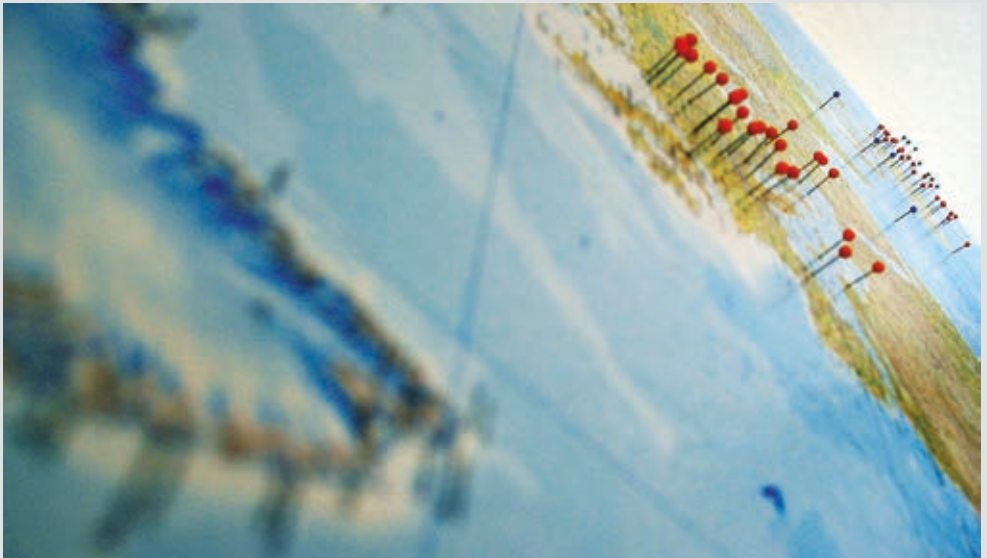


STATISTICS ACROSS BORDERS

International statistical co-operation



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Dear readers,

For many years, Azerbaijan has been a close partner in German statistical co-operation activities. Between 2009 and 2012, the Federal Statistical Office carried out a twinning project with the State Statistical Committee (SSC) of the Republic of Azerbaijan. It was the first such project undertaken by this Office in the European Neighbourhood region. To continue the activities, a follow-up twinning project has been launched this year. Until 2017, statisticians from Germany and other EU Member States will assist their colleagues in Azerbaijan in harmonising Azerbaijani statistics with the relevant EU standards in five selected areas. The Bulgarian National Statistical Institute has again joined the project as a junior partner. Its experts will participate in four of the five sub-components. Another project partner is Statistics Netherlands (CBS). The planned project activities are outlined in one of the articles in this publication.

Within the framework of the existing bilateral partnerships, the Federal Statistical Office has carried out further activities with the national statistical authorities of Mongolia, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, China and Abu Dhabi and promoted the exchange of professional knowledge and experience in a wide range of statistical areas. The Federal Statistical Office organised a training seminar for young executives of the State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation and provided first internships for statisticians from the Abu Dhabi partner office.

Destatis has also carried out co-operation activities with the Vietnamese statistical office. In November 2015, Lam Nguyen, Director of the General Statistics Office of Viet Nam, visited Wiesbaden where he was received by Dieter Sarreither who had succeeded Roderich Egeler as President of the Federal Statistical Office in October. Information on the Vietnamese colleagues' visit is included in this issue, too.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue.

The editors

Ringo Raupach

Christine Kronz

Denis Kaschuba

Should you not yet receive our electronic publication regularly and be interested, please send a request to cooperation@destatis.de.

Twinning project with Azerbaijan



A new EU twinning project agreement with the State Statistical Committee (SSC) of the Republic of Azerbaijan entered into force on 23 September 2015. The project is entitled “Support to the State Statistical Committee in Harmonisation of the National Statistics System of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Line with European Standards”. Arslan Ahmedov from the Bulgarian National Statistical Institute has joined the project as long-term adviser. He began to work in Baku on 29 October 2015 where he is co-ordinating project implementation over a period of 24 months.

The President of the Federal Statistical Office of Germany, Dieter Sarreither, took part in the twinning project’s official kick-off event in Baku on 27 January 2016.

The current EU-funded project continues the activities undertaken during the first twinning project between 2009 and 2012. It is aimed at further developing the Azerbaijani statistical system, in particular, by harmonising Azerbaijani statistics with the relevant EU standards in the following areas:

- Quality management (SQMS)
- Geographical Information System (GIS)
- Household surveys, Community statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC)
- Statistics of people with disabilities
- Tourism statistics.

The project is being conducted under the leadership of the Federal Statistical Office in conjunction with the Bulgarian National Statistical Institute as a junior partner. Another project partner is Statistics Netherlands (CBS). Furthermore experts from the statistical offices of Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Croatia and Latvia and also from the statistical offices of the Länder of Berlin-Brandenburg, Hamburg/Schleswig-Holstein and Bremen are involved in the project.

All in all, the project implementation phase comprises 64 consulting activities for which the European Union provides a total budget of roughly 1.18 million euros.

A first meeting at expert level took place from 2 to 6 November 2015. The study visit on quality management in statistical offices funded under the EU TAIEX¹ programme marked the beginning of the new phase of co-operation with the Azerbaijani Statistical Committee. During the study visit to Wiesbaden, the experts involved had the opportunity to get to know each other, exchange views and opinions on professional issues, discuss expectations, explain the co-operation partners' situation and plan and co-ordinate future co-operation activities.



From right to left: Sibylle von Oppeln-Bronikowski, Qasim Aliyev (SSC), Irina Meinke, Bernd Störtzbach, Mahliga Malikova, Vugar Shahbazov (both SSC), Naila Nasirova (interpreter), Leonhard Fix

¹ TAIEX = Technical Assistance and Information Exchange. TAIEX is an EU instrument to organise co-operation activities at short notice between EU Member States, EU candidate countries and European Neighbourhood countries.

Kazakhstan – Approaching the final stretch of project implementation



The third year of implementing the KAZSTAT project with the Kazakh Committee on Statistics (CS) has been completed. Activities as a whole are to be completed by December 2016. After three years of successful project work, this is the right time to take stock of developments.

To date 85 % of the agreed co-operation activities have been completed. The results achieved include progress made in further developing the specialised statistics. The Kazakh Committee on Statistics has revised or prepared a total of 29 methodological papers. This number is set to increase to 74 by the end of the project.

Another result achieved is improved communication with users. The number of visits to the CS website has continuously increased. Furthermore, 50 % of all questionnaires are now available online. This percentage is to increase to 90 % by the end of the project.

Considering the time after project completion, the focus will now be on the Committee's strategic orientation. This issue was discussed together with the above project results during the 5th bilateral meeting of the heads of office, which took place in the Berlin Information Point of the Federal Statistical Office on 3 September 2015. Against this background, the Kazakh Committee's management used the opportunity to gain more information about the Federal Statistical Office's Strategy and Programme Plan as the updating of the CS strategy plan is scheduled for the next year. The purpose of the plan to be based on the results achieved in the KAZSTAT project is to formulate the Committee's future strategic priorities.



From left to right: Denis Kaschuba, Günter Kopsch, Ringo Raupach, Alikhan Smailov, Roderich Egeler, Mustafa Dinc, Aliya Abakanova, Sibylle von Oppeln-Bronikowski, Elena Mory, Kerstin Dietzel – Meeting of the heads of office in Berlin

Another component in strengthening the CS statistical capacities in a sustainable manner is the introduction of a one-year master programme in co-operation with the Kazakh State Academy of Economics. The programme provides an opportunity for staff to expand their expertise in full-time study courses. The goal of this CS measure is to retain statistical expertise and prevent labour turnover in the long term.

On 4 November 2015, during a ceremony in Astana to mark the 95th anniversary of the foundation of official statistics in Kazakhstan, a range of improvements achieved during the project were presented to international experts.

In 2015, more activities were implemented than in any other year since the beginning of the project in 2012. The total number of consulting missions, international conference participations and study visits prepared and carried out amounted to 137.



The German participants Bernd Störtzbach and Ringo Raupach together with Mustafa Dinc (World Bank), Alikhan Smailov (the former Chairman of the Committee on Statistics), Iva Ritschelová (President of the Czech Statistical Office – CZSO) and other national and international participants in the ceremony to mark the 95th anniversary of Kazakh statistics in Astana

The following list includes all co-operation activities undertaken between March and December 2015:

Area	Expert missions in Kazakhstan	Study visits to partner countries
Labour market and labour costs	4	–
Foreign trade	1	1
Population	6	4
Services/ICT	4	3
Energy	2	–
Data collection tools, quality	3	1
Health	2	1
Trade	2	1
Household surveys	4	1
Information technology (IT)	3	2
Classifications	1	1

Area	Expert missions in Kazakhstan	Study visits to partner countries
Agriculture	3	2
Organisation, planning and personnel	7	6
Prices	6	2
Registers	2	1
Seasonal adjustment	2	—
Sample surveys	1	1
Structural statistics, investments	1	1
Tourism	—	1
Environment	4	3
Business statistics	4	3
Dissemination	1	—
Transport statistics	1	1
National accounts	15	3

Supporting the National Bureau of Statistics of China (NBS)



Experts of the Federal Statistical Office visited the Chinese Bureau of Statistics for consultation discussions three times in 2015.

The first mission took place in March 2015 as a component of the continued co-operation with CISTC, the NBS-affiliated training centre. At regular intervals, the training centre of the Chinese Bureau of Statistics organises international workshops for staff of the NBS and other Asian statistical offices. On those occasions, it invites international experts to participate in the events in Beijing. The 2015 workshop focused on indicator systems of social statistics. The background for this is the NBS intention to further promote the creation of a common indicator system of social statistics in co-operation with the Asian neighbourhood and BRICS countries (apart from China: Brazil, Russia, India and South Africa). An expert of the Federal Statistical Office provided information on the specific situation in the area of German social statistics.

Furthermore, two consulting missions took place in the NBS which centred on the topics of employment statistics and the cost structure survey. The two subprojects of German-Chinese co-operation have reached the final implementation phase and are expected to be completed in 2016. Currently, publishing monthly employment figures and practical sampling for labour force survey purposes are high on the agenda of the NBS statisticians. In the current phase of project implementation, the focus of the cost structure survey consultations is on reducing the NBS list of indicators.

Overview of the project activities

March 2015		
Expert mission during the International Workshop on Indicator Systems of Social Statistics	Beijing	18 – 20
April 2015		
Expert mission in the NBS on employment statistics	Beijing	20 – 24
August 2015		
Expert mission in the NBS on the cost structure survey	Beijing	24 – 28

Russian Federation: Quality management and production index



A one-week training seminar on modern production approaches in compiling official statistics was organised for up-and-coming young executives of the Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation (Rosstat) in Wiesbaden from 22 to 26 June 2015.

The topics of the training course included, among others, quality aspects and initiatives at national and European level, data confidentiality and quality management from the perspective of a Land statistical office. Commissioned by the World Bank, the course was based on the Federal Statistical Office's seminar programme on Statistical Capacity Building, that is, a modular-structured system of courses on quality management in official statistics which may include case studies where necessary.

Furthermore, the Federal Statistical Office organised a study visit on production index calculations for representatives of the Statistics Service of the Russian Federation and the Irkutsk and Arkhangelsk regional statistical services in April 2015.



Staff of the Federal Statistical Office with young professionals from the Russian Federation

Bilateral co-operation with the Republic of Korea



On 30 June 2015, the Federal Statistical Office received visitors from the Korean administration in Wiesbaden to discuss topics related to the statistics of justice. More concretely, topics like collecting data from the reporting units (administrative offices of courts, prosecutor's offices) through to releasing statistics of justice in Subject-matter series 10 of the Federal Statistical Office were presented.

Another visit took place on 24 September 2015. A representative of Statistics Korea visited the Federal Statistical Office in Wiesbaden to discuss statistical aspects of German reunification. At the request of the visitor, the Federal Statistical Office explained, from its perspective, the process of transforming German statistics in the course of German reunification. At the Länder level, that information was supplemented with the experience gained by the Land Statistical Office of the Freistaat Sachsen.

Both professional discussions were an integral part of the long-term bilateral co-operation between Statistics Korea and the Federal Statistical Office.

The two sides agreed to organise a meeting of the heads of the two statistical offices in South Korea in May 2016. The following topics will be on the agenda of the meeting:

1. 2015 Census in the Republic of Korea and conceptual considerations regarding 2020/2021 round of censuses
2. Use of administrative data for statistical purposes
3. Strategy and Programme Planning, and
4. Progress monitoring based on statistical indicators in relation to the SDGs¹.

¹ See the UN Declaration of 25 September 2015. It covers 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to reduce extreme poverty, inequality and injustice and take action to combat climate change by 2030.



The visitors from Statistics Korea with interpreter and Destatis staff

Bilateral co-operation with the Statistics Centre of Abu Dhabi



As agreed between the heads of the two statistical authorities, the Federal Statistical Office received staff from the Statistics Centre of Abu Dhabi (SCAD) for two traineeships in August and September 2015. In terms of statistical work, the trainees were assigned to the units of Labour Market Statistics and Mathematical-Statistical Methods. The traineeships were part of the offices' bilateral co-operation which had been initiated in 2014.

As a result of the positive feedback, more traineeships have been scheduled for 2016.



Trainees from the Statistics Centre of Abu Dhabi with Destatis representatives

Bilateral co-operation with Mongolia



On 30 September 2015, Sodnomtseren Mendsaikhan, Chairman of the National Statistical Office of Mongolia, and Roderich Egeler, then President of the Federal Statistical Office, met in the Berlin Information Point. The discussions focused on the agreed continuation of bilateral co-operation between the offices during the period 2016 to 2018.

This meeting was preceded by two visits by members of the Mongolian parliament and the head of the Mongolian General Electoral Commission to the Berlin Information Point in March and August 2015.





Representatives of the Mongolian Parliament, the National Statistical Office of Mongolia and the Mongolian embassy together with Roderich Egeler, then President of the Federal Statistical Office, and his staff in the Berlin Information Point on 30 September 2015

Visit by the Director of the General Statistics Office of Viet Nam



On 19 and 20 November 2015, Lam Nguyen, Director of the General Statistics Office of Viet Nam, together with members of his staff, visited the Federal Statistical Office in Wiesbaden. The visit, which had been requested by the Vietnamese side, focused on German business statistics and their use in national accounts.



President Dieter Sarreither with Lam Nguyen, Director of the General Statistics Office of Viet Nam, and his delegation together with Destatis staff



The Director of the General Statistics Office of Viet Nam signing the visitors book

Support for the Croatian Bureau of Statistics in the area of environmental accounts/ environmental industry



In May and November 2015, a German expert visited the Croatian Bureau of Statistics. The consulting missions funded under the IPA programme of the European Union were undertaken to support the implementation of the new Regulation on environmental accounts. In the framework of this Regulation, statistics have been established and estimation methods developed in the Member States to comply with the data requirements of Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Union.

In spring 2015, Croatia devised a supply-side survey of the environmental industry (EA/EGSS¹) and is now analysing the first provisional results.

The second mission focused on reviewing the pilot survey and clarifying content-related questions regarding the environmental industry. In addition, future projects were identified to further improve the conditions of data collection. The insights gained are to be incorporated in the follow-up surveys from reference year 2015.

1 EA = Environmental Account; EGSS = Environmental Goods and Service Sector.

EU twinning project with Bosnia and Herzegovina



Between 2011 and 2013, the Federal Statistical Office was already involved as a junior partner in an EU twinning project with Bosnia and Herzegovina. The consortium leader was Statistics Denmark. The latter acts again as consortium leader in the second twinning project which was launched at the end of September 2014 and will be completed by 2016. The Federal Statistical Office supports the project by expert missions. In the relevant reference period, two missions on construction price statistics were undertaken by an expert from the Land Statistical Office of Sachsen-Anhalt.

Exchange of views and experience with the State Statistical Office of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia



A joint EU twinning project of the Federal Statistical Office and the Macedonian State Statistical Office (SSO) was completed in 2014. Since then further consulting activities have been carried out between the two statistical offices under the IPA programme of the European Union. In this context, an SSO staff member visited the Federal Statistical Office in Wiesbaden to discuss various issues of establishing a specialised statistical library in May 2015. The exchange of views and experience focused especially on the online distribution of statistical publications and the related changes and adjustments. The participants together prepared recommendations for further implementation stages.

Change of personnel in the Kazakhstan project

After more than four years Volker Gutekunst left the International Co-operation unit and started to work for the State Chancellery of Nordrhein-Westfalen. We wish him all the best for his new career outside official statistics.

Since 1 December 2015, Vladislava Karmanova has worked as member of academic staff in the team implementing the World Bank-funded KAZSTAT twinning project of the Federal Statistical Office with the Kazakh Committee on Statistics. She gained some prior experience as project manager in the International Department of the German Rectors' Conference and as member of academic staff at the Office for Statistics and Elections of the Land capital city of Düsseldorf and is now looking forward to her new tasks in the area of international co-operation.



Internship reports

Interns regularly support the international statistical co-operation. Here is their feedback:



Nidal Baklouti, March to April 2015
International Co-operation in Bonn

I was a full member of the project team and responsible for all aspects of project management. A highlight of the work is definitely the chance to get involved in a visit by foreign guests.

Julia Becker, May to September 2015
Bilateral Co-operation in Wiesbaden

Assisting the one-week seminar for young professionals of the State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation in June was particularly interesting. I would like to thank all wholeheartedly for the pleasant memories, friendly co-operation and all the experience I have gained.

Svenja Bounin, September 2014 to March 2015

International Co-operation in Bonn

My internship was to give me an insight into international co-operation activities, but it was much more than this. My internship in the International Co-operation unit was multifaceted, interesting and inspiring for the future.

Mariam Hovhannisyan, February to April 2015

Bilateral Co-operation in Wiesbaden

On the very first day of my internship, I was directly involved in activities to respond to a call for tender for the European Statistical Training Programme 2016 to 2020. I took part in preparing and reviewing curricula and trainer certificates and in co-ordinating activities with partner offices. I am leaving the Federal Statistical Office with great memories and new insights and ideas for my future professional career and life.

Anton Peez, May to July 2015

International Co-operation in Bonn

During my internship in summer 2015, I gained an insight into many phases of project work in the area of statistical co-operation. I performed tasks related to an EU project application and prepared both assessment sheets and agreements for a twinning project with Azerbaijan. In addition, I was involved in the large-scale KAZSTAT World Bank project and handled reports on a completed EU partnership with Macedonia. During those four phases of project management, I was faced with different challenges that required various approaches. All in all, I gained a lot of work experience and deep insight into (German and international) official statistics.

Wendy Wang, August to October 2015

International Co-operation in Bonn

I was involved in preparing and organising expert missions and study visits and was given many special tasks, which made my work very interesting. Especially the intercultural aspects turned my work into an exciting experience.

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