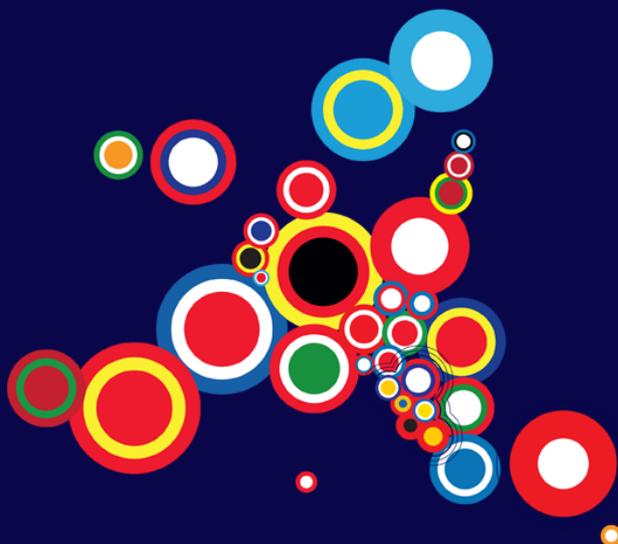




# INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA II) 2014-2020

## SERBIA

### EU for Development of Statistics in Serbia



The desired impact of IPA 2018 in the area of Statistics is to enable carrying out of the obligatory censuses in Serbia (due in 2021) and to contribute to improved evidence based decision making, monitoring and evaluation process. Through upgrading the capacities of the Statistics Office for ensuring sustainable alignment to EU acquis in statistics, the Action will increase availability, quality and comparability of policy-relevant statistics.. Furthermore, the Action should serve, inter alia, for assessing the quality of existing statistics registries in order to prepare a strategy for the implementation of a registers-based census in 2031.

<b>Action Identification</b>			
<b>Action Programme Title</b>	Annual Action Programme for the Republic of Serbia 2018		
<b>Action Title</b>	EU for Development of Statistics in Serbia		
<b>Action ID</b>	IPA 2018/041-249/4/Serbia/EU for Development of Statistics in Serbia		
<b>Sector Information</b>			
<b>IPA II Sector</b>	1. Democracy and governance		
<b>DAC Sector</b>	16062		
<b>Budget</b>			
<b>Total cost</b>	EUR 29,750,000		
<b>EU contribution</b>	EUR 20,000,000		
<b>Budget line(s)</b>	22.02 01 01		
<b>Management and Implementation</b>			
<b>Management mode</b>	Direct Management		
<i>Direct management:</i>	EU Delegation in Serbia		
<b>Implementation responsibilities</b>	Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia		
<b>Location</b>			
<b>Zone benefiting from the action</b>	Republic of Serbia		
<b>Specific implementation area(s)</b>	Republic of Serbia		
<b>Timeline</b>			
<b>Final date for concluding Financing Agreement(s) with IPA II beneficiary</b>	At the latest by 31 December 2019		
<b>Final date for contracting, including the conclusion of contribution/delegation agreements</b>	3 years following the date of conclusion of the Financing Agreement, with the exception of cases listed under Article 114(2) of the Financial Regulation		
<b>Indicative operational implementation period</b>	6 years following the conclusion of the Financing Agreement		
<b>Final date for implementing the Financing Agreement (date by which this programme should be de-committed and closed)</b>	12 years following the conclusion of the Financing Agreement		
<b>Policy objectives / Markers (DAC form)</b>			
<b>General policy objective</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Main objective</b>

Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	√	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aid to environment	√	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender equality (including Women In Development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	√	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trade Development	√	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health	√	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>RIO Convention markers</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Main objective</b>
Biological diversity	√	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Combat desertification	√	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change mitigation	√	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change adaptation	√	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 1. RATIONALE

### PROBLEM AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Statistics is a key cross-cutting area in the EU accession process. The development of official statistics is connected to the EU accession process (Chapter 18), as well as to assessing the impact of the policies chosen and monitoring the changes and indicators of fulfilment of economic criteria for the membership throughout accession negotiations with the EU.

The acquis in the field of statistics requires the existence of a statistical infrastructure based on principles such as impartiality, reliability, transparency, confidentiality of individual data and dissemination of official statistics. The acquis requires that the national statistical offices act as reference points for the methodology, production and dissemination of statistical information. The acquis covers methodology, classifications and procedures for data collection in various areas such as demographic and social statistics. This Action fully supports Serbia's progress in the alignment with the standards required under Chapter 18.

The context and aim of the Action is to enable the continuation of valuable support provided through previous and ongoing IPA and Eurostat technical assistance for the strengthening of the national statistical system and its compliance with Eurostat's Code of Practice (CoP).

This Action should be understood as a necessary intermediate step in the complex process of establishment of a register-based Population Census.

More specifically, it is designed to provide continuation and complementarity of support to the results achieved through the ongoing IPA Multi-Beneficiary programme which is supporting the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS) in the development of a methodology for the conduction of the Population Census in line with relevant EU regulations, and conducting the pilot Population Census. Furthermore, it will be aligned with the ongoing IPA 2016 programme (support to Farm Structure Survey-FSS) where CAPI method for data collection (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) is going to be tested and used for the first time on such big sample. As such, it will support the piloting for the two biggest statistical actions: Population and Agricultural Census.

The context of the Action is also shaped by the conclusions and recommendations of the recently published Eurostat Peer review report on SORS compliance with the CoP and on coordination role of SORS. The CoP recognizes the high level of trust, respect and independence of SORS. Generally, the Peer Review considered that the national statistical system of Serbia is largely compliant with the CoP and the recommendations in this report are intended to further enhance compliance with the European statistical system. Furthermore, the Peer review recognizes that SORS has made good use of funding provided through ongoing and past IPA assistance and it has continually expanded the range of statistics available and improved the service it provides. In that context, the Action shall enable continuation of the national statistics strengthening and its alignment with the European statistical system. The legal basis for the production and dissemination of data and information of the official statistics, as well as for the organisation of the official statistical system in the Republic of Serbia, are laid down in the Law on Official Statistics<sup>1</sup>. Pursuant to this Law, the National Assembly, in June 2015, adopted the "Programme of Official Statistics for the period 2016 – 2020". The Programme defines the set of activities streamlined towards the achievement of the main objective of the harmonisation of statistical surveys and indicators with international standards, primarily with the standards of the European Statistical System (ESS) and the European Union. Furthermore, the Programme recognises the importance of implementation of activities on modernisation and improvement of all statistical research in order to reduce the costs of data collection and burden of respondents.

Recognising the need and significance of the official statistics, Serbia is progressing in harmonisation of the statistical system with international standards. Serbia is moderately prepared in the area of statistics assessed by the 2018 EC Progress Report. In assessing the overall situation the EU addressed

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<sup>1</sup> Official Journal of RS; No 104/09

a number of sub-issues in the area of statistics, two of which will be tackled by the present Action: social statistics through supporting the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS) for conducting the Population Census and European Health Interview Survey (EHIS), and agriculture statistics – through supporting the Statistics Office (SORS) for conduction of the Agricultural Census. On social statistics (imminent to Population Census), Serbia is partially in line with the *acquis* and this is observed in particular for the public health statistics.

SORS initiated the amending of the Law on Official Statistics in order to provide an adequate legal frame for developing an efficient, professional, independent and sustainable statistical system. The main aim is to change the status and to strengthen the coordination role of the SORS among other relevant official statistics stakeholders and providers, to strengthen the position of the SORS in terms of using administrative sources, as well as the mandatory consultations with the SORS in establishing new or changing the existing administrative sources<sup>2</sup>. Laws on Population and Agriculture Census are now in the preparation phase, and they should be adopted regulating the content, preparation, organisation and implementation of the censuses. Timing for conduction of Population, households and dwellings Census (PC) is always, according to international standards and national legislation, in the first year of the decade. Agricultural Census (AC) shall be conducted soon after the PC since data from the PC will serve for additional updating of the frame for conduction of AC. The periodicity of conduction of EHIS and MICS shall be every five years.

As the most massive and complex statistical action, PCs are mainly conducted in the period of ten years. Previous PC (together with Housing Census) was conducted in 2011, through traditional methods, and data has subsequently been published. After finalisation of 2011 PC, in line with the Law, SORS started with preparation of the 2021 census in order to explore possibilities for reduction of PC implementation costs, minimise the burden on the respondents and improve the availability of more up-to-date estimates and surveys in the interim period. The assessment was focused on possibilities for usage of administrative registers as the data source, in line with the UN and EU standards which regulates the area of official statistics modernisation and provides requirements in that regard. During 2014-2015, within IPA 2012 MB – Pilot project “Statistical Population Register”, SORS started with implementation of activities related to: establishing cooperation with relevant institutions and main statistical data producers, defining the content of the Statistical Population Register and exploring the possibility for conducting a register based census in 2021. Findings and recommendations are summarised as follows:

- The transition from a traditional census to a register based census shall be carried out gradually over a longer period of time;
- In Serbia, the conditions for census based on registers have not yet been met;
- Key registers at national level are missing, primarily Population register and Register of buildings and dwellings, and also the Address register is not complete and up-to-date;
- Significant number of core census topics cannot be provided from the existing administrative registers;
- None of the registers contain data on ethnic characteristics of the population which are of particular importance for the implementation of national legislation;
- Classifications and definitions are not harmonised, etc.
- In order to move to alternative ways/modern methods of census implementation, it is necessary first of all to provide an adequate legal framework, to secure support from other stakeholders, statistical data producers, holders of different administrative registers users and to intensify cooperation with all relevant institutions in charge of administering/establishing administrative registers;
- Regardless of the decision to implement the 2021 PC by a traditional method (and more specifically, by using Computer Assisted Personal Interview method), it is of utmost importance that at the state level activities on establishment of missing registers and improvement of the quality of existing administrative registries need to be intensified;

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<sup>2</sup> In accordance with the Regulation 759/2015 amending Regulation 223/2009 on European statistics regarding access, use and integration of administrative records

- The work on harmonisation and the establishment of consistency and coherence of administrative data between different sources, should be initiated and coordinated having in mind that it is difficult to achieve a compromise between state-level registers and what the SORS wants to achieve, especially since the establishment and maintenance of the necessary administrative sources, for the time being, is beyond the influence of official statistics;
- The SORS, in accordance with the Law on Statistics, should participate in all activities related to the establishment of new ones or the change of existing administrative registries that are relevant to official statistics. In addition, the SORS, as the largest producer of official statistics, should have a coordinating role in the activities related to the introduction and application of unique classifications and codes.

The results of the analysis have shown that there are still no basic conditions for creating and updating the Statistical Population Register and for implementation of the full register based census in 2021. However, some of the administrative sources can be used in different phases of carrying out the 2021 Census (e.g. for defining boundaries and creating maps of enumeration areas, controlling the coverage of individual contingents, imputations, etc.). Therefore, further assistance is envisaged for the development of more efficient census procedures, clear identification of targets, steps, necessary resources and complementary actions in order to be prepared for the introduction of the register based census in 2031.

Agricultural Census (AC) is of crucial importance for provision of a real image of the structure of agriculture in Serbia and a pre-condition for the creation of a Statistical Farm Register that should be used in all agriculture surveys. Since agricultural data is very important for the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and it changes faster than demographic data, between two agricultural censuses two sample based intermediate surveys shall be conducted. These two surveys represent the Farm Structure Survey (FSS). Both, the full censuses and intermediate sample surveys (FSS) are aimed at producing a variety of information on specific CAP targets. AC is providing data for making a strategy for agricultural and rural development, for analysing efficiency of the implemented measures in agriculture and for updating the Statistical Farm Register.

The European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) provides data that is the documentary basis for the evidence based decision-making in the areas of health promotion and disease prevention, as well as planning a more efficient and qualitative health care with the aim of reaching a longer and better-quality life of the population of Serbia. The Serbian National Health Survey conducted in 2013, was in line with the methodology of EHIS wave 2, but the data was never transmitted to Eurostat. The next EHIS survey on the health of the population is planned for 2019, in accordance with the Commission Regulation (EU) 2018/255.

EHIS is of special importance for EU negotiation process particularly for Chapters 18 and 28. SORS will (in cooperation with the Institute of Public Health of Serbia “Dr Milan Jovanović Batut”) conduct the EHIS wave 3 in line with the priorities identified in the “Programme of official statistics 2016-2020”. It will provide data on the health status of the population, health determinants and use of health care and this data will be transmitted to Eurostat. EHIS will allow the highest degree of comparability of survey results with the results in the EU countries and with international indicators. Wherever possible, national health research methodology will be observed, in order to monitor the trend of selected national health indicators (such as - anthropometric and blood pressure measurements which are important for national needs, but they also increase the accuracy of collecting of anthropometric data, especially among the elderly). Data collected through EHIS will be used as an analytical tool for better evidence based decision and policy making process within the health sector as well as a monitoring tool for the *Strategy for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases in Republic of Serbia*<sup>3</sup>. Statistical data will also be used by researchers to make in-depth analyses on specific health issues (the health status – including disability, health determinants and health care services – and unmet needs of the Serbian citizens).

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<sup>3</sup> Official Gazette of RS, No. 55/05, 71/05, 101/07 and 65/08

. Since 1995, UNICEF has supported the implementation of five rounds of Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) around the globe, with close to 300 surveys conducted in more than 100 countries, in order to ensure internationally comparable estimates, continuity of survey and time sets of indicators. MICS evolved into a tool that, through a single survey, provides data for more than 50% of SDGs indicators based on household survey data. Serbia is one of the few countries in which all five previous rounds of MICS were implemented. By participating in the MICS survey, every country gets a better insight into the situation of women (15-49 years) and children under 5 years, thus enabling easier implementation of the country's national and global goals. Results of this survey present one of the most significant databases and are the largest single source of data for numerous indicators in progress and education of children, health status of youth and women in Serbia. Data from MICS 6 will be used for reporting on Action Plan EU accession (Ch.23, rule of law, human rights), Monitoring Roma Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan, Monitoring National Strategy for Education, Monitoring policies on ECD and health, coverage and targeting of social benefits.

### **Stakeholders**

The Law on Statistics establishes a legal, institutional and programmatic framework for the collection, production and dissemination of data and information and the organisation of a system of official statistics. The system is comprised of the SORS, as the main coordinator of the system, and the National Bank of Serbia, as well as other responsible producers of official statistics such as: ministry in charge of finance, ministry in charge of agriculture, ministry in charge of education, and others. The SORS is leading and coordinating the work of the Negotiating group for Chapter 18.

Finally, the Statistical Council of the Republic of Serbia participates in the drafting and adoption of proposals of programs and other strategic documents, as well as in monitoring their implementation.

With regard to introduction of the register based census, the SORS is already participating in various inter-sectorial working groups and bodies which are addressing its different aspects , such as: Coordination body for the establishment and development of the Central Population Register of the Republic of Serbia; Expert group of the Coordination Body for the establishment and development of the Central Population Register of the Republic of Serbia; Coordination body for improving the address register of the Government of RS; Operational group of the Coordinating Body for the improvement of the address register of the Government of the Republic of Serbia; Working group for the development of the harmonised Classification of Occupations; Working group for development of the National Qualifications Framework) – related to the Education register; Working group for Open Data and Council of National Geospatial Data Infrastructure.

### **OUTLINE OF IPA II ASSISTANCE**

The activities planned within this Action will enable continuation and sustainability of results and impact of statistical reforms implemented so far. In this regard, support to the Statistical Office aims to enable more efficient enforcement of the planned **reform activities** and delivery of results in line with the National Programme of Official Statistics priorities and its alignment with the European statistical system. The Republic of Serbia is the recipient of the continuous technical support in the last ten years, overseen by the Eurostat, and it is on a reform path towards the introduction of the register-based census.

The proposed Action also has a wider context of highly reform orientation that is reflected through the following:

- Population Census data will enable completion of the process of establishing the address register (kept by Republic Geodetic Authority);
- Statistical population register will be set up;
- For the first time the connection between Census and geospatial data will be provided (geographic coordinates and geospatial distribution of population, households, and housing), necessary for emergency situations response, defining rural areas and planning investments for those areas (IPARD funds, etc), urban planners, etc.;
- Road Map and Action Document toward register based census will be in place and accepted by Government;

- Beside national reform nature of the Action's outcomes, the crucial Action's outcome important for the Western Balkan region is establishing the common infrastructure basis for the Western Balkan's regional hub for the Censuses' data dissemination (One-Stop-Shop approach-WB Censuses data in one place). This is enabled by existence and usage of the same IT platform in several WB countries. This IT platform representing the concept of integrated data processing is initially developed in SORS and in the last several years know how was shared with other countries in the region, thus providing the base for creation the foundation of this common WB regional hub for the Censuses' data dissemination.

With four tightly interlinked results under this Action (pertaining to Population Census, Agricultural Census, EHIS and MICS), it is envisaged to ensure timely carrying out of the obligatory censuses in Serbia (due in 2021) and to contribute to improved evidence-based decision making, monitoring and evaluation process highly relevant for the national policy making and implementation, but also for fulfilling monitoring and reporting requirements throughout EU accession negotiations. Through upgrading of SORS capacities for ensuring further sustainable approach to EU acquis in statistics, the Action will increase availability, quality and comparability of high-quality and policy-relevant statistics, necessary for evidence-based policy making.

The support provided through this Action is recognised as an extremely important step forward reforming the statistical processing of information, taking into consideration that the new modern method in census implementation would create significant financial savings, contribute to the more efficient data processing, as well as more accurate and adequate statistical data.

In addition, the implementation of the Action aims to provide the significant reform incentive to the establishment of preconditions for modernisation of the procedures applied in conduction of census. In this regard the Action will through assessment of the current state of play in terms of quality of both existing registries and registries that will be established in the meantime identify main steps and targets in order to modernise and upgrade the procedures and methodology for the implementation of the census in 2031 on the basis of registers. This is recognised as an extremely important intervention in terms of creating a good basis for investing further efforts in reforming the statistical methods and procedures, thus contributing to the significant financial savings, more efficient data processing and continuous availability of the most adequate and quality statistical data that are very valuable in the context of evidence-based policy making.

## **RELEVANCE WITH THE IPA II STRATEGY PAPER AND OTHER KEY REFERENCES**

All of the activities proposed within the Action derive from the priorities listed under the IPA II Indicative Strategy Paper (ISP) for Serbia, and have been aligned with the recommendations of the EC Progress Report for Serbia 2018 and the EC "*Credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans*".

Both EU-Western Balkan Strategy and Progress Report indicates that Serbia needs to invest more efforts in strengthening of administrative capacities necessary for pursuing sectorial reforms and fulfilment of EU requirements. Statistics as a main producer of data required for policy and decision making processes shall empower and facilitate the analytical capacities of the relevant public administration bodies in the process of EU accession.

The ISP sets out the following priorities for EU financial assistance for the period 2014-2020, within the Democracy and governance sector: "*assistance will be focused on supporting the Public Administration Reform (PAR), in order to establish a more professional, depoliticised, accountable and fiscally responsible public administration, which provides services to citizens and businesses both at central and local level*". The envisaged Action will directly contribute achieving the following ISP result: "*Statistical methods applied by the Serbian Statistical Office are in line with the requirements of the European Statistical System*". Realisation of the Action will contribute to the harmonisation with the EU requirements and contribute to the establishment of preconditions for modernisation of the processes supported through the Action in terms of their digitalisation. Given the value of statistics in enhancing policy analysis, policy design and policy outcomes across a wide range of sectors, there is clear causal link between modernisation of these processes (introduction of register-based census) and more adequate and effective policy decisions including the decisions related to the priorities identified within **Economic Reform Programme**.

**Multi-Country Indicative Strategy Paper (2014-20)** recognises the need for more and better quality statistics to support evidence based policy making and planning. In that respect it envisages support for building the capacity of statistical services to improve the conditions for evidence-based policy making and to harmonise the statistical methods and standards with EU requirements, including the robust quality management now applied to European statistics.

**The Europe 2020 strategy** and the **South East Europe (SEE) 2020 strategy** will assist the beneficiaries to produce the indicators which are necessary to measure the achievement of headline targets set out by these strategies.

The planned activities under the Action are complementing interventions defined in the **National Programme for Official Statistics 2014-2020 including the development strategy**, endorsed by the Management Group for Statistical Co-operation (MGSC) in 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.

According to the **National Plan for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA 2014-18)**, Serbia is expected to adopt new legislation to be harmonised with the Regulation (EU) 759/2015 where independence and coordination role of the SORS is stressed, and Regulation (EU) 99/2013 concerning the European statistical programme 2013-2017 (EC) No 1059/2003 (NUTS classification).

In regard to the **National Priorities for International Assistance for Period 2014-17 with 2020 Projections (NAD)**, activities envisaged as support to official statistics are in line with priorities and measures identified in the document and more particularly, they are in line with the Measure 2.2 on Improving institutional and technical capacity for monitoring and forecasting socio-economic developments.

Finally, the proposed Action is directly linked with the **Public Administration Reform Action Plan Measure 1.3** related to the improvement of the system for management of public policies of the Government. Namely, within the process of introducing of evidence based policy making, the document especially recognises the need for creation of analytical capacities within the Public Policy Secretariat and state administration bodies for planning, creation, implementation and monitoring of public policies based on evidence and relevant data.

#### **LESSONS LEARNED AND LINK TO PREVIOUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

The SORS has received significant support from the EU for the alignment with the EU requirements in the field of statistics, through aligning present methodologies and outputs with the statistical acquis and taking forward its integration into the European Statistical System.

With support of the **IPA 2011** Direct Grant for the “*Alignment with the European Statistical System*”, SORS had conducted: Population, households and dwellings Census in 2011, AC in 2012 (after almost 60 years), and National Account survey. All three components reached the predefined objectives and results, which present the backbone for all further statistical activities. This project had been contracted at a very late stage, a few days before PC started, which caused many administrative problems during the project implementation and afterwards. The appropriate timing of the contracting and implementation of projects is therefore crucial for the achievement of appropriate results in this field. Despite these issues and obstacles, both censuses were implemented successfully and were carried out through traditional „paper and pencil“ method of data collection, and provided good quality data that have been widely used. During that period the idea of improving the next censuses rounds was raised, either to conduct the register based census, or if not possible to modernise the method of data collection, more specifically to switch to the CAPI method (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing).

In the scope of **IPA 2012 Multi-country programme**, one of the pilot project was “*Statistical Population Register*“ with the aim to test the possibility of establishing Statistical Population Register and conducting Census based on administrative sources. Results shown that there are still no basic conditions for creating and updating the Statistical Population Register and for implementation of the

fully register based census in the Republic of Serbia, but that some of the administrative sources can be used in different phases of carrying out the 2021 Census..).

The surveys that were carried out within the preliminary activities for the Agricultural Census 2012 were funded by the **EU IPA 2007 national assistance**, as well as the design of the Statistical Farm Register. After the Agricultural Census 2012, the conditions for the creation and maintaining of this register were met, which is now under responsibility of the SORS.

The IPA 2012 project led to the improvement of IT system in SORS, having in mind the growing ICT needs in all statistical offices. The project was directly linked to a previous IPA 2007 support. Project activities included the improvement of the system/platform for integrated data processing. This IT platform is exclusively developed in SORS.. The functionalities of this user-friendly IT platform reduce the complexity of data collection, processing, storing, analysing and dissemination of statistical data, taking into account the best international practices. The system is resistant to technological changes, IT staff turnover and it contributes to the cost reduction since it uses the existing software without purchasing the additional licences. This platform and its applications will be used in IPA 2018, in all four components and also for the project management.

Within **IPA 2015 Multi-country statistical** cooperation programme, which is currently in progress, an ad-hoc project “Pilot Population Census” will be conducted. All methodological and organisational solutions, including new data collection techniques, will be tested, so they could be applied in the 2021 Census. Pilot Census will be conducted in April 2019 on the sample of 260 enumeration areas (about 20,000 households and 50,000 persons).

Ongoing **IPA 2016 national assistance** aims to support official statistics in developing efficient and sustainable statistical systems in line with ESS, through setting up and conduction of Farm Structure Survey (FSS) and dissemination of the results, improvement of National Accounts and business statistics, more specifically tourism statistics. FSS, beside the AC, is the major source of agricultural statistics in Europe and it has been carried out in EU since the 1960s. Usually it is carried out twice between two censuses in order to follow up the changes in the agricultural sector. FSS in Serbia will be set up and conducted for the first time through IPA 2016 intervention. It will use the CAPI method for data collection and this will be the first time to use this method for such a big sample (app. 120,000 agricultural holdings). This activity is a very important exercise for the upcoming censuses in 2021, since it represents the testing of IT solutions, organisational set up, etc. for two major statistical activities: Population and Agricultural Census 2021. The plan is to do the censuses’ fieldworks using the same method of data collection (CAPI).

One of the important lessons learned from the Farm Structure Survey (IPA 2016), also from the IPA 2011 (Population and Agricultural Census), as well as from 5 rounds of Multi-beneficiary IPA programmes interventions, was the selection of the Direct grant as the contracting modality. This proves to be the most efficient and effective option having in mind SORS capacities for Direct grant implementation as well as the scope, structure, number of participants and other specifics of the statistical projects.

Beside the EU support to statistics, SORS has continual bilateral cooperation with various statistical offices and institutions, such as the French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) and the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO). Cooperation covers various statistical fields of particular importance for SORS (using the administrative sources of data for different needs, exchanging the experiences in the field of agricultural statistics, etc.).

In addition, SORS benefited from the long-term cooperation with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), through capacity building activities, improvement of social statistics and usage of administrative sources and registries.

All the aforementioned assistance in the previous period has significantly contributed to the current level of SORS development, which is reflected in the annual reports of the European Commission, as well as in various Eurostat reports. In the context of preparation and planning of the IPA 2018 assistance, accumulated previous experiences and knowledge represent the starting point for further improvements, especially in the fields of Population and Agricultural Censuses.



## 2. INTERVENTION LOGIC LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	
To contribute to improved evidence based decision making, monitoring and evaluation process in Serbia	Government Effectiveness (P-Rank) Positive assessment of progress in the implementation of Public Administration Reform process	World Bank report Evidence based policies and regulations in different areas Reports by Serbian Government Reports by FAO	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
To increase the availability, quality, comparability and timeliness of high quality and policy-relevant statistical data	Level of availability of methodologically compliant data in relevant fields, including gender statistics Level of compliance including gender statistics of applied methodologies in relevant fields. Availability of statistical infrastructure for rational and efficient statistical production (relevant registers linked to each other in an interoperable way)	EC and Eurostat Progress Report Report from SMIS (Statistical Information Management System) SORS website	Continuous commitment of the Serbian government to the EU integration process Continuous commitment of the EU to the enlargement process Continuous commitment to the implementation of public administration reform Sufficient dedicated and qualified staff available at beneficiary institutions Commitment of other governmental institutions in supporting the Action maintained Funds committed and disbursed with the estimated deadline
RESULTS	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATOR	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
R 1. Population Census conducted and high quality population statistics are provided	Availability of high quality <sup>4</sup> Population Census statistics including gender data Status of the Action plan for introduction of the	Census publications; Quality Census control report SORS website	Adoption of Law on Population Census and Law on Agricultural Census Commitment of other

<sup>4</sup> Production of quality statistics is based on the European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP), Regulation (EC) No 223/2009, existing implementing regulations on quality reporting and quality measurement methodology used by Eurostat.

	registry based Population Census implementation		governmental institutions in supporting the Action maintained Sufficient dedicated and qualified staff available at beneficiary institutions
R 2. Agricultural Census conducted and statistics comparable with Community methods in the area of agriculture are provided	Availability of high quality statistics in the area of agriculture  Governmental use of agricultural statistics for policy and rural area strategy development and planning	Census publications; Quality Census control report SORS website Eurostat reports DG AGRI reports	
R 3. The European Health Interview Survey EHIS conducted and results disseminated	Availability of high quality statistics in the area of health including gender data  Status of the EHIS fieldwork <sup>5</sup>	Survey publications; Quality control report SORS website and Public Health Institute website	
R 4. Round 6 of the Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS) conducted	Status of the MICS training and fieldwork <sup>6</sup>  Availability of MICS indicators	MICS reports – Survey findings report and Final report SORS website and UNICEF website	

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<sup>5</sup> The indicator is process indicator because the intervention finances this comprehensive activity, the implementation of the fieldwork of the survey. This activity will be conducted in the year 2019. After the fieldwork data will be analysed and disseminated

<sup>6</sup> The indicator is process indicator because the intervention finances only two comprehensive activities, the trainings for the survey participants and implementation of the fieldwork of the survey. These activities will be conducted in the year 2019.

## DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

### Result 1: Population census conducted and high quality population statistics provided

The PC produces at regular intervals the official counting (or benchmark) of the population in the territory of an entire country including all of its geographical units.

The 2021 Census will be conducted as traditional (with CAPI method), while administrative sources will be used in certain phases of the Census. Census results will serve for coverage and quality analysis of the administrative registers with the main aim of detecting problems and inconsistencies in those registers. Results of this activity will provide further directions for implementing the 2031 Census as a register-based.

The implementation of this action will enable implementation of the 2021 PC and integration of the quality management system in the census cycle in line with the standards of the European statistical system. The action will contribute to further enhancement of the usage of data for the purpose of creation of evidence based policies which shall enable greater analytical value of census data. Furthermore, the action aims to strengthen capacities of other relevant public administration bodies in the process of usage and application of census data in their analytical and decision making work. Special attention will be placed on trainings of analytical staff within respective governmental institutions how they may be familiar with existing data sets and possibilities of their further analysis. This shall allow creation of further specialised analysis needed for their work, which will support proper planning, monitoring and reporting of different sectorial policies, strategies, etc.

All activities within the intervention may be divided into **four main groups of activities**:

- Preparatory activities for the conduction of survey, such as preparation of organisational and methodological tools;
- Fieldwork activities;
- Post Population Census Activities;
- Strengthening capacities of relevant public administration bodies for introduction of the register based census in 2031.

#### Activity 1.1: Preparatory activities for conduction of Population Census:

- *Defining content of census questionnaires and consultation with stakeholders* – although the content of the census is defined in accordance with the national needs and international recommendations (UNECE/Eurostat) additional consultations (with ministries, special state organisations, science institutions, universities, etc.) ensures that the needs of census data users are carefully considered during the planning of Census and questionnaires design.
- *Creating methodological and organisational guidance and forms* - preparation of the documents which covers all tasks and procedures for all direct census participants involved in implementation of the Population Census.
- *Setting up census commissions in the municipalities* – census commission in municipalities will be set up by SORS in order to provide logistical support and promote census at the local level.
- *Selection and training of direct participants in the census*: republic instructors, municipal instructors and enumerators – training of 250<sup>7</sup> republic instructors which will be

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<sup>7</sup> Republic instructors represent a basic link between the SORS and the direct participants in the field implementation of the census. Number of republic instructors by municipality (from 1 to 4 persons) depends on its size as well as on number of engaged municipal instructors and enumerators.

responsible to coordinate and supervise work of municipal instructors and resolve specific problems in the field. Republic instructors will then train about 2,500 of municipal instructors which will be responsible to coordinate and supervise the work of enumerators. Both republic and municipal instructions will train about 16,000 enumerators. If necessary, an additional Roma enumerators and coordinators will be engaged and trained for the purpose of better coverage of the Roma population.

- *Implementation and management of the quality* – development of procedures, design and tools for quality monitoring in line with the CES Recommendations and the Regulation (EC) No 763/2008.
- *Design of the Post-Enumeration Survey (PES)* - includes activities related to quality control of the data and coverage which shall be secured through: design of the sample survey, selection of the sample of enumeration areas, organising the field work, preparation of questionnaires and auxiliary forms, defining criteria for selection of controllers, etc.
- *Preparation and updating of the documentation of the statistical areas (SAs) and enumeration areas (EAs) for the fieldwork* - this activity covers updating data from Address register and Register of spatial units, preparing satellite photos/orthophotos and creation of updated electronic maps of the SAs and EAs. Those maps will be used by the enumerators during the fieldwork which will provide linking census data with geo-spatial data up to the level of house number.
- *Design and development of IT system for data capture and data processing of the Census* - Database design, design and development of applications for data capture, for monitoring of field activities and coverage monitoring, for computer assisted coding for fields of occupation and industry, for contingents control, for logical control and imputation, for tabulation, for data capture and for data processing of PES.
- *Defining and implementing the communication campaign* – raising awareness on Population Census and encouraging population to take part in the census. Development of the positive attitudes and responsibilities towards census among wider community.
- *Purchase of the IT equipment/hardware and software* – supply of equipment for data collection during the Population Census as well as for agricultural census. Around 18,000 laptops will be purchased for the fieldwork implementation. This activity will not be supported through this Action Document, but from the budget of Republic of Serbia.

### **Activity 1.2: Population Census fieldwork activities:**

- *Data collection* – this main census activity is going to be carried during April 2021, in a traditional way, by method of interviewing (door-to-door). Around 18,000 direct participants (enumerators and municipal instructors) will be engaged for this activity and they will use the CAPI method (Computer Assisted Personal Interview). Benefits of the CAPI method of data collection:
  - Engaging a smaller number of enumerators and instructors (better selection and training of candidates),
  - Improved quality of collected data (electronic questionnaire, logical control during data collection, reduction of error made by enumerators)
  - Monitoring the coverage of census units in real time
  - Automatic data capture and shorter period of data processing
  - Earlier start of dissemination of final results
  - Better protection of individual data.
- *Monitoring the quality of data collection* – minimisation of errors in the phase crucial for the success the entire census operation: monitoring enumeration in the households by municipal instructors, following the dynamic of enumeration, coverage of buildings and

dwellings, as well as monitoring of the quality based on indicators defined in advance - unit non-response rate, item non-response, etc.)

- *Preparation and presentation of the preliminary results* not later than 30 days after the completed data collection
- *Training for the Post Enumeration Survey (PES) and conducting PES fieldwork* - includes re-enumeration in the selected enumeration areas in order to determine the census coverage error

### **Activity 1.3: Post Population Census Activities:**

- *Data processing, tabulation, editing and analysis including treating of special requests* – Use of modern data collection methods will significantly reduce the data processing phase comparing to the previous 2011 Census. Data processing will be required for computer assisted coding for fields of occupation and industry, for contingents control, for logical control and imputation (identification and correction of errors), for preparation of tabulations, evaluation of census results, analysis of census data, and so on. The most complex part of data processing is data editing and logical control, which includes defining and testing the rules, and controlling the results of the logical control. Special IT applications will be developed for enabling tabulation of the census data according to the methodological requests. It can be expected that SORS will receive various special requests from other users for results from the census that are not published (not part of methodological requests). Special programs need to be developed for tabulating those requests as well.
- *Evaluation of the results (PES)* - Errors in the census results are classified into two general categories – coverage errors and content errors through: development of application, batch editing, coding the quality of answers, prepress, etc.
- *Census data dissemination and training of analytical staff in respective governmental institutions* – dissemination of information to broad public about census activities and results; presentation of the census data to wide number of different users and highlight their availability. Special attention will be put on trainings of analytical staff within respective governmental institutions on the usage of the data for analytical and decision making purpose related to sectorial policies, strategies, etc.
- *Final conference – promotion* of the census results among broad professional stakeholders (scientific public and state officials).

### **Activity 1.4: Strengthening of capacities relevant public administration bodies for introduction of the register based census in 2031**

Implementation of the Action will contribute to further strengthening of relevant public administration bodies and institutions (Ministry in charge of Public Administration, Ministry in charge of Interior, Ministry in charge of Social Affairs, Republic Geodetic Authority, National Employment Service, Post Office of Serbia, Tax Administration Office, Fond for Pension and Disability insurance, etc.) necessary for intensifying activities related to establishment of missing registers and raising the quality of existing administrative registers, in order to enable introduction of the register based census. The intervention aims to provide reliable analytical base which will be used as an input for decision makers in selection of the adequate model for shifting from a traditional to a register-based census. In addition, this activity is in line with the digitalisation process in the Republic of Serbia.

In this regard the intervention envisages implementation of the following:

- Comparison of the data which will be collected during the 2021 Census with data from various administrative sources in order to assess the administrative registers in terms of availability, coverage, content and quality of the data,

- Based on the main findings resulted from the previous activity, SORS will prepare the Road map which will include targets and necessary steps for development of capacities of all relevant bodies for conduction of the Population Census based on administrative registers,
- Organisation of the national workshops with the main aim of discussing the possibilities, future steps, roles and responsibilities of the relevant stakeholders in the process of introduction of the register based census and the deadlines for implementation of agreed steps.
- Conclusions from the national workshops will be presented on the Conference where the SORS will emphasise the findings of conducted analysis and the Road map,
- The final stage of this activity is development of the Action plan for introduction of the register based census in the Republic of Serbia and identifying all public administration bodies relevant for this activity. The defined Action plan shall be adopted by the Government.

### **Activity 1.5: Establishing the common infrastructure basis for the Western Balkan regional hub for data dissemination**

Implementation of the Action will enable the establishing the common infrastructure basis for the Western Balkan's regional hubs for the Censuses' data dissemination. This is called One-Stop-Shop approach, which means that all WB Censuses data may be found in one place. It is enabled by existence and usage of the same IT platform in several WB countries. The concept of integrated data processing is initially developed in SORS and in the last several years shared with other countries in the region. This action will support further development of this platform for the purpose of data dissemination and create basis for joint Western Balkan platform that shall enable simple approach to Censuses data from the whole region (Western Balkan).

### **Related to Result 2: Agricultural Census conducted and statistics comparable with Community methods in the area of agriculture provided**

All activities within the intervention may be divided into **three main groups of activities**:

- Preparatory activities for the conduction of survey, such as preparation of organisational and methodological tools.
- Fieldwork activities
- Post Agriculture Census Activities

#### **Activity 2.1: Preparatory activities for implementation of Agriculture Census:**

- *Drafting methodological guidance and forms* - to support the overall implementation of the AC in the field. Thus, all direct participants involved in its conduction, from members of the Census commissions to instructors and enumerators, will be provided with these guiding documents.
- *Development of all necessary IT applications* – implementation of the new technologies in the data collection requires development of applications for: editing, transmission and processing data; controlling of enumerators work and flow of the action; financial transactions (payments for enumerators and instructors).
- *Consultative process with all stakeholders / First conference* - ensures that the needs of AC data users are carefully considered during the planning of AC and *questionnaire(s) design*
- *Setting up census commissions in the municipalities* – census commission role is to provide logistical support and to promote the census on the local level/ It will be appointed by SORS and will be composed of 500 members

- *Selection and training of republic instructors, municipal instructors and enumerators* – trainings are envisaged for: approximately 150 republic instructors (around 100 as members of census commissions in municipalities where agriculture activities are present, and other 50 are persons from each of the 16 SORS regional office). Republic instructor will be responsible for training of municipal instructors, enumeration of legal entities holdings and for logistic support to local government bodies and municipal instructors on the field; approximately 1,000 municipal instructors who will be directly responsible for control of the enumerator work and approximately 6,000 enumerators who will be in charge of enumeration on the field.
- *Updating the Statistical farm register* - Statistical farm register (family holdings) will be updated based on 2021 Population Census, administrative and other sources. Statistical farm register (legal entities) will be updated by using different available sources.
- *Conducting the media campaign* – to promote and explain the significance of the census itself, as well as the benefits that would come from taking part in the Agricultural Census

**Activity 2.2: Agriculture Census fieldwork activities** are focused on the data collection from the family holdings through the fieldwork of the enumerators and internet based enumeration for data collection from legal entities. This implies usage of new technologies in the data collection – self-enumeration via internet (CAWI) and computer assisted personal interviewing (CAPI). Self-enumeration by CAWI method will be implemented for enumeration of legal entities with agricultural production. Enumeration of family holdings will be done on the field by CAPI method and by approximately 6,000 previously trained enumerators.

**Activity 2.3: Post Agriculture Census activities:**

- *Preparation and presentation of the preliminary results* shortly after the Agriculture Census fieldwork
- *Data processing, tabulation, editing and analysis, including treating of special requests* – use of modern data collection methods will significantly reduce duration of the data processing phase comparing to the previous 2012 Agricultural Census. The most complex part of data processing is data editing and logical control which includes defining and testing the rules and controlling the results of the logical control. Special IT applications will be developed for enabling tabulation of the census data according to the methodological requests (and for special requests as well).
- *Post enumeration survey (PES)* - post enumeration survey will be conducted in order to provide coverage errors evaluation for the census results.
- *Census data dissemination and transmission data to Eurostat* – aims to raise awareness and inform broad public about census activities and results and also to present census data to wide number of different users and highlight their availability. Special focus will be targeted towards building capacities of analytical staff in the relevant governmental bodies with aim to provide them with the insight in the available data sets and possibilities for further data analysis.

**Result 3: The European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) conducted and results disseminated**

The preparatory activities will be supported through the budget of the Republic of Serbia, while the EU contribution will be necessary for conduction of the fieldwork and post fieldwork activities.

**Activity 3.1: Preparatory activities for implementation of EHIS (set of activities to be supported through the budget of RS):**

Implementation of EHIS preparatory activities will be financed through the RS budget. Representatives of SORS and Institute of Public Health will jointly participate in the realisation of all activities regarding the conduction of the Survey.

In the framework of preparatory activities, given the fact that it is necessary to collect data on the weight, the height and the blood pressure of participants, procurement of equipment (for

anthropometric and blood pressure measurements) will be done. The collection of these data by field measurements is necessary for the national needs and comparisons with the results collected in the 2013 Survey. All interviewers will be trained on the use of measuring instruments. About 200 interviewers will carry out the fieldwork (70 teams, consisting of 2 or 3 members, one of which will be a health professional). Each team will receive one set of measuring instruments. Detailed list of preparatory activities is presented below:

- *Set up of the EHIS working group (representatives of SORS and Institute of Public Health of Serbia “Dr Milan Jovanović Batut”)* - The working group will be set up at the early stage of the component implementation. The members of the working group will be in charge of organisational and methodological issues and meet on an as-needed basis, depending on the current situation concerning the survey.
- *Preparation of methodological and organisational tools, including selection of the sample* - National Health Interview Survey will be carried out in accordance with the methodology and instruments of the European Health Survey – Wave 3, and wherever possible, the national Health Research Methodology will be respected, in order to monitor the trend of selected national health indicators. The sample will be selected following the instructions in EHIS-W3 Manual and taking into account national needs.
- *Development of software application for data capturing* - Particular applications (CAPI program) for the data capturing will be created and the logical control criteria will be built into the application).
- *Updating the enumeration areas* - Special trained staff will update address data and create lists of households for selected enumeration areas.
- *Selection and training of fieldwork participants* - After the selection process, approximately 200 interviewers and 20 supervisors will go through the training sessions. Training instructors will be representatives of SORS and Institute of Public Health – members of EHIS working group.
- *Procurement of equipment (for anthropometric and blood pressure measurements)* - Approximately 70 anthropometric and 70 blood pressure measurements will be purchased for the purpose of the survey. The exact number of necessary equipment will be known after the phase of sample selection.
- *Conducting the media campaign* - media campaign will inform the public about the implementation and the importance of survey, and to encourage selected households and persons to participate.

**Activity 3.2: EHIS fieldwork activities (set of activities proposed to be supported through this Action):**

The Survey will be conducted in second half of 2019 and it will last at least 3 months, in line with the legislation relating to the EHIS (data shall be collected in 2019 and spread over at least 3 months including at least 1 month of the period from September to December). The Survey is planned on a representative sample of 600 enumeration areas, which would include about 6,000 households.

- *Conduction of the fieldwork by interviewers using CAPI method* - Fieldwork will be carried out by about 70 teams, consisting of 2 or 3 members, one of which will be a health professional.
- *Quality and coverage control* - Systematic quality assurance procedures will be implemented in order to prevent unacceptable practices and to minimise errors in data collection. This phase covers activities related to quality and coverage control on the field.

**Activity 3.3: Post fieldwork activities (set of activities proposed to be supported through this Action Document):**

- *Data processing, tabulation and analysis* - will include defining and testing criteria of logical control and contingent control. To measure/monitor changes in the processed data, the indicators will be defined.
- *Dissemination* - Special publications will be prepared and promotion of the survey results will be organised.

#### **Result 4: Round 6 of the Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS) conducted**

Representatives of the SORS and UNICEF Serbia Country Office, signed the Memorandum of Understanding in Belgrade on 1 February 2018. The Memorandum sets forth the terms, conditions and procedures for the cooperation regarding the implementation of MICS. Due to the MICS Serbia timetable, SORS have already started preparatory activities regarding the establishing Steering Committee and Technical Committee, preparation for the engagement of the SORS staff and methodology issues.

The assistance provided through this Action will support implementation of MICS fieldwork activities, while all other planned activities such as preparatory and post field activities will be supported through the contribution of the UNICEF and UNFPA, in accordance of the timing of phases and activities of the Serbia MICS implementation. **Activities that refer to the preparatory activities are:** setting up the MICS working group inside of the SORS, preparation of methodological and organisational tools, selection of the sample, adaptation of software application for data capturing, updating of the enumeration areas and conducting the media campaign refers to the preparatory activities. **Activities that refer to the post fieldwork activities are:** data processing, tabulation and analysis, and dissemination of the MICS 6 reports.

#### **Activity 4.1: MICS fieldwork activities:**

Implementation of this component envisages support to conduction of the MICS survey consisting of the following:

- *Selection and training of fieldwork participants*
- *Conducting the fieldwork by interviewers and measurers* - the survey will be conducted using the CAPI method. The interviewers will conduct interviews face to face.
- *Quality and coverage control* - Systematic quality assurance procedures will be implemented in order to prevent unacceptable practices and to minimise errors in data collection. These procedures will include also coverage control access.

#### **RISKS**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation Measure</b>
Delays in adoption of the relevant legislative acts related to censuses (PC, AC)	Implementation of the forthcoming censuses (PC, AC, etc.) is necessity of all countries in line with the EU accession requirements. Since implementation of the census 2021 is the priority of the Republic of Serbia the commitment to the adoption of the laws will be provided from the top of the GoS. Adoption of the Laws are envisaged two years prior the commencement of the Censuses.
Lack of political commitment and willingness to support the Action; including the risk of changes in the Governmental structures and lack of constant coordination and cooperation between main beneficiary institutions	SORS will involve all relevant institutions from the very beginning in preparatory and consultative processes. During the implementation of the Action SORS will closely work with relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries in order to strengthen their capacities necessary for active participation in the Action implementation. The role of MEI and the EU negotiating structures

Risk	Mitigation Measure
	and the policy dialogue in the context of EU accession should be intensified.
Insufficient inter and intra institutional awareness of roles of all beneficiaries during implementation of the action	<p>At the beginning of Direct grant implementation SORS will initiate establishment of the multi-stakeholder working group at national level in order to secure active involvement of all relevant institutions in implementation of the Action particularly having in mind the complexity of intervention and involvement of great number of public administration bodies related to assessment of possibility for introduction of the registers based census.</p> <p>Targeted capacity building activities for involved representatives are foreseen</p> <p>Regular and active communication between SORS and other relevant institutions in bodies responsible for different aspects of register based census is maintained also through SORS participation in various inter-sectorial working groups and bodies which are addressing different aspects of register based census.</p>
Inadequate staffing and high turnover rates in the public administration influences the absorption capacities in line ministries and relevant bodies involved in the Action	<p>SORS is investing as much as possible in the human resource policies to ensure more attractive career options for statisticians and IT staff to slow down the rate of turnover.</p> <p>Strong commitment of the Government towards implementation of the public administration reform strategy.</p> <p>Setting up of Action comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system, a careful targeting and preparation of programme potential beneficiaries and extensive training should be provided to programme administration and institutions involved</p> <p>Continuation of capacity development of involved institutions through other available EU and donor funded initiatives</p> <p>Implementation of recommendations on capacity development within involved institutions provided through other EU projects</p>
Relevant ministries and involved beneficiaries hesitant to commit necessary human resources to the preparation of relevant Action implementation documents	<p>Ministry of European Integration (MEI) takes into consideration workload analyses of all significant implementing institutions.</p> <p>Continuous support by MEI in development of the capacity of all institutions to prepare good quality documentation</p>
Resistance of involved institutions to implement the changes in line with the EU acquis requirements	<p>Continual capacity development and raising of awareness among involved institutions and beneficiaries on necessary requirements which has to be implemented as a result of the Action</p> <p>SORS take stronger role in facilitating and leading other relevant institutions which have to respect decisions and implement them as the obligatory</p>

## CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Activities envisaged in this Action are the part of the five-year National Programme of Official Statistics and government of the Republic of Serbia has already showed commitment by financing some initial activities necessary for the preparation of the Censuses. The implementation of the activities is conditioned by securing the timely governmental commitment in financing the action.

In addition to the contractual requirements for the final payment of the direct grant, SORS has to provide the evidence, prior to the final payment, that the supply of relevant IT equipment to conduct the Census by CAPI method has been financed from the national budget.

## 3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The institutional arrangements for implementation of activities are:

For the Result 1 SORS, while the end recipients of the assistance are all other responsible public institutions responsible for administering of different administrative registers as well as producers of different statistical data (i.e. Institutions which belong to Serbian statistical system).

For the Result 2 SORS, while the end recipient is the Ministry in charge of Agriculture.

For Result 3 SORS, while end beneficiary is the Institute for Public Health

For Result 4 SORS, while end beneficiaries are: the Ministry in charge of Health, the Ministry in charge of Education, Science and Technological Development, Institute of Social Protection, Institute of Public Health of Serbia, the Minister without portfolio for Demographics and Population Policy, Office of Human and Minority Rights.

The SORS will have the guiding and lead coordinating role in the work of the Steering Committee (SC). The SC will encompass representatives of the beneficiary (SORS), EU Delegation as well as other key partners involved in Action implementation (i.e.: Ministry in charge of Agriculture, Republic Geodetic Authority and the Institute for Public Health). The tasks of the SC will be: to review the progress and endorse Action implementation reports (inception, quarterly and annual reports); discuss any open issues related to the implementation of the Action; approve requests for funding and review and make decisions regarding the overall structure and content of the Action, coordination with other donor's activities. The SC will meet on quarterly and ad-hoc basis.

In addition, creation of a **multi-stakeholder working group** at national level is envisaged. The existence of this group will secure active involvement of all relevant institutions in implementation of the Action particularly having in mind the complexity of intervention and involvement of great number of public administration bodies related to assessment of possibility for introduction of the registers based census. Furthermore, multi-stakeholder group will enable efficient development of secondary legislation, preparation of necessary documents, especially in the needs analysis phase and preparation of the Roadmap and Action plan for introduction of the registers based census, planning of project activities and their smooth implementation – all phases of Action implementation. In this sense, the ownership over the action will be raised and the real capacity building and preparation of the national institutions for future implementation of activities of this kind will be provided. This working group will include the representatives of the beneficiary institutions. The multi stakeholders working group will actively cooperate and coordinate activities with various number of institutions and bodies which are all from different aspects relevant and responsible for introduction of the register based census.

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

This Action under IPA II assistance will be implemented and managed in accordance with the rules and procedures under the **direct management** and in line with respective legislation and Manuals of Procedures.

The Direct grant will be provided to SORS, which shall be directly responsible for the implementation of all results under this Action. National contribution for implementation of the

overall Action will be in the amount of EUR 9.750.000 from the budget of the Republic of Serbia. Purchase of the IT equipment necessary for the Censuses implementation by CAPI method will be financed, in addition to this Action, through the budget of the Republic of Serbia and procured in accordance with national rules and national procurement procedure, with the allocation of EUR 8.208.000. Direct Grant will be awarded to SORS as this is an action with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative power, in line with the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation.. SORS is according to the Law on Statistics, the institution responsible for producing and disseminating official statistics. The Direct Grant will cover all four Results: Population Census, Agricultural Census, European Health Interview Survey and Multiple Indicator Cluster survey (MICS) with a single consolidated budget for the whole Action.

Pursuant to the Law on Official Statistics, the SORS is the mandated body for production and dissemination of data, thus representing the official statistics of the Republic of Serbia in the international statistical system. The responsibility of SORS for leading the negotiations group on Chapter 18 – Statistics, and implementing the National Programme of Official Statistics for the period 2016 – 2020 is another key element in ensuring statistical results which are harmonised with the international standards, primarily those of the European Statistical System (ESS) and the European Union.

#### **4. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

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

Monitoring the progress of implementation will be done in accordance with the rules and procedures for monitoring stipulated in the IPA II Implementing Regulation and Framework Agreement between the Republic of Serbia and the European Commission on the arrangements for implementation of Union financial assistance to the Republic of Serbia under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II).

The overall progress will be monitored by means of several sources:

- **Result Orientated Monitoring (ROM) system** (led by DG NEAR): This will provide, as necessary and required, an independent assessment of the on-going or ex-post performance of the Action.
- **IPA II Beneficiary's own monitoring:** IPA II monitoring process is organised and led by the NIPAC, supported by the NIPAC TS/ BCPME. NIPAC is the main interlocutor between the Serbian government and the EC regarding strategic planning, co-ordination of programming, monitoring of implementation, evaluation and reporting on the overall IPA II assistance. NIPAC monitors the process of programming, preparation and implementation, as well as the sustainability and effects of programmes, aiming to improve these processes, ensure timely identification, remedying and alleviation of potential issues in the process of programming and implementation of Actions. Through the support of the NIPAC TS/ BCPME, the NIPAC prepares regular monitoring reports for the Government and the EC based on the reports drawn up by the institutions responsible for implementation. It reports on the formulation of Action, the fulfilment of preconditions for the initiation of public procurement procedures, the implementation of Action, its sustainability and effects, and organises the process of evaluation.
- **Self-monitoring performed by the EU Delegation:** This is part of the annual assurance strategy process and is done based on the ex-ante risk assessment of actions/contracts considered riskier.
- **Joint monitoring by DG NEAR and the IPA II Beneficiary:** the compliance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and coordination in implementation of financial assistance will be regularly (at least once a year) monitored by the IPA Monitoring Committee. It will be supported by Sectoral Monitoring Committees which will ensure monitoring process at sector

level. The results of monitoring will be used in the policy-making process to propose programme adjustments and corrective actions.

Monitoring process envisages participation of various stakeholders, such as EC/EUD, NIPAC, NIPAC TS/ BCPME, NAO, NAO SO, NF, Contracting Authorities, Final Beneficiaries, AA, and other institutions and civil society organisations.

In line with the IPA II Implementing Regulation 447/2014, an IPA II beneficiary who has been entrusted budget implementation tasks of IPA II assistance shall be responsible for conducting evaluations of the programmes it manages.

The European Commission may carry out a mid-term, a final or an ex-post evaluation for this Action or its components via independent consultants, through a joint mission or via an implementing partner. In case a mid-term or final evaluation is not foreseen, the European Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner. The evaluations will be carried out as prescribed by the DG NEAR guidelines for evaluations. In addition, the Action might be subject to external monitoring in line with the European Commission rules and procedures set in the Financing Agreement.

## INDICATOR MEASUREMENT

Indicator	Baseline	Target 2022	Final Target 2025	Source of information
Government effectiveness	58.17 <sup>8</sup> (2015)	60.00	62.00	World Bank Report
Positive assessment of progress in the implementation of Public Administration Reform process	Serbia is moderately prepared with the reform of its public administration. <sup>9</sup> (2016)	Good progress in the implementation of public administration reform	Good progress in the implementation of public administration reform	EC Progress Report for Serbia
Level of availability of methodologically compliant data in relevant fields, including gender statistics	0%	100%	100% (2025)	EC and Eurostat Progress Report Report from SMIS (Statistical Information Management System) European System of Accounts (ESA) 2010 SORS website
Availability of statistical infrastructure for rational and efficient statistical production (relevant registers linked to each other in an interoperable way)	20%	40%	60%	
Level of compliance including gender statistics of applied methodologies in relevant fields	60%	100%	100%	
Availability of high quality Population Census statistics	0%	90%	100%	
Status of the Action plan for introduction of the registry based Population Census implementation	No Action Plan	Action plan prepared	Action plan adopted and 10% implemented	
Availability of high quality statistics in the area of agriculture (AC 2021)	0%	80%	100%	
The Governmental use of agricultural statistics for policy and rural area strategy development and planning	0%	30%	90%	
Availability of high quality statistics in the area of health including gender data	0%	100%	100%	
Status of EHIS field work	0%	100%	100%	
Status of the MICS training and fieldwork	0%	100%	100%	
Availability of MICS indicators	0%	100%	100%	

(1) This is the related indicator as included in the Indicative Strategy Paper (for reference only)

<sup>8</sup> Last available figure on government effectiveness for Serbia originates from 2015 World Bank Report on Worldwide Governance Indicators: <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#home>

<sup>9</sup> Source of verification: EC Progress Report, 9 November 2016.

- (2) The agreed baseline year is 2010 (to be inserted in brackets in the top row). If for the chosen indicator, there are no available data for 2010, it is advisable to refer to the following years – 2011, 2012. The year of reference may not be the same either for all indicators selected due to a lack of data availability; in this case, the year should then be inserted in each cell in brackets. The baseline value may be "0" (i.e. no reference values are available as the Action represents a novelty for the beneficiary) but cannot be left empty or include references such as "N/A" or "will be determined later".
- (3) The target year CANNOT be modified.
- (4) This will be a useful reference to continue measuring the outcome of IPA II support beyond the 2014-2020 multi-annual financial period. If the Action is completed before 2020 (year for the performance reward), this value and that in the 2020 target column must be the same.

## 5. SECTOR APPROACH ASSESSMENT

The Government of Serbia have been firmly committed towards enforcement of the sector approach in the process of planning and programming of the international assistance, during the previous period. Due to the fact that Statistics has not been recognised as an individual sector, a sector assessment for Statistics has been done as a part of the comprehensive assessment of the PAR sector detailing each of the assessment criteria envisaged for the adoption of sector approach in pre-accession assistance. The Statistics can be mainly recognised as a cross cutting area which constitutes the inseparable part of all other relevant sectors, providing the services and data which represents the backbone to relevant public administration bodies for the evidence based policy development and monitoring of the sectorial and/or cross sectorial reforms.

The strategic framework, which guides the process of statistical development in Serbia, is recognised within the “*National Programme of Official Statistics 2016-2020, with the development strategy*”. The National Programme defines the activities aimed at achieving the harmonisation of statistical surveys and indicators with the international standards (i.e. European Statistical System and the European Union), in the mentioned period. An integral part of the Programme, in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Official Statistics, is the *Strategy for the Development of Official Statistics in the Republic of Serbia for a period of five years*. The Strategy aims to provide faster development of official statistics in the direction of harmonisation of methodologies, standards and good statistical practice, as well as the basis for obtaining the most significant statistical indicators and increasing their comparability with statistical data from European and other countries. Both, Programme and Strategy provide an adequate strategic framework for guiding the statistical development in Serbia until 2020. The Law on Official Statistics stipulates that the activities of official statistics are based on a five-year statistical programme including the annual plans.

The institutional framework is defined by the Law on Official Statistics, which stipulates that official statistics tasks are performed by the responsible producers of official statistics:

1. Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia;
2. National Bank of Serbia;
3. City Administration of the City of Belgrade - for the territory of the City of Belgrade;
4. Other responsible producers of official statistics, identified within the five year National Programme of Official Statistics

The SORS performs the largest part in the system of official statistics activities related to: organisation and implementation of statistical research; determination of unique methodologies and unique statistical standards; development, maintenance and use of administrative and statistical registers; formation and maintenance of the system national accounts; international statistical cooperation; development and improvement of statistical systems and professional cooperation and coordination with other responsible producers of the official statistics. Bearing in mind that the SORS is a special expert organisation in the public administration system, its scope of work, in accordance with the defined activities is also defined by the Law on Ministries.

Although institutional setting for the implementation of statistics activities is well defined, in the context of initiating the reform toward introduction of register-based census, a need for further improvement of inter-institutional cooperation between relevant bodies and its formalisation are the imperative on which the success in implementation of this reform is depending. Regarding the administrative capacities, as stated within Action Plan for Public administration reform, there is a need for further capacity building activities in the area of evidence based policy making, which means more adequate using of statistical data.

Sector and coordination of donor assistance related to the Statistics is performed in the scope of the Public Administration Sector Working Group (SWG), particularly having in mind that Statistics is not recognised as a separate sector. The SWGs are established in order to achieve efficient and coordinated process of programming and monitoring of international development and to ensure adequate forum for sector policy dialogue and reliable basis for effective planning and programming enabling strategic focus and prioritisation, complementarity of various interventions and optimisation of different sources of funds. It thus improves the coordination and management

of international development assistance and increases its effective absorption while ensuring a transparent and inclusive dialogue among all relevant stakeholders.

Sector Reform Contract (SRC) for the PAR sector, IPA 2015, shall additionally strengthen capacities for evidence based public policy development and coordination in terms of planning, analysis, creation, adoption, monitoring and evaluation of sectorial policies.

The public administration of Serbia is not equipped with general methodology, guidelines, manuals and IT systems for monitoring and evaluation. The existing methodologies, guidelines, manuals and IT systems have been developed on a case-by-case basis. Evaluation is done ad hoc, without methodology, there is no internal capacity to carry out evaluation, and this refers both to sector and sub-sector level. The reporting mechanism on sub-sector level is not harmonised and there is no reporting mechanism on the sector level. For the time being the mechanism which provides monitoring of the statistic reform implementation progress relies on the “National Programme of Official Statistics 2016-2020, including the development strategy”. In addition there is an annual Eurostat survey of SMIS (Statistical Management Information System), on the basis of which the degree of conformity of each statistical survey is measured. The SORS regularly completes the SMIS questionnaire each year, on the basis of which Eurostat reports and assesses compliance according to statistical surveys. However, the capacities for defining proper (RACER – Relevant, Acceptable, Credible, Easy and Robust) indicators, carrying out the monitoring and evaluation tasks on the sector level should be strengthened.

## **6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

### **GENDER MAINSTREAMING**

In 2016, the Serbian Government adopted a National Strategy for Gender Equality 2016 – 2020 with an accompanying Action Plan for its implementation, as the main strategic document for promotion of gender equality in the Republic of Serbia. The Strategy highlights key national policies to reduce gender stereotypes and change some harmful cultural norms and it also focuses on the development of new policies that will promote equal opportunities between women and men. The Strategy also affirms that new government policies and programs must have a gender perspective.

Due to the fact that official statistics provides various sets of gender data and statistical indicators which enable gender based policy making and monitoring of gender statistics within different policies and strategies, the Action will closely align with the provisions and measures of this national strategy.

In terms of concrete recommendations concerning the activities under the action, preparatory activities for the conduction of surveys offer an opportunity for the introduction of gender perspective in various ways:

- *Defining content of census questionnaires and consultation with stakeholders* – although the content of the census is defined in accordance with the national needs and international recommendations (UNECE/Eurostat) additional consultations with gender experts, women’s NGO-s, special state organizations, science institutions, universities, etc. ensures that the gender perspective are carefully considered during the planning of Census and questionnaires design,
- *Creating methodological and organizational guidance and forms in accordance with the recommendations* - it is important that a gender perspective is incorporated both in topics covered and their specific implementation, as well as data collection instruments and materials.
- *Selection and training of direct participants in the census*: republic instructors, municipal instructors and enumerators. If necessary an additional Roma enumerators and coordinators will be engaged and trained for the purpose of better coverage of the Roma population–The direct participants in the census will be selected on the basis of competence, and both sexes will have equal opportunities for participation. Selection of participants for work in Roma settlements will be organized in cooperation with Roma National Council and Roma women organizations and networks’ members.
- *Defining and implementing the communication campaign* – raising awareness on population census and encouraging population to take part in the census has to take into account gender

perspective and all the differences in women's and men's positions, in order for the both to be appropriately informed on census. Also, the census will be additionally promoted in cooperation with local NGOs representatives and especially addressed to certain vulnerable groups of population (like tribunals or workshops for Roma women...).

#### 1.3. Post Population Census Activities

Census data dissemination - Special attention could be put on mechanisms for gender equality on all levels and women's networks, NGOs and gender experts.

1.4. Gender statistics should also be addressed in Action plan for register based census, including ensuring availability of gender disaggregated data.

### **R2: Agricultural Census conducted and statistics comparable with Community methods in the area of agriculture provided**

**2.1. Preparatory activities** for the conduction of survey, such as preparation of organizational and methodological tools, including consultations with CSOs, especially rural women's networks:

- *Drafting methodological guidance and forms* - Methodological guidance should cover identified gender relevant issues and data that will enlighten position of women in agricultural production.
- *Consultative process with all stakeholders, including rural women's organisation, governmental institution and independent researchers dealing with gender issues / First conference* - ensures that the needs of AC data users are carefully considered during the planning of AC and *questionnaire(s) design*

**2.2. Agriculture census fieldwork activities** – as in the census, here, too, it would be important to also have female enumerators, women from villages, those engaged in agriculture to ensure their participation in the process but also reaching different households and producers, especially women.

**2.3. Post Agriculture census activities** – to ensure that the results of the census are accessible to gender equality bodies, women's networks and organizations, in particular networks of rural women's organizations.

### **R3: The European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) conducted and results disseminated**

To ensure integrating a gender perspective into all stages of survey implementation (questionnaire and sample design, selection and training of interviewers and supervisors, fieldwork, etc.) and ensuring that attention is paid to all factors that could potentially lead to a gender bias in the data. The field staff will be selected based on competences and both women and men will be recruited as interviewers or supervisors. Whenever possible, fieldwork teams will consist at least one women interviewer. Gender-disaggregated data and gender indicators will serve for better inclusion of gender equality in public policies regarding health and the results will be distributed to gender equality bodies, women's organizations, networks, experts and local self-governments.

### **R4: Round 6 of Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS) conducted**

To ensure that consultations with gender experts, women's organizations (in particular representatives of minority women's organizations or those working with marginalized groups of women) are carried out during the preparation phases of the research; that women, women's organizations and activists (especially representatives of marginalized groups, to the extent possible) engage in the field work, and that after the research, the results are distributed to gender equality bodies, women's organizations, networks, experts and local self-governments.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

The concept of equal opportunity is strongly embedded in the Action design. Throughout the duration of the project, steps will be taken to guarantee equal opportunity of access to project activities and benefits. Equal opportunities will also be secured through appropriate information and publicity materials, in the design of activities and accessibility to the opportunities they offer. The different project implementation structures will ensure the observance of the principles of equal opportunities and non-discrimination.

An appropriate men/women balance will be sought on all the activities of the Action. In the implementation of activities under this Action, the same principles shall apply, so that participation in the envisaged activities will be guaranteed on the basis of equal access regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, etc. Gender equality incentives will be incorporated

particularly in activities concerning capacity building. The Action will produce gender disaggregated data through all four components, serving as the basis for policy making in the field of gender quality mainstreaming and protection and promotion of the rights of women.

A separate annex related to gender mainstreaming is part of this action document.

#### **MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS**

The Government of the Republic of Serbia has adopted the Strategy and Action Plan for fight against discrimination. The Action will be implemented in line with the non-discrimination policy, taking into consideration that representatives of minority and vulnerable groups and their organizations are included in all phases of surveys (in the preparation phase, in the survey implementation and then in the process of census data dissemination) in order to ensure that all citizens are represented in the survey. A specific result of this Action is the conduction of the MICS, precisely with the aim of improving the statistical data available for mainstreaming policies in the field of minority and vulnerable group protection and promotion.

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

The Action is conceived on the basis of previous similar initiatives and is taking on board the lessons learned. The process of the Action preparation was very inclusive. It involved relevant competent and expert national level institutions.

The cooperation with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) is facilitated by the Government's commitment as part of its European Agenda. Regarding mechanisms for dialogue, two official mechanisms exist: (i) Office for Cooperation with Civil Society; and (ii) Sectorial Civil Society Organisations - SECO for the processes of IPA programming. Both are examples of good practices in terms of CSO representation in general.

SECO mechanism enables the exchange of information and contribution of CSOs in relation to programming and monitoring of the international assistance including IPA II. Members of SECO participate in the meetings of PAR SWG, established within the introduction of the IPA II sector approach and involved in programming and monitoring of the EU funds and in assessing the advancement of the new PAR.

The improvement of statistics production and dissemination would also enlarge the public information available for policy analysis. The lack of information has been identified by the civil society as a main barrier to its participation in the policy-making. By resolving this issue, the action will also support civil society giving it tools to assume a more active role in crafting the sector policies.

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

The intervention will contribute to the decision making process in the field of environment protection, since the Agricultural Census data are the basis for the environmental database development, and particularly for „agro-environment" indicators development. Agro-environment statistics are the integral part of AC, and they include data on: water statistics, water use for irrigation, water sources, irrigated methods, irrigable and irrigated area, land erosion, drainage, water use for livestock, nutrients in the water: pesticides (insecticides, fungicides and herbicides), fertilisers (mineral and organic fertilisers), waste statistics – (including agricultural waste) according to national and international requests, agricultural waste - biomass from agriculture, fisheries, forestry, wooded biomass, biodiversity and land use - arable land, gardens, pastures, species planted culture, an area covered by forests and ponds, air pollutions, livestock - number and type of livestock, organic fertiliser, manures, energy use - agriculture vehicles, equipment for renewable energy production (by the source of energy, etc.), toxic chemicals - use and consumption (pesticides, fertilisers, etc.).

### **7. SUSTAINABILITY**

The Action is firmly grounded on the GoS commitment towards implementation of censuses in the Republic of Serbia in the course of 2021. This will be confirmed through the adoption of the Laws on Census (PC, AC, etc.) which are the preconditions for implementation of censuses in 2021 and

further modernisation of the statistical system in Serbia, mainly through introduction of the registry based census.

The Action is designed as a support to the efforts of the Statistics in Serbia as well as the overall public administration efforts focused on development of analytical capacities in order to enable more efficient evidence based policymaking, monitoring the progress of the reforms implementation towards fulfilment of the EU accession requirements. Therefore, the Action will produce sustainable results through contribution to existing beneficiary institutions and structures, already in place, but which require additional assistance in the complex process of modernisation of the statistical system in Serbia.

This process is a key political priority to the Serbian Government, and the resources and attention of the national authorities are strongly geared toward achieving the steps needed for the opening and closing of the negotiation chapters, and for the achievement of all benchmarks in the process of EU accession negotiations. All of the capacities developed through this Action will be used in the future period for the further alignment as part of the accession, and they will be a crucial resource for EU integration. Sustainability is also envisaged in the fact that the support for legislative alignment results in adoption of the laws, by-laws, plans and policy documents by the Parliament, Government or governmental bodies, ensuring that these are part of the system, and not ad hoc interventions. Sustainability of the result will be achieved through capacity building of not only SORS but also all relevant producers and users of official statistical data. Through the capacity building activities, SORS will raise awareness and contribute to the development of capacities of public administration bodies which are responsible for development of evidence based policy and strategies documents in the process of EU integration.

Furthermore, the SORS experts are members of great number of Working Groups at the national level which will allow the quality assessment and the improvement of the available administrative registers by imposing common standards and definitions.

Finally having the Agricultural Census in one Action and in a short period after, the Population Census, will have lot of advantages such as: the usage of common organisational standards, IT equipment and premises and auxiliary material, positive financial effects meaning that less funds were needed; the use of common statistical standards, definitions and classifications provided consistency and comparability of data and afterwards easier interpretation and analysis of the same data; etc.

Finally, through the activity 1.4, the Action will directly contribute to strengthening of the capacities of key public administration bodies for introduction of the register based census in 2031.

The Action will support activities for the establishment of missing registers and raising the quality of existing administrative registers, in order to enable introduction of the register based census. It will provide reliable analytical base which will be used as an input for decision makers in the selection of the adequate model for shifting from a traditional to a register-based census.

## **8. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY**

Communication and visibility will be given high importance during the implementation of the Action. The implementation of the communication activities shall be funded from the amounts allocated to the Action (Direct grant).

All necessary measures will be taken to publicise the fact that the Action has received funding from the EU in line with the EU communication and visibility requirements in force. All stakeholders and implementing partners shall ensure the visibility of EU financial assistance provided through IPA II throughout all phases of the programme cycle.

Visibility and communication actions shall demonstrate how the intervention contributes to the agreed programme objectives and the accession process, as well as the benefits of the action for the general public. Actions shall be aimed at strengthening general public awareness and support of interventions financed and the objectives pursued. The actions will aim at highlighting to the relevant target audiences the added value and impact of the EU's interventions and will promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

Visibility and communication aspects shall be complementary to the activities implemented by DG NEAR and the EU Delegations in the field. It is the responsibility of the beneficiary to keep the EU Delegation fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities. The beneficiary shall report on its visibility and communication actions in the report submitted to the IPA monitoring committee and the sectoral monitoring committees.

One of the main activities of the SORS is wide dissemination of statistical data and awareness raising among all relevant stakeholder groups on the importance of statistical data and its application in the evidenced based policy planning and monitoring of sectorial reforms. The main method of dissemination is the SORS website ([www.stat.gov.rs](http://www.stat.gov.rs)), through which the published statistics are available to users, free of charge. Publications are available to users in electronic (pdf. and excel) and printed form.

Furthermore, a database for dissemination has been established on a website with about 400 indicators and provides direct access to users for downloading in excel, html. and pdf. format. Also, the electronic library contains statistical publications and forms (about 7.300 titles) published by the SORS in Serbian and English, as well as rare publications from the 19th century. The user database allows obtaining reports on the structure of users, the structure of statistical areas, the number of requests, etc. The data users are informed of the date of publications and press releases through the Calendar of Publications and the Calendar of Public Releases, which is published on December 31 for each subsequent year. Good communication with the media will be established, as a very important target group, in order to inform the general public and strengthen confidence in official statistics.

The proposed Action envisages several communication and visibility interventions related to dissemination of statistical data produced as a result of PC, AC, EHIS and MICS activities. This will be performed through organisation of conferences, preparation of publications, updating of the census web page by posting Census results in dissemination database on website which allows users to easily search for and find wanted data - creation of user friendly data, providing specialised trainings for different users for using census data, creating studies and analyses, as well as providing data at the level of 1km<sup>2</sup> – a so called population grid.

