

Project Fiche No. 16.

IPA 2010 Multi-beneficiary Statistical Cooperation Programme

1. Basic information

- 1.1 CRIS Number:** 2010/0xx-xxx
- 1.2 Title:** IPA 2010 Multi-beneficiary Statistical Cooperation Programme
- 1.3 ELARG Statistical code:** 03.18 - Statistics
- 1.4 Location:** Iceland

Implementing arrangements:

- 1.5 Contracting Authority (EU):** The European Union represented by the European Commission on behalf of the Beneficiary. Implementation of this project will be cross sub-delegated from DG Enlargement to DG ESTAT.
- 1.6 Implementing Agency:** Not applicable
- 1.7 Beneficiary:** National statistical institute of Iceland and partners in the national statistical system.

Financing

- 1.8 Overall cost (VAT excluded)¹:** EUR 1 111 111
- 1.9 EU contribution:** EUR 1 000 000
- 1.10 Final date for contracting:** 31 December 2011
- 1.11 Final date for execution of contracts:** 31 December 2013
- 1.12 Final date for disbursements:** 31 December 2014

¹ The total cost of the project should be net of VAT and/or other taxes. Should this not be the case, the amount of VAT and the reasons why it should be considered eligible should be clearly indicated.

2. Overall Objective and Project Purpose

2.1 Overall Objective

To prepare the statistical authority in Iceland for future EU membership by aligning their present methodologies and practices with the statistical *acquis* and integrating them into the European Statistical System and to allow Iceland to be fully integrated with the work going on as part of the IPA 2008 and 2009 Multi-beneficiary Statistical Cooperation Programmes where the beneficiaries include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia as well as Kosovo under UNSCR 1244/99 and Turkey.

2.2 Project purpose

To continue upgrading and strengthening the statistical systems in the IPA beneficiary, thereby improving the availability, quality, comparability and timeliness of statistical data.

2.3 Link with AP/NPAA / EP/ SAA²

The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) has been set up to help the Beneficiaries face the challenges of European integration, implement reforms to satisfy EU requirements in the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) and lay the foundations for fulfilling the Copenhagen criteria for EU membership. The principal policy documents spelling out the priorities for programming of assistance under the IPA are the Accession and European Partnership instruments, which present the European Commission's overall enlargement policy for the candidate countries and potential candidates, as well as the annual Progress Reports and the Commission's Opinion on Iceland's application for EU membership.

These documents underline the need to further develop the statistical systems in the IPA beneficiaries. The Commission's Opinion on Iceland's application for EU membership specifically highlights improvement needs in the areas of agriculture, business and macroeconomic statistics and the need to secure financing of the agricultural census and of the housing and population census.

2.4 Link with MIPD

This project has been designed on the basis of the IPA Multi-beneficiary Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document (MIPD) 2009-2011³ in which statistics is a priority under Section 2.3.3.7. The MIPD emphasises the need to harmonise the national statistical systems of all IPA beneficiaries with the *acquis*.

3. Description of project

² AP = Accession Partnership; NPAA = National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis (for Candidates), National Action Plan (for Potential Candidates); EP= European Partnership; SAA = Stabilisation and Association Agreement

³ C(2009)4518 of 16.06.2009

3.1 Background and justification

Reliable statistics are essential for assessing the situation in the IPA beneficiaries and their performance, both for domestic policy-making purposes and for the accession process. The methodologies and practices applied for compiling the statistics must be harmonised with EU practices, i.e. with the *acquis*, in order to achieve full comparability of key data.

The integration of the National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) and their partners in the National Statistical Systems into the European Statistical System was started under the CARDS, Phare and USST (Upgrading the Statistical System of Turkey) programmes, and continues under the IPA 2007, IPA 2008 and IPA 2009 multi-beneficiary statistical cooperation programmes. For Iceland as a signatory to the EEA agreement a part of the *acquis* in statistics is already in place. In these areas, Iceland has benefitted from assistance that Eurostat offers to all members of the European Statistical System, principally in the form of direct grants.

The multi-beneficiary approach which proved to be cost-efficient under Phare and CARDS and was adopted also for the IPA 2007, IPA 2008 and IPA 2009 multi-beneficiary statistical cooperation programmes should be continued to reinforce regional integration and cooperation so as to develop the statistical systems of the IPA beneficiaries. At the same time, this approach has to reflect the different stages of development and differing priorities of the IPA beneficiaries. This is best achieved by a sufficient level of flexibility in the implementation of this programme that can take account of groups of IPA beneficiaries with different needs and levels of attainment.

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo were beneficiaries of a CARDS 2003 regional programme on statistics that ended in March 2008. The Phare-funded Multi-Beneficiary Programmes 2005 and 2006 covered Croatia and Turkey only. An IPA 2007 multi-beneficiary programme on statistics has recently been completed. It covered components in several statistical fields such as price statistics, external trade, population census, and transmission of statistical data. A successor programme under the IPA 2008 multi-beneficiary programme is currently being implemented. It contains a number of statistical components. A new IPA 2009 multi-beneficiary programme is currently being programmed. The IPA 2009 multi-beneficiary programme has been amended to include Iceland as a beneficiary to some extent - mainly for technical assistance. This IPA 2010 multi-beneficiary programme will focus on data collection projects and will complete the integration of Iceland into the IPA multi-beneficiary programmes.

3.2 Assessment of project impact, catalytic effect, sustainability and cross border impact

The IPA beneficiaries have made progress in aligning their statistical legislation and practice with the *acquis* and international requirements and there is evidence that past assistance has made a contribution to this. However, recent European Commission Progress Reports and Opinions still indicate significant weaknesses in terms of administrative capacity and coordination. Full alignment will require further support as well as additional human and operational resources for statistical offices and their partners.

The programme will produce improvement actions not only in the statistical office but also with main partners involved in producing official statistics (e.g. ministries of finance and agriculture, customs authorities, central bank) and will promote cooperation between them.

The programme will result in strengthened capacity in statistical production, ensuring the availability of timely and good quality statistics that are comparable with the statistics of EU Member States. The increased capacity and coordinating function of the national statistical offices is the best guarantee for the sustainability of the project.

3.3 Results and measurable indicators:

The expected results are

- Improved harmonisation of statistical legislation;
- Improved administrative capacity of official statistics, including for the coordination of the national statistical systems;
- Improved functioning of the national statistical systems;
- Improved availability, quality and comparability of statistical data in priority areas.

Indicators to measure the results are:

- Increased level of alignment with the *acquis*;
- Number of new variables covered;
- Volume of data transmitted to Eurostat;
- Number of statisticians trained;
- Number of Eurostat meetings attended;

The increased level of alignment with the *acquis* and the number of new statistical variables covered can be verified precisely. Also the establishment of new technologies for the transmission of statistical data to Eurostat and the volume of data transferred is measurable.

3.4 Activities:

Technical assistance:

- Expert missions to the IPA beneficiary to assess the domains where improvements are most urgently required;
- Expert missions to the IPA beneficiary to give on-the-spot guidance for improvements of identified weaknesses;
- Financing data collection surveys and censuses and the use of administrative databases for statistical purposes;

General statistical assistance will facilitate:

- Experts from the IPA beneficiary to participate in technical meetings including working group meetings, task force meetings, seminars, training courses and

workshops organised by Eurostat and other European Commission services as well as by international organisations;

- Study visits to statistical offices and other official statistics providers in the countries of the European Statistical System (ESS) as well as IPA beneficiaries;
- the organisation of consultation visits to the IPA beneficiary on demand;
- Traineeships of experts from the IPA beneficiary NSIs at Eurostat and at the NSIs of the European Statistical System.

Data collection projects will be implemented in particular in the following statistical areas:

Agricultural statistics

Agricultural statistics are of particular importance since agriculture is a major economic activity in the region. Agricultural statistics also provide a major input for national accounts. Development of agricultural economic accounts is important alongside statistics on agricultural production and prices.

Demographic statistics

Reliable demographic statistics are necessary for guiding the policy making. The 2011 census of population and housing is an indispensable source of data for a wide range of statistical and policy uses.

Business statistics

Changing economic structures and the emerging sector of small and medium sized enterprises underline the importance of business statistics based on reliable statistical business registers. In particular good structural and short term statistics are needed for guiding the economic policy making.

Macro-economic statistics

Annual and quarterly national accounts, balance of payments statistics, and government finance statistics are the most significant elements of macro-economic statistics.

In addition, horizontal issues such as dissemination, human resource management, quality management in statistics and specific statistical topics can be covered by separate projects.

3.5 Conditionality and sequencing:

- Good cooperation between the NSI and its partners in the national statistical system in the implementation of the project is essential. The different providers of official statistics must be willing to cooperate with the NSI in implementing the activities;
- The coordinating role of the NSI in compiling and disseminating official statistics must be strongly established and recognised.
- The NSI must have sufficient resources to be able to effectively cooperate in and give necessary information for the different activities.

An effective and focused statistical cooperation over a number of years is a prerequisite for the alignment with the *acquis* and the deeper integration into the European Statistical System.

Therefore it is important that both national and multi-beneficiary programmes be continued in future IPA years to ensure the sustainable development of statistical systems.

3.6 Linked activities

Several IPA beneficiaries either have received assistance or plan to receive assistance under the national programmes. Also other donors (mainly international organisations and some EU Member States) support the development of some components of the statistical systems of individual countries in the region.

Particular care needs to be taken therefore to coordinate the activities under the Multi-beneficiary statistical cooperation programme with the activities under the national IPA programmes to avoid any possible duplication of actions and to maximise complementarity and synergies among all programmes. This will be ensured through regular contacts and statistical cooperation meetings with the IPA beneficiaries during the implementation of the programme.

Support from national IPA programmes is essential for the successful upgrading of the statistical systems. The Multi-beneficiary statistical cooperation programme ensures coordination among countries and is the instrument for ensuring the transfer of knowledge, the respect of common standards and the production of comparable statistics. In parallel, the national IPA programmes cover country-specific actions and the implementation of major statistics at national level.

Eurostat undertakes regular donor coordination surveys on statistical support to ensure coordination with other donors. The latest survey completed in March 2010 shows that several countries and international organisations remain active in the Western Balkans. This includes Sweden, Switzerland, Italy, the United Kingdom, Norway, France and Japan as well as EFTA, Council of Europe, the IMF, ILO, the World Bank, UNICEF and other UN organisations. The European Commission is by far the largest donor in the region, providing significantly more support than all other donors taken together.

In the case of Iceland, there is currently no significant activity of other donors, nor is there a national IPA programme on statistics.

3.7 Lessons learned

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

- Harmonising the methodologies and practices used with the EU requirements;
- Sharing best practices;
- Changing the working culture towards a more open adaptation of EU standards;
- Integrating the IPA beneficiaries into the European Statistical System.

Past experience suggests that major risks to the sustainability of the results include high staff turnover in the statistical services of the region. If there are gaps between periods of support, the result of the assistance is not sustainable. For that reason, projects should be planned so that they slightly overlap each other over time. Moreover, donor coordination is essential for improving results and avoiding overlapping. It should also be mentioned that gaps between

successive EU projects are very detrimental to the sustainability of the development of the statistical systems, even though other donors normally are able to step in and bridge the gap, thanks to the good cooperation between the European Commission and other donors.

Upgrading statistical systems is a long-term task. Support should be provided over several years in a stable manner taking careful account of the absorption capacity of the IPA beneficiaries. The absorption capacity is particularly crucial because some IPA beneficiaries have small statistical agencies with only limited experience.

4. Indicative Budget (amounts in EUR)

			SOURCES OF FUNDING									
			TOTAL EXP.RE	IPA EU CONTRIBUTION		NATIONAL CONTRIBUTION					PRIVATE CONTRIBUTION	
ACTIVITIES	IB (1)	INV (1)	EUR (a)=(b)+(c)+(d)	EUR (b)	%(2)	Total EUR (c)=(x)+(y)+(z)	% (2)	Central EUR (x)	Regional/ Local EUR (y)	IFIs EUR (z)	EUR (d)	% (2)
Activity 1			1 111 111	1 000 000	90.0	111 111	10.0	111 111				
Grant to the NSI of the IPA bene- ficiary	X	–	1 111 111	1 000 000	90	111 111	10	111 111				–
TOTAL IB			1 111 111									
TOTAL INV												
TOTAL PROJECT			1 111 111	1 000 000	90.0	111 111	10.0	111 111				

Amounts net of VAT

- (1) In the Activity row use "X" to identify whether IB or INV
(2) Expressed in % of the **Total** Expenditure (column (a))

5. Indicative Implementation Schedule (periods broken down per quarter)

Contracts	Start of Tendering	Signature of contract	Project Completion
Direct grant to the NSI of Iceland	NA	2011 Q2	2012 Q4

6. Cross cutting issues

6.1 Equal Opportunity

The principles and practice of equal opportunity will be guaranteed so as to ensure equitable gender participation in the project.

ANNEXES

- I- Logical framework matrix in standard format
- II- Amounts (in EUR) contracted and disbursed per quarter over the full duration of project
- III- Description of Institutional Framework
- IV - Reference to laws, regulations and strategic documents:
- V- Details per EU funded contract (where applicable)

ANNEX 1: Logical framework matrix in standard format

LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR Project Fiche	Programme name and number IPA 2010 Multi-beneficiary Statistical Cooperation Programme	2010/xxx-xxx
	Contracting period expires 31 December 2011	Disbursement period expires 31 December 2014
	Total budget : EUR 1 111 111	IPA budget: EUR 1 000 000

Overall objective	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	
To prepare the statistical authorities in the IPA beneficiary for future EU membership by aligning present methodologies and practices with the statistical <i>acquis</i> and integrating it into the European Statistical System.	Issues raised in the Commission's Opinion and Progress Reports, progress with accession negotiations for the Statistics chapter	Monitoring reports from the Regional Cooperation Council, European Commission Progress Reports, European Commission and Council documents related to accession negotiations	

Project purpose	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
To upgrade the statistical systems in the IPA beneficiary, thereby improving the availability, quality, comparability and timeliness of statistical data.	Statistical variables provided by IPA beneficiary, Degree of completeness of the Statistical Annexes to the Commission Progress Reports	Commission monitoring and evaluation tools Commission documents Government documents Statistical Publications Eurostat public database Grant Beneficiary's reports	Commitment of national authorities to the process
Results	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
Improved harmonisation of statistical legislation. Improved administrative capacity of official statistics providers, including for the coordination of the national statistical systems. Improved functioning of the national statistical systems. Improved availability, quality and comparability of statistical data in priority areas.	Increased level of alignment with the <i>acquis</i> . Number of new variables covered. Volume of data transmitted to Eurostat. Number of statisticians trained. Number of Eurostat meetings attended.	Experts' and Commission staff mission reports Grant beneficiary's reports Project monitoring reports Eurostat public database	Cooperation of official statistics providers in the IPA beneficiary. Parallel implementation of necessary national IPA programmes on statistics.
Activities	Means	Costs	Assumptions

<p>Technical assistance: expert assessment missions, workshops, meetings participation, training, specific data collection support, data transmission software, on-demand consultations, study visits, traineeships, translation of key documents.</p>	<p>Grants Commission staff Experts</p>	<p>Technical Assistance and Grants: EUR 1 000 000</p>	<p>Availability of experts and good cooperation between all stakeholders. The necessary human resources are provided by the national authorities.</p>
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ANNEX II: Amounts (in EUR) contracted and disbursed per quarter over the full duration of project

Contracted	Q1 2011	Q2 2011	Q3 2011	Q4 2011	Q1 2012	Q2 2012	Q3 2012	Q4 2012	Q1 2013
Direct grants to NSI of the IPA beneficiary	1 000 000								
Cumulated	1 000 000								
Disbursed	Q1 2011	Q2 2011	Q3 2011	Q4 2011	Q1 2012	Q2 2012	Q3 2012	Q4 2012	Q1 2013
Direct grants to NSs of the IPA beneficiary	500 000				400 000				100 000
Cumulated	500 000	500 000	500 000	500 000	900 000	900 000	900 000	900 000	1 000 000

ANNEX III: Description of Institutional Framework

All IPA beneficiaries have a similar set-up of the national statistical system. The lead institution is the national statistical office. Partners in the production of official statistics are ministries and other official bodies, for example the ministries of finance and agriculture, the customs authorities and the central banks.

The production of official statistics is regulated by national laws on statistics.

ANNEX IV: Reference to laws, regulations and strategic documents

Reference list of relevant laws and regulations

The statistical *acquis* 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 (EC) 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European Statistics ("Statistical Law").
- Commission Decision 97/281/EC on the Role of Eurostat
- Decision No 1578/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2007 on the Community Statistical Programme 2008 to 2012.
- Council Regulation 1101/2008 on the transmission of data subject to statistical confidentiality to the Statistical Office of the European Communities
- Commission Regulation 831/2002 on access to confidential data for scientific purposes.

Reference to AP /NPAA / EP / SAA

NA.

Reference to MIPD

Multi-beneficiary Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document 2009-2011, chapter 2.3.3.7 Statistics⁴.

Other references

Eurostat, in cooperation with the statistical offices of the IPA beneficiaries, has developed the "*Strategy for Statistical Cooperation with candidate and potential candidate countries 2007 - 2009*". The strategy was approved by the Policy Group on Statistical Cooperation (PGSC) in October 2006. A new "*Strategy for Statistical Cooperation with candidate and potential candidate countries 2010 - 2013*" was approved by the PGSC in October 2009.

Iceland:

- The Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA) - 1 January 1994
- Commission opinion on Iceland's application for EU Membership:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/press_corner/key-documents/opinion-iceland_2010_en.htm

⁴ C(2009)4518 of 16.06.2009

ANNEX V: Details per EU funded contract

The project will be implemented through:

1) Direct Grant:

A grant will be provided to the National Statistical Institute (NSI) of Iceland. Through this grant the beneficiary NSI shall be directly responsible for the implementation of the activities foreseen in this project fiche.

The grant is awarded to the NSI on the basis of a *de-jure* and *de-facto* monopoly to carry out the statistical activities included in this project fiche in line with Article 168 (1) (c) of the Implementing Rules⁵ as the NSI is the institution inside the public administration of the IPA beneficiary responsible for collecting, producing and disseminating official statistics. The NSI might be supported in this undertaking by other services of the public administration but the final responsibility for the official statistical information lies with the NSI.

The grant beneficiary will contribute 10% co-financing to the eligible expenditure.

The grant will cover technical assistance, data collection projects, and provision of tailor-made expertise. The final amounts will depend on the costs to implement the actions foreseen under the grants. These costs depend on the specific circumstances in the beneficiary, in particular as regards the costs and work load of conducting the data collection projects.

⁵ Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002, OJ L 210, 31.7.2006, p. 82