Kosovo\*: Council Decision of 18 February 2008

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:080:0046:01:EN:HTML>

SAA = *Stabilisation and Association Agreement*

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA)

– 26 March 2001

[http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/the\\_former\\_yugoslav\\_republic\\_of\\_macedonia/saa03\\_01\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/the_former_yugoslav_republic_of_macedonia/saa03_01_en.pdf)

Albania: Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) – 22 May 2006

[http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/albania/st08164.06\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/albania/st08164.06_en.pdf)

Serbia: Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) - 7 November 2007

[http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/serbia/key\\_document/saa\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/serbia/key_document/saa_en.pdf)

### ***Reference to (M)CSP***

Multi-country Indicative Strategy Paper 2014-2020;

### ***Other references***

In cooperation with the statistical offices of the IPA II beneficiaries, Eurostat has developed the "*Strategy for statistical cooperation with the enlargement countries 2014 – 2020*". The strategy was approved by the Management Group on Statistical Cooperation (MGSC) on 20-21 March 2014.

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\* 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