

Project Fiche No. 11

Statistical Cooperation

1. Basic information

- 1.1 CRIS Number:** 2009/021-705
- 1.2 Title:** IPA 2009 Multi-beneficiary Statistical Cooperation Programme
- 1.3 ELARG Statistical code:** 03.18 - Statistics
- 1.4 Location:** Western Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia as well as Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244/99)
Turkey

Implementing arrangements:

- 1.5 Contracting Authority (EC):** The European Community represented by the Commission of the European Communities on behalf of the Beneficiaries. 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 institutes and partners in the national statistical system.

Financing

- 1.8 Overall cost (VAT excluded)¹:** EUR 5 733 333
- 1.9 EU contribution:** EUR 5 400 000
- 1.10 Final date for contracting:** 30 November 2010
- 1.11 Final date for execution of contracts:** 30 November 2012
- 1.12 Final date for disbursements:** 30 November 2013

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 authorities in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia as well as Kosovo² and Turkey (IPA beneficiaries) for future EU membership by aligning their present methodologies and practices with the statistical *acquis* and integrating them into the European Statistical System.

2.2 Project purpose

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

2.3 Link with AP/NPAA / EP/ SAA³

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.

The European and Accession Partnership documents, the NPAA's where they exist as well as the SAAs underline the need to further develop the statistical systems in the IPA beneficiaries.

2.4 Link with MIPD

This project has been designed on the basis of the IPA Multi-beneficiary Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document (MIPD) 2009-2011⁴ in which statistics is a priority under Section 2.3.3.7. The MIPD emphasises the need to harmonise the national statistical systems of the IPA beneficiaries with the *acquis*.

3. Description of project

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.

² under UNSCR 1244/99

³ 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

⁴ C(2009)5418

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 and IPA 2008 Multi-beneficiary statistical cooperation programmes.

The Multi-beneficiary approach which proved to be cost-efficient under Phare and CARDS and was adopted also for the IPA 2007 and IPA 2008 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. These two countries must now be integrated into the IPA programmes. An IPA 2007 Multi-beneficiary programme on statistics is currently being implemented. It covers 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 has been programmed and will be contracted during 2009. It contains a number of statistical components, mainly as a continuation of those under the IPA 2007 Multi-beneficiary programme but with more depth. The IPA Multi-beneficiary programmes on statistics need to have overlaps in time in order to minimise the risk for gaps in the support and also as each programme has an inception phase and a concluding phase.

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 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 is expected to contribute to increased data quality in key areas through harmonised legislation, knowledge transfer and the regional exchange of experience. Traineeships and study visits to other countries are vital for this aim.

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

3.3 Results and measurable indicators:

The expected results are

- 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.

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 beneficiaries to assess the domains where improvements are most urgently required;
- Expert missions to the IPA beneficiaries to give on-the-spot guidance for improvements of identified weaknesses;
- Organising workshops and seminars for the IPA beneficiaries to disseminate best practices and exchange views among the IPA beneficiary experts;
- Help desk function to give continuous assistance (e.g. on the use of classifications and statistical methods);
- Financing data collection surveys such as the price collections needed for compiling the Purchasing Power Parities;

General statistical assistance will facilitate:

- Experts from the IPA beneficiaries to participate in technical meetings including working group meetings, task force meetings, seminars 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 training activities both locally and in the EU;
- the organisation of consultation visits to the IPA beneficiaries on demand;
- the translation and dissemination of relevant documentation;
- the development of web sites also in English language;
- Traineeships of experts from the IPA beneficiary NSIs at Eurostat and at the NSIs of the European Statistical System.

These activities will help to integrate staff of statistical offices into the international statistical network and thus to contribute to the motivation of the staff. In this way a major risk to the sustainability of the project (high staff turnover) is alleviated.

These activities will be implemented in the following areas:

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. Regional accounts are necessary input for the determination of eligibility to EU structural funds in future.

Price statistics

Reliable statistics on price developments are necessary for assessing the inflation in the countries but also for deflating the economic accounts expressed in current prices to get for example the real economic growth figures. Compilation of Purchasing Power Parities is required for international comparisons of GDP and other economic indicators originally expressed in national currencies. The work which is carried out under the IPA 2007 and IPA 2008 Multi-beneficiary statistical cooperation programmes needs to be continued and expanded.

External trade statistics

External trade statistics compilation methods need to be harmonised with the EU requirements and the quality and coverage must be further improved. Reliable external trade statistics are a key input for trade agreements and the discussion of other economic issues. The work which is carried out under the IPA 2007 and IPA 2008 Multi-beneficiary statistical cooperation programmes needs to be continued in order to achieve a sufficient quality of external trade statistics.

Demographic statistics

Reliable demographic statistics are necessary for guiding the policy making. Population estimates based on vital statistics and on statistics on migration need to be improved.

Labour market statistics

Indicators and analysis based on reliable labour market statistics are of vital importance for the employment strategy.

Other social statistics

Surveys on income and living conditions (SILC) and household budget surveys (HBS) will help identify the levels of poverty. Statistics on education needs to be improved and the classifications harmonised. Depending on the country, a light or a full SILC may be carried out. Some countries will develop health statistics, including a system of health accounts and causes of death. Food safety statistics is also covered under this heading.

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.

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.

Statistics on science and technology

Research and development are key factors for sustaining economic development. STI statistics include innovation statistics and patent statistics in addition to research and development statistics.

Information society statistics

Statistics on the information society are an essential basis for European policy makers in order to follow the structural changes of the economy. The diffusion of new information and communication technologies in the population has proved vital for maintaining competitive advantages.

Energy and transport statistics

The energy policy of EU is gaining in importance and it is vital to build up a harmonised energy statistical system. Information about transport of goods and persons in various transport modes are necessary for the transport policy of EU.

Environment statistics

Statistics on environment have to be developed due to the growing need for such data for the EU policy. Statistical support for sustainable development should also be developed by some IPA beneficiaries.

Tourism statistics

Statistics on tourism covers an important part of the economic system. It is more important for some IPA beneficiaries than in others.

Dissemination of statistics

Each national statistical office has a role to disseminate EU statistics within its country. Basic statistical data should be provided free of charge in the language(s) of the country, both on Internet and as promotional material. Users at both the national and international level have the right to demand support from the NSI to explain statistical concepts and methods.

In addition, horizontal issues such as human resource management, quality management in statistics and specific statistical topics will be covered.

3.5 Conditionality and sequencing:

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

The specific statistical activities foreseen under the IPA 2009 national programmes are essential for the correct development of the national statistical systems and must be implemented in parallel with this Multi-beneficiary programme.

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 April 2008 shows that several countries and international organisations remain active in the region. This includes Sweden, Switzerland, Italy, the United Kingdom, Norway, France and the USA as well as EFTA, Council of Europe, the IMF, OECD, the World Bank, UNDP 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.

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 COMMUNITY 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			5 733 333	5 400 000	94.19	333 333	5.81	333 333				
Grants to the NSIs of the IPA Beneficiaries ⁵	X	–	3 333 333	3 000 000	90	333 333	10	333 333				–
Service contract 1	X	–	2 000 000	2 000 000	100							–
Service contract 2	X	–	400 000	400 000	100							–
TOTAL IB			5 733 333	5 400 000	94.19	333 333	5.81	333 333				
TOTAL INV												
TOTAL PROJECT			5 733 333	5 400 000	94.19	333 333	5.81	333 333				

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 The IPA beneficiaries concerned by grants for this amount are Croatia, Turkey, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. However the distribution of the amounts of the grants to the NSIs might be modified if further NSIs will be considered eligible for such grants.

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

Contracts	Start of Tendering	Signature of contract	Project Completion
Contract 1	2009 Q4	2010 Q2	2012 Q4
Contract 2	2009 Q4	2010 Q2	2012 Q2
Direct grant to the NSIs of the IPA beneficiaries	NA	2010 Q2	2012 Q2

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	2009/021-705
	IPA 2009 Multi-beneficiary Statistical Cooperation Programme	
	Contracting period expires 30 November 2010	Disbursement period expires 30 November 2013
	Total budget : EUR 5 733 333	IPA budget: EUR 5 400 000

Overall objective	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	
To prepare the statistical authorities in the IPA beneficiaries for future EU membership by aligning their present methodologies and practices with the statistical <i>acquis</i> and integrating them into the European Statistical System.	SAA process requirements, issues raised in 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 beneficiaries, thereby improving the availability, quality, comparability and timeliness of statistical data.	Statistical variables provided by IPA beneficiaries, 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 Contractor's reports Grant Beneficiaries' 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 Contractor's and grant Beneficiaries' reports Project monitoring reports Eurostat public database	Cooperation of official statistics providers in the IPA beneficiaries. 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>Service contracts Grants Reports related to the execution of the contracts Contractor's staff Commission staff Experts</p>	<p>Technical Assistance and Grants: EUR 5 400 000</p>	<p>Availability of experts and good cooperation between all stakeholders. The necessary human resources are provided by the national authorities.</p>

ANNEX II: Amounts (in EUR) contracted and disbursed per quarter over the full duration of project

Contracted	Q2 2010	Q3 2010	Q4 2010	Q1 2011	Q2 2011	Q3 2011	Q4 2011	Q1 2012	Q2 2012	Q3 2012	Q4 2012
Contract 1	2 000 000										
Contract 2	400 000										
Direct grants to NSIs of the IPA beneficiaries	3 000 000										
Cumulated	5 400 000										
Disbursed	Q2 2010	Q3 2010	Q4 2010	Q1 2011	Q2 2011	Q3 2011	Q4 2011	Q1 2012	Q2 2012	Q3 2012	Q4 2012
Contract 1			600 000		400 000		400 000		400 000		200 000
Contract 2	120 000		80 000		80 000		80 000		40 000		
Direct grants to NSIs of the IPA beneficiaries	1 350 000				1 350 000				300 000		
Cumulated	1 470 000	1 470 000	2 150 000	2 150 000	3 980 000	3 980 000	4 460 000	4 460 000	5 200 000	5 200 000	5 400 000

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:

- Council Regulation (EC) 322/97 ("Statistical Law"). A new "Statistical Law" is at an advanced stage of preparation and can be expected to be adopted during 2009.
- 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

AP = Accession Partnership

Accession Partnership with Croatia

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:042:0051:01:EN:HTML>

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)

National Strategy for European Integration of the Republic of Macedonia:

http://www.cc.cec/home/dgserve/larg/docs/FYR_Macedonia/Annexes/3-21/21_Annex_01.pdf

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

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

National Programme of Croatia for the Adoption of the EU Acquis:

Available on CD-ROM on an annual basis (2008 is the latest)

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 under UNSCR 1244: 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

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

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

Reference to MIPD

Multi-beneficiary Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document 2009-2011, chapter 2.3.3.7 Statistics⁶.

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.

⁶ Include COM when available

ANNEX V: Details per EU funded contract

The project will be implemented through:

1) Direct Grant:

Grants will be provided to the National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) of Croatia, Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia. It is possible that by the time of launching the invitations to apply for the grants, NSIs of other IPA beneficiaries could also be considered eligible if deemed to have the necessary capacity to manage a grant. Through these grants the beneficiary NSIs shall be directly responsible for the implementation of the activities foreseen in this project fiche.

The grants are awarded to the NSIs 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 Rules⁷ as the NSIs are the institution inside the public administration of the IPA beneficiaries responsible for collecting, producing and disseminating official statistics. The NSIs 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 NSIs.

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

The indicative grant (EC contribution) distribution by IPA beneficiary is provided below:

IPA beneficiary	Indicative distribution of the grants (EUR)
Croatia	1 000 000
Turkey	1 000 000
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	500 000
Serbia	500 000
Total (maximum amount of EC contribution)	3 000 000

Croatia and Turkey will receive larger grants as they will need to implement more projects and a wider range of activities than the other IPA beneficiaries.

The grants will cover technical assistance, data collection projects, and provision of tailor-made expertise. The amounts of the individual grants are indicative. 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 Beneficiaries, in particular as regards the costs and work load of conducting the data collection projects.

⁷ Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002, OJ L 210, 31.7.2006, p. 82

2) Service Contract

Following a restricted tender a service contract (EUR 2m) will be signed to provide technical assistance to those IPA beneficiaries, in particular, who do not receive a grant.

3) Service Contract

Following a restricted tender a service contract (EUR 0.4m) will be signed to provide technical assistance for the implementation of the grants provided to the NSIs.

This service contract will provide mainly external technical expertise in selected areas and the organisation of workshops involving grant beneficiaries. As in the past⁸, this external technical support is organised via a service contract rather than being included in each individual grant. This ensures an efficient and harmonised approach and facilitates monitoring and evaluation across the Beneficiaries.

⁸ E.g. Commission Decision C(2006)6973 establishing a multi-beneficiary statistical cooperation programme for Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Turkey.