

STATISTICS ACROSS BORDERS

Statistical Co-operation
with Transition and Developing Countries



2/2005

Federal Statistical Office of Germany

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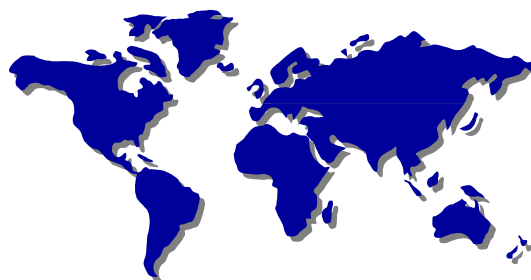
Published and edited by:
Federal Statistical Office, Bonn Dependency
Division I E; Co-operation with Other Countries, Translation Service

Published in April 2006
Order number: 0000024-05532-1

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Copy deadline: 31.12.2005



Editorial

Twinning projects played an important role in the Federal Statistical Office's commitment to make a contribution to administrative capacity building in Eastern Europe. Apart from a rapidly advancing project with Bulgaria, we have in the meantime been awarded two more twinning projects with Latvia and Macedonia. Furthermore, the traditionally close cooperation with Russia is entering a new stage of partnership.

In December 2005, members of the statistics cooperation staff of the Federal Statistical Office visited Eurostat in Luxembourg for an exchange of views with staff from the newly created units E4 and E5. The two units share the responsibility for statistics cooperation both with newly acceded member states of the EU and with non-member states. On the part of Eurostat, the two heads of unit Arunas Butkevicius and James Whitworth were in charge of the talks. In spite of the organisational rearrangement, Eurostat remains an important partner of the Federal Statistical Office in this area.

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Statistical Capacity Building as an Essential Component of Technical Co-operation

(Excerpts from a speech given by Mr. Günter Kopsch, President of Division for Principal Matters, at the World Bank meeting for co-operation with the Ukraine statistical system, August 2005)

1. A globally changing environment for statistical institutions requires new approaches

When the large European and international co-operation programs for the support of the statistical systems in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe came into being, the focus of support was clearly on methodological and conceptual issues. Consequently, in the course of the last ten years, the German Federal Statistical Office, being a major co-operation partner in this context, provided more than 1000 expert missions and training courses mostly on statistical subject matters such as price statistics, agricultural statistics, foreign trade statistics or production statistics. These measures aimed at transmitting and promoting the methodological and conceptual standards of the UN or the EU. All concerned partners in these measures, - the donor institutions, the providers of know-how and the recipient institutions, - felt at the time that it was quite sufficient to provide statistical know-how. It was felt that cross-sectional aspects such as strategy development, planning and management would somehow take care of themselves, once the methodological and conceptual standards would have been introduced.

This was and is a fallacy, as statistical institutions all over the world have come to realize in the course of the last five to six years: As user demands for accurate, timely and relevant statistics are constantly on the rise, the budgets and personnel resources of the statistical offices tend to stagnate or even decrease. The widening gap between rising demands in terms of quality and timeliness of statistical results and additional topics to be covered by statistical surveys on the one hand, and diminishing resources on the other hand, can only be bridged by a new and better way of planning and managing statistical systems. In order for methodological progress to become sustainable, the introduction of state-of-the art methods and concepts must be accompanied by the development of the requisite institutional infrastructure and by a sound total quality management. As we start to pay more attention to these cross-sectional elements of statistical capacity building, we as institutions of the public sector can learn from the private sector. In response to new economic challenges, enterprises all over the world have had to take a critical look at their present situation, they had to develop a vision of their role in the future, including a set of medium and short term goals together with goal achievement indicators in order to change their mode of operations. This is a prerequisite of staying or becoming a successful organisation.

2. Statistical capacity building as a joint effort

Statistical capacity building in the context of technical co-operation calls for the mobilization of all stake holders. To start with, the international donor agencies will have to broaden their funding focus to include cross sectional topics such as strategy development, program and budget planning, general and project management, quality monitoring and human resource development. Respective training tools, including curricula of relevant courses, should be developed on the international level, for example under the auspices of the UN Statistical Commission, the Paris21 or the European Foundation of Quality Management. Statistical offices with experience in these areas should be asked to join such efforts. Presently, there is a lack of co-ordination and



interaction, and we propose that the donor institutions should pool their resources for a more concerted effort in this respect.

The statistical institutions in the recipient countries will, first of all, have to develop a strategy for their own institutional capacity building. It may be useful to have consultants from partner countries or from international agencies to assist in this endeavour, but the foremost responsibility for the process and the results of strategy development lies with the statistical office itself. Any strategy development and ensuing program planning must involve the stake holders of the respective statistical system: the government ministries as the major users and budgeting authorities of statistics, other government institutions engaged in the collection of statistical data, users outside the sphere of government, the respondents, and last but not least, the staff of the statistical institution. Furthermore, the importance of staff involvement cannot be stressed enough. The strategic goals of the statistical institution and related program measures have to be communicated to the general staff. It is of paramount importance to explain to them the advantages to be gained and the relevance of the new strategies and programmatic activities to their own tasks. Good communication skills and co-ordination experience on the part of the involved staff and firm backing by the leadership of the statistical office are prerequisites for any successful strategy development and ensuing programmatic and management activities.

When it comes to the partner offices to provide expert know-how and training, it is important to have a thorough understanding of the frame conditions which influence statistical capacity building in the recipient institution. It has to be understood that solutions which may have worked well in one's own statistical office may not be readily applicable in a different institutional and cultural environment. Consulting and training by experts in the cross-sectional subjects of statistical capacity building calls for innovative, open-minded and well experienced professionals who are able to pay attention to the frame conditions and requirements at hand and who are willing to work closely with their counterparts on tailor-made solutions.

3. The experience of the German Federal Statistical Office

For a number of years now the Federal Statistical Office has stressed at EU and international meetings that cross-sectional statistical capacity building should be conducted in parallel with capacity building in statistical subject matters. In this, we argue from our own experience over the last decade. We have found that major efforts in strategic and program planning, combined with the monitoring of goal achievement and the continuous development of human resources have resulted in quantifiable improvements of the quality of our statistics and in a higher efficiency of our operations.

Our strategic goals aim at

- being acknowledged as a high quality information provider to users from all sectors of society,
- taking into consideration the concerns of respondents,
- using our resources efficiently,
- being a reliable partner in national and international co-operation, and
- promoting the qualification and motivation of our staff through good working conditions.

We conduct our multi-annual and annual planning within the frame of these strategic goals in that we relate the planned tasks and results to our strategic goals in terms of their contribution to goal achievement. Our annual planning is accompanied by the monitoring of deadlines for data



production and dissemination and of tasks completed. Along with the planning and monitoring of work, we have established a long term program of personnel development. This includes an extensive curriculum of advanced training which covers statistical subject matters, ITC proficiency, management and leadership skills. These are just a few examples of our cross-sectional capacity building. We offer to share our experience with our partner institutions and to assist them in developing their own practical solutions to statistical capacity building.

To sum it up: Cross-sectional statistical capacity building in the context of technical co-operation is a very demanding task for all concerned. It should become an essential component of technical co-operation in the area of statistics, particularly in view of its contribution to enabling recipient countries to supply the requisite statistics MDG monitoring and for international economic co-operation. Last but not least, cross-sectional statistical capacity building will enhance the sustainability of methodological advancement and it has proven to contribute to successful and intensified partnerships across institutional and national boundaries.

In this context, the Federal Statistical Office of Germany offers a broad range of cross-sectional topics to be transmitted in a customized approach of training courses, expert missions and study visits. Further information on these courses can be obtained from our website <http://www.destatis.de/>. Just follow the links "International Data" and "Statistical Co-operation with Transition and Developing Countries".



Joint Statistics Symposium in Bonn

A seminar organised by Germany's Federal Statistical Office and the National Statistical Offices of the PR of China and the Republic of Korea on "Strategies of National Statistical Offices to Cope with Future Information Needs" was held at Gustav-Stresemann Institute in Bonn on 6 and 7 July 2005.

The seminar was opened by Mr. Eckart Hohmann, President of the Hessian State Statistical Office; by Mr. Johann Hahlen, President of the Federal Statistical Office of Germany; and by Commissioner Li Deshui and Commissioner Oh Kab Won, the two chief statisticians from China and Korea.

Apart from the statements made by the three chief statisticians in the discussion of the three thematic blocks, lectures were given by Mr. Günther Hanreich, Director of the European Statistical Office EUROSTAT, Professor Dr. Michael Hüther, Director at the Institute of the German Economy in Cologne, Mrs. Solveigh Gross from the Federal Association of the German Industry, and Prof. Dr. Reiner Stäglin from the German Institute for Economic Research in Berlin. In addition, other high-ranking representatives from fields such as statistics, politics, business, science and research made statements as producers and users of official statistics.

The German, Chinese and Korean participants assessed this seminar, which was held in this form for the first time, as very successful, saying that it shall be repeated on a different subject in the Republic of Korea in 2007, as Mr. Oh Kab Won, the Korean Chief Statistician, suggested.



Twinning Project with Bulgaria



The twinning project between the Federal Statistical Office of Germany and the Bulgarian Statistical Office was continued successfully. The first fact-finding expert missions in the various statistical fields took place between July and September 2005. In July the project team in Sofia could be reinforced by committing an assistant to the long-term adviser. The project management team met on 21 September 2005 to hold their first official steering committee meeting. Chaired by the project leader from the Federal Statistical Office, the talks were attended by members of the project management team and by responsible persons in charge of subject-matter components from Bulgaria, by the German long-term adviser, the Danish junior project leader and by representatives of the EU Delegation and the German Embassy to Sofia. Apart from presenting and discussing the progress achieved under the project, participants intensively discussed the issue of synchronising twinning-project activities with bidding procedures for pilot survey implementation.

A public bidding procedure invites private businesses to take care of the following statistical pilot surveys:

- Pilot surveys on investments and expenditures in information and communication services (ICT),
- Pilot surveys on ICT usage by NACE J enterprises (financial sector),
- Pilot surveys collecting statistics on income and living conditions (SILC; first wave as a cross-sectional study, second wave as a longitudinal study),
- Pilot survey on the size and the quality of the business register,
- Pilot survey on ad hoc modules in household budgets,
- Pilot survey on the shuttle trade.

When the decision on the methodologies to be used will be taken with the support of German, Danish and Czech experts, a private service provider is supposed to conduct the pilot surveys. The bidding procedure has already started, but the period fixed for the bid is long, so that a delay might have an influence on the timeliness of consultations to be held under the twinning project. For that reason, the Project Steering Committee decided to elaborate the methodology of these surveys as early as by the end of October 2005, so that they could be submitted to the responsible financing and contracting unit (CFCU) in Sofia as a part of the technical specification of the bid. This goal was achieved.

Twinning-light Project on Iron and Steel Statistics with Slovakia



In the context of a Slovak-German Twinning-Light project a final meeting was held in Bratislava, Slovakia, from 7 to 9 November. This project was aimed at building a steel statistics system in Slovakia, one of the European Union's member countries newly admitted since 2004. The experts from the Federal Statistical Office had the task to provide support in preparatory work and adaptation activities. One important result of the German support is, for example, the introduction of user-friendly questionnaires following the guidelines of a Joint German Working Group "Standardisation of Survey Documents", which is composed of representatives from the Federation and the federal states. Though presently introduced merely as a "pilot project" of Slovak steel statistics, this innovation has good chances to be adopted in other survey areas of Slovak official



statistics as well. In addition, the experience of many years in iron and steel statistics, which is one of Germany's old-established subject fields, was incorporated in the conceptual approach to and the wording of plausibility checks for basic data editing. As a consequence, this branch-specific survey, which is new for Slovakia, will be capable right from the outset to supply statistics in full compliance with the statistical requirements of the EU and the OECD, for which people in Bratislava expressed their appreciation. In a stocktaking statement the German party expressed their satisfaction with the pleasant work environment and the far-reaching support provided on the spot, which had very much enhanced the transfer of subject-matter information and the consultation process in the context of the project.



The People's Republic of China advised by the Federal Statistical Office on Statistical Issues of Environmental Economics

As early as in February 2005 environmental statisticians in Bonn were visited by a delegation of statisticians from China's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and the Chinese State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA). On that occasion the survey and publication guidelines practiced by German official environmental statisticians were presented and contacts were established in the course of it, so that Chinese statisticians expressed the wish that the counselling discussions should be continued and intensified.

In accordance with that, two German experts came to meet their colleagues in November 2005 at the National Statistical Office in Beijing and the Regional Statistical Office in Shanghai. The focus of the one-week counselling talks was on the practice of organising, implementing and publicising statistics on environmental protection expenses and on the calculation and analysis of environmental indicators that can be derived from the results of individual statistical surveys.

The talks took place in a very cordial and friendly atmosphere. The way in which the German experts were attended to by their colleagues, the Chinese statisticians, was excellent and exemplary. From the moment of arrival at Beijing Airport over the daily ride to the statistics office and the domestic flight from Beijing to Shanghai up to the departure towards Frankfurt - the German environmental statisticians were cared for in an outstanding way.

In the course of intensive subject-matter discussions, in which a well prepared interpreter made it possible for participants to speak German and Chinese, while drinking countless cups of green tea and following invitations to dinner, an atmosphere developed that was open-minded and friendly. The excellent Chinese meals, in which the skills in using chopsticks were almost brought to perfection, and the good hotels fit seamlessly in what was said about our previous impressions.

As early as on the first evening the German experts ventured to leave the hotel on their own account in order to explore the city centre of Beijing. Once getting used to the huge dimensions of the metropolis with its four-lane highways and the enormous car traffic, one has no trouble finding one's way by using a city map. The utilisation of the underground is just as easy, buying a ticket for the underground at a ticket window is done at times more quickly than operating one of the ticket machines in Germany. The German experts were particularly impressed by the dimensions of Tiananmen Square (square of heavenly peace) and the huge Forbidden City (the former



imperial palace) with its 800 buildings. Everywhere in the city one sees large-sized posters announcing the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing.

It fits in the picture that the large arterial roads are lined by ultramodern shopping galleries and office buildings as well as by a large number of building sites giving evidence of China's rapidly growing economy. Yet the price is high that China keeps paying for the booming economy – increased environmental pollution affecting, in particular, air and water as environmental media. Here, the Chinese are firmly decided to take the countermeasures required. The counselling mission of environmental statisticians was aimed at generating an improved database needed for environmental policy-making. The two interested parties said that they intended, if possible, to continue the exchange of opinions and information.

Support to the Macedonian Statistical Office



In a consortium with the statistical offices of Sweden, Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Hungary, the Federal Statistical Office will, in the context of a twinning project, provide support to the National Statistics Office of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. That means that the Federal Statistical Office will strongly extend its engagement in the CARDS area, which comprises the countries of the West Balkan. The use of an instrument such as EU-financed twinning projects opens up a new possibility of providing intensive advice to the statistical offices in twinned (partner) countries over a period of up to two years. Such close co-operation enhances the dialogue between the twinned partners to the effect that useful information will be provided, from which the German statistical system will profit as well.

The overall goal pursued by the project with Macedonia is to improve the decision-making and support the democratic processes in the country through the development of a comprehensive, sustainable and reliable statistical system. It also means that, in addition to strengthening the Macedonian Statistical Office's institutional capacity, the Macedonian statistics system will be adapted to the system of the EU. Statistical Capacity Building is the only way to make sure in a sustainable fashion that the country will be capable of providing high-quality data with the required timeliness.

The project will probably start in June 2006 and it consists of six components:

1. Capacity building of the State Statistical Office of Macedonia
2. Harmonisation of national accounts to EU standards
3. Improvement of the statistical programme, with a focus on business and social statistics
4. Strengthening the ICT capacity of the Macedonian Statistical Office
5. Strengthening of the performance and quality monitoring practices of the Macedonian Statistical Office
6. Enhancing the communication strategy vis-à-vis users.

Mr. Klaus Kickner from the Statistical Office of Thuringia will probably start his 18-month activity as a long-term expert at the National Statistics Office in Skopje in June 2006. There, Mr. Kickner will coordinate expert missions and all required activities in Skopje and will be available as a consultant to the Macedonian office.

The project will be managed, organised and financially handled by Division IE "Co-operation with Other Countries, Translation Service" of the Federal Statistical Office. In view of this project's very



large size numerous statisticians from Slovenia, Sweden, the Czech Republic and Hungary will also be involved in the project, in addition to German experts.

At present, the task schedule, which will be compiled in the form of a twinning contract, is being elaborated for this project.



Twinning project with Latvia

In July 2005 the European Commission tendered a twinning project "Strengthening the institutional capacity in the area of statistics" in the context of the Transition Facility to Latvia.

The aim of this project is to introduce a total quality management (TQM) system at the Latvian Statistical Bureau. The German bid in the context of the application procedure was presented in September. Subsequently, the task schedule of the project was prepared and presented to the Latvian project leader and various key issues of the project's implementation were discussed and agreed upon. Then, on 9 November, the EU accepted the bid of the Federal Statistical Office to implement the project. At present, the Latvian and German project partners are elaborating the twinning contract and the work schedule for this 12-month project. As may be derived from the current state of planning, the project is expected to start at the end of March 2006 and it will comprise a total of eight consultations to Latvia and one study mission to Germany. In the implementation of the project the Federal Statistical Office will be supported by experts from the statistical offices of Sweden and Finland.



CO-OPERATION ACTIVITIES

Overview from July 2005 to December 2005

<p>27 June – 01 July 2005 in Almaty</p> 	<p>Tacis 7 "Reform of official statistics – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova"</p> <p>The first German expert mission under the "<u>Information Technology</u>" project component to the Statistics Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan was aimed at the analysis of the technological and organisational framework, data flow and network architecture as well as the use of IT components.</p>
<p>27 June – 01 July 2005 in Wiesbaden</p> 	<p>Tacis 7 "Reform of official statistics – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova"</p> <p>The goal of the study visit on "<u>Investment Statistics</u>" was to improve statistics on intangible assets in Kazakhstan as well as statistics on building permits, buildings completed and buildings in progress. In line with an agreement achieved during the first expert mission questionnaires had been prepared, which were discussed in detail, improved and finalised.</p>
<p>04-08 July 2005 in Sofia</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Twinning project with Bulgaria</p> <p>Experts from Denmark and the Czech Republic paid a visit to the Statistical Office of Bulgaria for a first discussion on the "Improvement of data quality in the system of national accounts" with the focus on the adjustment of "<u>shuttle trade</u>" data. As has been found out, expenditure and income data on the shuttle trade are covered neither by Bulgaria's balance of payments nor by the country's national accounts. The discussion on possibilities of computing shuttle trade estimates will be continued in the context of the project.</p>
<p>04-08 July 2005 in Wiesbaden, Bonn and Berlin</p>  	<p style="text-align: center;">Bilateral co-operation with China and South Korea</p> <p>For a report on the <u>symposium</u>, please, refer to <i>page 5</i>.</p>
<p>04-08 July 2005 in Wiesbaden and Bonn</p> 	<p>Tacis 7 "Reform of official statistics – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova"</p> <p>During a study visit to Wiesbaden and Bonn Kazakh environmental statisticians were made familiar with data collection and management problems encountered by a federal state's statistical office. Furthermore, in the context of <u>waste statistics</u> a waste dumping site was visited in the surroundings of Bonn.</p>
<p>06-08 July 2005 in Banská Bystrica</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Twinning-light Slovakia – iron and steel statistics</p> <p>The progress of preparatory work on steel statistics with 2005 as the reference year was presented to and discussed by 22 participants of a seminar. Following the pilot surveys in 2003 and 2004, this will be Slovakia's first "real" survey ever since the country's accession to the EU. The focus of the questions that were discussed in the course of the seminar was on the confidentiality of the data. As before, it was necessary to invalidate the partly substantive reservations which some of the steel enterprises had already expressed during the pilot surveys. The German party tried to persuade participants that for European steel statistics to be meaningful it is indispensable to have at least cumulated data. In this connection, the relationship between the obligation to provide the data and the obligation to keep individual data confidential was explained in detail, using German official statistics as an example.</p>



CO-OPERATION ACTIVITIES

Overview from July 2005 to December 2005

<p>11-13 July 2005 in Berlin</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">USST co-operation project with Turkey</p> <p>This fourth study visit on agricultural statistics in the context of the USST project continued the deliberations which already took place in April. The goal of this action is to build a long-needed modern and harmonised system of agricultural information in Turkey, especially for the implementation of EU regulations on the Farm Structure Survey, which Turkey is preparing for implementation in autumn 2005. Details were discussed regarding German experience in establishing an adequate framework of legal conditions and implementing the "Acquis Communautaire", undertaking surveys and planning and integrating separate surveys on land use, crop farming, horticulture and livestock. The programme also envisaged such items as talks at the Federal Ministry for Consumer Protection, Food and Agriculture in Berlin and a visit paid to a market garden at Werder/Brandenburg.</p>
<p>11-15 July 2005 in Sofia</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Twinning project with Bulgaria</p> <p>A Danish expert inspected Bulgaria's statistical <u>business register</u>. In addition to sources, the structure and maintenance of the business register there was a discussion on a forthcoming survey to measure the register's size and quality. There is a continued need for improvement regarding the identification of those businesses in the register that have ceased to be active. The business register is not able to contribute to national accounts by providing an estimate of the hidden economy.</p>
<p>11-15 July 2005 in Sofia</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Twinning project with Bulgaria</p> <p>The survey on the "Use of <u>information and communications technologies</u> in the credit and insurance trade (NACE J)" was the subject of a visit paid by an expert from the Federal Statistical Office and two Danish experts to Sofia. On that occasion they discussed the progress of preparations in Bulgaria as well as EU requirements. As the implementation of the survey is being tendered on a Europe-wide scale, the experts intensively discussed the delimitation of tasks between the actors involved (Bulgaria's statistics office, EU experts and external contractor). Forthcoming advisory missions will have to deal, in particular, with specific methodological issues.</p>
<p>18-21 July 2005 in Ankara</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">USST co-operation project with Turkey</p> <p>German experts examined the current state of preparations for a <u>business register</u> to be built in Turkey. The responsible Turkish representatives have already reached very high methodological standards, so that the methodological and conceptual basis has already been laid for the business register to be built. The underlying data model has been developed and the respective units have been defined just like the measures needed for plausibility checking. Simultaneously, the basis has been laid for an exchange of information between the statistics office and the Turkish Ministry of Finance.</p>
<p>18-22 July 2005 in Sofia</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Twinning project with Bulgaria</p> <p>Another consultation on <u>information and communications technologies</u> focused on an investment and expenditure survey of enterprises. In this context, an expert from the Federal Statistical Office and two experts from Denmark discussed the progress of survey preparations with their Bulgarian colleagues. They also had intensive talks about the delimitation of tasks between the actors involved. It has been agreed that the harmonisation of the methodology, the sampling frame and the design of the questionnaire will be finalised by November.</p>



CO-OPERATION ACTIVITIES

Overview from July 2005 to December 2005

08-10 August 2005 in Wiesbaden	USST co-operation project with Turkey
	<p>The talks focussed on issues related to the <u>labour cost survey</u>. In Turkey labour cost data have been collected for the manufacturing industry since 1993. As the data obtained from that survey are not good enough to meet the requirements of Eurostat, the European Statistical Office, it is envisaged, beginning in 2005, to undertake a general labour cost survey in Turkey, which will comply with international standards and cover all fields of economic activity. Major subjects discussed during the discussion included the design of the questionnaire and the sampling frame.</p>
08-10 August 2005 in Wiesbaden	USST co-operation project with Turkey
	<p>This study visit was to continue the consultations in the field of <u>short-term business statistics</u>. Emphasis was laid on the computation of short-term indices, as the Statistical Office of Turkey (SIS) plans to calculate indices of sales and orders at hand starting from 2005 as the base year. So far such data have indeed been collected, but there has not been a quality check. Indices have not been compiled. During the consultations, the experts discussed in detail what action should be taken when calculating indices and waiting for feedback that fails to come, what guidelines should be used to draw samples and what techniques of computation should be applied.</p>
15-19 August 2005 in Bishkek	GTZ project on "Agricultural statistics"
	<p>Since January 2000 the Federal Statistical Office has advised the National Statistics Committee of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan (NatStatCom) on issues of <u>agricultural statistics</u> in the context of a project, which is funded by Germany's Technical Co-operation Agency (GTZ). Apart from providing conceptual and organisational support to Kyrgyz statisticians in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the agricultural census, advice has also been given on the agricultural farm register to be further developed. During the concluding discussions in Bishkek the experts discussed the outcome of the project and gave explanations on questions that had not yet been answered on how to proceed further in building the agricultural register. NatStatCom is now planning to conduct sample surveys in the various fields; the next census of agriculture is envisaged to take place in four years.</p>
17-19 August 2005 in Kiel and Hamburg	USST co-operation project with Turkey
	<p>The focus of these first discussions on <u>national accounts</u> in the context of this project was on issues related to regional accounts. That was the reason why experts from the Northern Statistical Office in Kiel and Hamburg were entrusted with attending to the participants from the Statistics Office of Turkey. The guests were made familiar with the methods and techniques practised by the Interstate Working Party on National Accounts.</p>



CO-OPERATION ACTIVITIES

Overview from July 2005 to December 2005

**22-25 August 2005
in Bratislava**



Twinning light with Slovakia – iron and steel statistics

The focus of the meeting was on finalising and reviewing error descriptions for plausibility checks to edit basic data materials obtained from the survey for reference year 2005. To meet, in particular, the OECD's current data requirements for the steel industry it had been necessary to adapt a questionnaire module and to adjust the respective procedures of computerised editing. The corresponding output table needed to be revised, as this part of the survey also included foreign trade data from steel enterprises. Furthermore it was necessary to clarify in which way it would be possible to integrate or automatically include the figures from national foreign trade statistics. For the time being we still have to put up with the fact that the data, which are directly collected from the enterprises concerned, will be delivered by regular mail. Enterprises care very much indeed that the confidentiality or safety of their data is guaranteed. This was discussed as a high-priority topic as early as during the workshop held in early July. For that reason there was a discussion at that time with representatives from the organisation and data processing division of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic. Details of alternatives were being discussed to indicate possible ways of adapting the electronic data transfer system used for other statistical surveys to the specific needs of the newly conceived steel statistics survey. For the time being it seems that this is not yet possible – at least in the short run. Nevertheless, the survey for reference year 2005 is not at risk, since the questionnaires in paper form are completely ready and can be used for delivery by ordinary mail, which is considered safe. Furthermore, they deliberated on possible ways of getting the software firm, which will only be known when the bidding procedure is completed, involved in adjusting the office's internal data processing routine as quickly as possible so that at least part of the delay, which has already occurred, can be compensated. With that goal in mind it was recommended that preparatory activities should be speeded up further by giving a detailed and platform-neutral description in the so-called "Technical Project" (section A – checks, section B – technological workflow, section C – output tables).

**29-30 August 2005
in Berlin**



PHARE programme 2003

This visit was the first direct contact between the Federal Statistical Office and the Statistical Office of **Lithuania** concerning the dissemination of European statistics in the respective countries. The guests received comprehensive information on the services offered by the European Data Service unit (EDS) and a detailed description was given of the procedure used in replying to requests. The presentation of the client management software was followed by a detailed commentary on the use of Eurostat's database. Emphasis was also laid on the approach to handling complex requests. Finally, the guests paid a visit to the Service Bureau at the German Parliament building.

**29 August – 02 September 2005
in Almaty**







Tacis 7 "Reform of official statistics – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova"

The goal of this third and last expert mission under the "Publication and Dissemination" project component was to bring the project to an end. The two German experts met with their **Kazakh** colleagues, including representatives from regional statistical offices, to talk about a marketing concept, including a pricing policy component, as well as the practice of working with journalists and preparing metadata for journalists.



CO-OPERATION ACTIVITIES







Overview from July 2005 to December 2005

03-10 September 2005 in Beijing, Xi'an and Shanghai	<p style="text-align: center;">Bilateral co-operation with China</p> <p>The talks served to define the thematic fields of the future bilateral co-operation. In particular, they include fields such as the development of an IT strategy including data dissemination, social statistics and external trade statistics.</p> <p>Discussions with German embassy representatives have shown that there is a lack of data, in particular, regarding Chinese enterprise or business statistics. However, these data are of great interest to German enterprises for their business activities in the PR of China. In this connection the representatives from the Federal Statistical Office referred to a business census conducted by the PR of China until May 2005, in which all Chinese enterprises had been invited to provide data, in particular, on the kinds of activity, sales and human resources.</p>
	
05-09 September 2005 in Bishkek	<p>Tacis 7 "Reform of official statistics – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova"</p> <p>In the context of an EU-funded Tacis 7 programme the Federal Statistical Office advised the National Statistics Committee of Kyrgyzstan on tourism statistics. A study visit and two joint advisory missions to Kazakhstan were now followed by final talks. In addition to evaluating the results of a pilot survey of private accommodations in Kyrgyzstan, the two German experts held a three-day seminar to give representatives from regional offices a general idea about tourism statistics in Germany. A draft questionnaire for a planned quarterly survey was explained as well. According to the assessment given by the German experts, Kyrgyzstan is capable of providing tourism data in line with international standards.</p>
	
05-16 September 2005 in Bishkek	<p>Tacis 7 "Reform of official statistics – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova"</p> <p>This expert mission took place under the "Regional Statistics of Kyrgyzstan" component and served, in particular, to hold a seminar attended by representatives from both Kyrgyzstan's National Statistics Committee and regional offices. Three major topics were dealt with: the common agricultural politics of the European Union, sample surveys for the collection of agricultural statistics in Germany, and the structure and operation of the agricultural farm register. In accordance with a wish expressed by the Kyrgyz participants, a consultation organised on short notice was given on German population statistics and on the German approach to a register-driven census.</p>
	
06-08 September 2005 in Vilnius	<p style="text-align: center;">PHARE programme 2003</p> <p>Different aspects of the quality of primary data collection were discussed during an expert mission to Lithuania. The most important issues referred to the checking and processing of primary data, the measurement of primary data quality and quality reporting. In this context a comprehensive overview was given of topics such as quality guidelines, data quality management tools, documentation and development of quality indicators. The Statistical Office of Lithuania is very interested in further developing data quality management as a component of the TQM approach.</p>
	



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Overview from July 2005 to December 2005

07-09 September 2005 in Vilnius	<p style="text-align: center;">Project "Modernisation of the Lithuanian statistical system"</p> <p>As a consequence of Lithuania's EU membership, the Statistical Office is now faced with the task of meeting the requirements of the European Intrastat system. This system serves to record the actual amount of Community goods transactions between countries of the European Union. That approach became a necessity, when customs clearance was abolished after the accomplishment of the European single market for goods transactions within the Community, which had as a consequence that these flows of goods were no longer recorded statistically by the customs authorities, although customs statistics continue to be the basis of data collection on transactions of goods, which cross the borders of the EU.</p>
	
07-13 September 2005 in Almaty	<p style="text-align: center;">Tacis 7 "Reform of official statistics – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova"</p> <p>During the latest consultation under the Tacis 7 "<u>Environmental Statistics</u>" programme German experts met environmental experts from the Kazakh Statistics Office to discuss, in particular, practical aspects related to the design of questionnaires and the identification of sewage treatment plants. Furthermore, they analysed the results of a survey conducted in the Almaty region as well as the results of pilot surveys and spoke about their publication.</p>
	
12-14 September 2005 in Bonn	<p style="text-align: center;">Phare programme 2003</p> <p>This three-day study visit of the director and the vice-director of a division in charge of <u>agricultural statistics</u> at the Lithuanian Statistical Office was aimed, above all, at the legal framework conditions and the data sources on agricultural production as a basis of information for the country's national and the EU's common agricultural politics. This was the meanwhile twelfth bilateral consultation of experts from both offices since 2000. It was also the first consultation since Lithuania's accession to the EU. Statistical offices of some federal states and the Federal Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection have also been involved in this long-standing partnership.</p>
	
12-15 September 2005 in Sofia	<p style="text-align: center;">Twinning project with Bulgaria</p> <p>Discussions were continued concerning the implementation of a survey on the "<u>Use of Information and Communications Technologies</u> in the Credit and Insurance Trade (NACE J)" in Bulgaria. This time the focus of the discussions was on the elaboration of the questionnaire required. In addition, the experts discussed methodological issues of the survey population, of the sample and response rate as well as further steps of co-operation activities under the project.</p>
	
12-16 September 2005 in Bishkek	<p style="text-align: center;">Tacis 7 "Reform of official statistics – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova"</p> <p>This expert mission focussed on technical improvements in the <u>regional statistics system</u> of Kyrgyzstan and on the introduction of modern methods of statistical production. In this context, the general aspects of statistical information systems in European member countries were discussed as well and the extent was examined to which they are applicable to the Kyrgyz Statistical Office.</p>
	
19-21 September 2005 in Sofia	<p style="text-align: center;">Twinning project with Bulgaria</p> <p>An expert from the Federal Statistical Office gave this consultation on a survey of enterprise expenditures and investments on <u>information and communications technologies</u>. Apart from methodological issues emphasis was placed, in particular, on the elaboration of a draft questionnaire. The concept of a questionnaire with instructions and explanatory notes was compiled jointly with Bulgarian colleagues.</p>
	



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Overview from July 2005 to December 2005

19-21 September 2005 in Sofia	Twinning project with Bulgaria Please, read a report on the Project Steering Committee meeting on <i>page 6</i> .
	
20-22 September 2005 in Belgrade	EU grant project for Serbia-Montenegro Since the beginning of this year the Federal Statistical Office has been advising the Statistical Office of Serbia and Montenegro as well as the Serbian Statistical Office on issues of strategic planning and strategic management . A first study visit of representatives from both offices on executive level in Wiesbaden in April 2005 was followed recently by a three-day expert mission to Belgrade. A two-day workshop imparted knowledge to participants on subjects such as strategic development and multi-year work planning. Furthermore, the two German experts presented the Strategic Planning System of the Federal Statistical Office to a large number of people from the two statistical offices. Another subject of the consultation was devoted to the interaction between the Federation and the federal states and to the co-operation with Eurostat in the field of programme planning.
	
	
21-27 September 2005 in Ankara	USST co-operation project with Turkey Experts from a Federal Statistical Office unit, which is responsible for the dissemination of statistical data , provided information on the planning and compilation of new statistical publications. The subjects discussed with the colleagues from Turkey included user-friendliness, corporate design and the compilation of charts. A booklet for young readers was used as an example to show how the explanations given will function when put into practice.
	
26-29 September 2005 in Bratislava	Twinning light with Slovakia – iron and steel statistics After the preceding meeting, which was mainly devoted to the revision of editing procedures (error checks), thus modifying part A (data capture and editing) of the "Technical Project", it was now necessary to integrate the specific features of the data, which are to be regularly delivered to the OECD, into the two other parts of the description. Although some of these requirements went beyond the scope of the variables covered by the EU Steel Statistics Survey (e.g. external trade statistics data), one cannot separately deal with the corresponding section of the database structure and with the data input and output operations based upon them. With a view to that, the required extensions of the database were described and included in part B of the "Technical Project". Part C (output tables) had to be supplemented as well. The "Technical Project" is now complete and updated so that a comfortable basis is available for the programming work, which is still to be done. During the meeting the result of the bidding procedure for program writing became known and, with that in mind, a meeting was organised at short notice with representatives from the institute that had been awarded the job of program writing. The meeting discussed the most important steps of the work to be done, the required specifications and the deadlines suggested. The presentation of a detailed "Technical Project" means that the preparations of Slovakia's Statistical Office to facilitate and accelerate program writing have advanced very far already.
	



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Overview from July 2005 to December 2005

26-29 September 2005 in Sofia	Twinning project with Bulgaria
	<p>At this first meeting on results of <u>household budget surveys</u> (HBS) and the <u>system of national accounts</u> (SNA) an HBS expert and an SNA expert discussed issues of improving the data quality of national accounts and household budget surveys with Bulgarian colleagues. In respect of HBS it was possible to adopt concrete action to extent and improve the database. In respect of national accounts it was recommended that the distinctions between national accounts data and HBS data should be examined on the basis of the respective COICOP items (Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose).</p>
03-14 October 2005 in Almaty	Tacis 7 "Reform of official statistics – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova"
	<p>This latest visit of experts from the Federal Statistical Office on "Business Statistics" under the Tacis 7 project served to give general recommendations to Kazakh colleagues on the institutional approach with different subject groups involved and on possible further activities in the field of business statistics.</p>
04-06 October 2005 in Bonn, Düsseldorf	Twinning light with Slovakia – iron and steel statistics
	<p>A recent meeting with Slovak experts was used to describe the typical workflow operations of this basically monthly survey, beginning with reception and progress checks via data capture, error checks and editing and ending with the accessibility of results and publicised tables. The structure and maintenance of the statistical master file and its relation to the general business register were also described. The Steel Business Association in Düsseldorf was visited to demonstrate the way of establishing contacts with the responsible industrial association and of interacting with that association when collecting data from enterprises of the steel industry. The survey "Steel Statistics in Germany", a statistical survey of that association, was presented there in detail. This survey deals with deliveries, orders at hand, output, market supply, domestic trade, capacities/investments, environment and, in a very detailed way, with external trade in steel.</p>
09-19 October 2005 in Bonn, Cologne, Wiesbaden and Munich	Bilateral co-operation with China
	<p><u>Service statistics</u> is a field which, practically, has not been covered so far by official Chinese statistics, but which has increasingly gained in importance, in particular, to national accounting. This study visit made it possible for the Chinese experts to learn a lot from their German colleagues' experience and to take this experience into account when building a well-functioning Chinese service statistics system. The members of the Chinese delegation want a long-term exchange of experience and information with German experts to accelerate the formation of Chinese service statistics.</p>



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Overview from July 2005 to December 2005

10-12 October 2005 in Bratislava	Twinning light with Slovakia – iron and steel statistics
	<p>The "Technical Project" submitted by the Statistical Office of Slovakia was examined and, after that, talks started with a representative from the institute entrusted with the writing of programs. Topics were discussed such as the size of comprehensive error inquiries, the presentation of output tables and the data format of the figures to be delivered to Eurostat. In this connection the Slovak partners said that two program variants were being prepared for steel statistics: one version to be installed at the regional office of Banská Bystrica, which would be driven by a universal database, into which the data would have to be entered manually, and one so-called "Internet Version", which means that enterprises, in a similar way like "Internet Banking", could log in with the Statistical Office to transfer their data. In the further course of the deliberations the experts came to the conclusion that a program should be written first of all, which provides for data collection in the conventional way (submission by means of paper questionnaires) and which, very importantly, must be ready and available by the envisaged time. An excursion to Košice was organised to enable participants to discuss these ideas on the spot at the largest steel enterprise of Slovakia.</p>
10-14 October 2005 in Ankara	USST co-operation project with Turkey
	<p>The Turkish Statistical Office has already done a lot of work on implementing the EU guidelines on <u>short-term business statistics</u>. Starting in 2006, Eurostat will be supplied with production index data and index data on orders at hand. In this context the experts discussed subjects such as the definition of variables, the determination of the main kind of economic activity of statistical units and the confidentiality of data obtained. Thus, this mission renewed the discussions of an advisory mission, which took place in February, and of two study visits to Germany.</p>
10-14 October 2005 in Ankara	USST co-operation project with Turkey
	<p>The Turkish Statistical Office plans to implement the <u>PRODCOM</u> guidelines of the European Union in the field of business statistics. As the production surveys, which have been conducted in Turkey since 1997, are not fully compatible with PRODCOM, the emphasis of these discussions in Turkey was on a continued and detailed specification of issues considered by two former missions on this subject.</p>
12-14 October 2005 in Wiesbaden	Twinning project with Bulgaria
	<p>The Federal Statistical Office was visited by a Bulgarian delegation for an exchange of views concerning the introduction of <u>Community statistics on income and living conditions</u> (EU SILC) in Bulgaria. The subjects of the visit were, in particular, the design of questionnaires, problems of measuring income from self-employment, survey management and field work. The programme also included a visit to the Hessian Statistical Office, during which experts from Hesse and North Rhine-Westphalia spoke about the experience they had collected in field work and data collection.</p>
12-14 October 2005 in Prague	PHARE programme 2003
	<p>In addition to a mirror comparison of external trade data between the Czech Republic and Germany, the Czech <u>Intrastat</u> survey system was evaluated. The modifications of the Intrastat regulation, which are to become effective as of 1 January 2006, were also discussed in this context. In conclusion, the parties agreed upon a joint press release. It describes not only the causes of discrepancies, but also possible activities to make the respective data pairs match more precisely.</p>



CO-OPERATION ACTIVITIES

Overview from July 2005 to December 2005

<p>17-19 October 2005 in Bonn and Wiesbaden</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Project "Modernisation of the Lithuanian statistical system"</p> <p>The study visit of Lithuanian statisticians to the Federal Statistical Office served to clarify some points related to surveys on the use of <u>information and communications technologies</u> at enterprises and in households. As these data have already been successfully collected in Lithuania, emphasis was placed on the discussion of detailed questions. A comparison of survey results between Lithuania and Germany revealed findings that were interesting.</p>
<p>17-20 October 2005 in Sofia, Svilengrad and Capitan Andreevo</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Twinning project with Bulgaria</p> <p>A Czech expert on shuttle trade revisited the Bulgarian Statistics Office. The focus of the discussions was on the identification of data sources and the elaboration of a methodology for a shuttle trade survey. For that purpose the Bulgarian-Turkish border was visited by the expert together with the German long-term adviser and with staff of the Statistical Office. The required data on the shuttle trade shall be obtained by interviewing customs officers and by evaluating the results of the tourism survey.</p>
<p>17-21 October 2005 in Almaty</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Tacis 7 "Reform of official statistics – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova"</p> <p>A consultation mission to Kazakhstan took place under the project component "Information Technology" for the discussion of subjects such as IT safety requirements, online questionnaires and plausibility checks of questionnaire data. The implementation of this activity concluded this project component.</p>
<p>17-21 October 2005 in Almaty</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Tacis 7 "Reform of official statistics – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova"</p> <p>The discussions on "<u>Tourism Statistics</u>" in Kazakhstan focussed on the results of a pilot survey of tourism in private accommodations and their capacities as well as on the dissemination of a publication containing the results of the survey. The project could be concluded successfully.</p>
<p>18-20 October 2005 in Prague</p>  	<p style="text-align: center;">PHARE programme 2003</p> <p>The first pilot solution of the "<u>Cross-Border Database</u>" developed in close co-operation between the offices involved from Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic has now been available to users on the internet for one year. Prior to this meeting the present state of the database contents, of the quality of data and the database's user-friendliness had been analysed in a comprehensive evaluation report, which was examined at the beginning of the meeting. This was used to derive the next improvements in the short and medium term. The meeting also started elaborating a concept for technical improvements. Now that the standard tables are available, the second project phase is to be launched in late 2005, which envisages an increase in timeliness, the provision of all data in a chronological comparison with the present-day territorial status and an extended presentation of the regions surrounding the "3-CIP region" (three-country innovation offensive) as well as an extension of the database's contents.</p>
<p>24-25 October 2005 in Riga</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Twinning project with Latvia</p> <p>Please, refer to <i>page 9</i> for a report on the start-up activities under the twinning project with Latvia.</p>



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Overview from July 2005 to December 2005

24-26 October 2005 in Bonn	Twinning light with Slovakia – iron and steel statistics
	<p>A detailed description of the interactions between this and other surveys of business statistics was followed by an explanatory overview of typical operations of the - basically monthly - surveys of iron and steel industries, beginning with reception and progress checks via data capture, error checks and editing procedures and ending with the accessibility of results and publicised tables. The structure and maintenance of the statistical master file and its relation to the general business register were described as well. The guests were particularly impressed by the preciseness of the workflows and production processes demonstrated while they were visiting a steel works in Duisburg. There, the various stages of crude steel production were depicted very well. The programme of the visit was completed by a presentation of online publications on iron and steel in the context of the publication system of the Federal Statistical Office.</p>
24-28 October 2005 in Sofia	Twinning project with Bulgaria
	<p>A Danish expert deliberated with Bulgarian colleagues on possible uses of Bulgarian administrative data for <u>Community statistics on income and living conditions</u> (EU SILC). He came to the conclusion that administrative data as presently available would not be suitable, in a foreseeable future, to obtain reliable income data. That is why future missions under this project component should be aimed, first of all, at data mining and data processing efforts and at the consideration of future possibilities to use administrative data in Bulgaria.</p>
31 October – 04 November 2005 in Almaty	Tacis 7 "Reform of official statistics – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova"
	<p>The main topics of the consultation on <u>investment statistics</u> were related to a national methodology to be elaborated for the coverage of intangible assets and to a register of completed and planned buildings which is to be established. The Statistics Agency of Kazakhstan conducted a pilot survey, as specified in former consultations, by the time scheduled. A total of 741 enterprises were interviewed. As individual results were compared with matching records from the 2004 investment survey, they can insofar be considered consistent. The submitted work tables served as a basis for detailed analysis. In addition, use was made of information collected in the course of oral follow-up interviews. Furthermore, the project was aimed at bringing statistics on building permits, building progress and buildings completed in line with European standards and at compiling a register of buildings. From 2006 on, statistics on building permits will be collected on a quarterly basis, whereas data on building progress and buildings completed will be collected on a yearly basis.</p>
04-13 November 2005 in Beijing and Shanghai	Bilateral co-operation with China
	<p>Please, refer to <i>page 7</i> for a report on the co-operation in the field of environmental statistics.</p>



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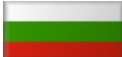





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07-08 November 2005 in Wiesbaden	PHARE programme 2003 In 2002, the Federal Statistical Office started a study on a <u>quick estimate of gross domestic product (GDP)</u> . The goal of this study is to examine the possibility of calculating a high-quality estimate of the growth rate of GDP by quarter within 30 days after the end of the quarter. Since the research institute of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO) is also engaged in such investigations, two experts from Hungary visited the Federal Statistical Office for an exchange of experience. As an introduction, they were given an overview of the statistical system of Germany, of estimating accounts by quarter and of the underlying techniques. The ensuing, detailed exchange of information about the estimation of quarterly accounts in Germany served, in particular, to discuss the calculation of value added estimates by kind of activity, the calculation of private consumption and the treatment of financial services.
 07-09 November 2005 in Bratislava	Twinning light with Slovakia – iron and steel statistics Please, refer to <i>page 6</i> for an executive summary of the final discussion on the twinning-light project.
 08-10 November 2005 in Ankara	USST co-operation project with Turkey Participants from the Statistical Office of Turkey were given a general review of the Federal Statistical Office's <u>Quality Management Concept</u> . Emphasis was laid, in particular, on topics of human resource development. The Federal Statistical Office had elaborated and used concepts, which were presented in this context. In addition to a presentation of German experience and an exchange of views on the discrepancies and similarities that can be found between the two offices, small working groups did some brainstorming to develop new ideas.
 08-10 November 2005 in Berlin	USST co-operation project with Turkey This second study visit on <u>national accounts</u> under the co-operation project with Turkey involved the participation of experts from the Berlin Statistical Office. The goal of this mission was a discussion of annual estimates based on a consideration of statistical sources. In compliance with the working priorities of statistical offices at federal states level, attention focussed on the production side of gross domestic product. A lot of time was devoted to answering questions about the calculation of value added estimates for the various branches of the economy.
 09-11 November 2005 in Berlin	USST co-operation project with Turkey This fifth study visit of Turkish agricultural statisticians to Germany in the context of the USST project dealt primarily with topics of animal production and livestock statistics. A visit embedded in the programme of this study tour was paid to the Federal Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection in Berlin. This opportunity was used not only to discuss issues related to reports on meat and animal production, but also to present German-Turkish co-operation activities in the agricultural field at ministerial level. To discuss the different statistical obligations of agricultural establishments, a farm was visited in the surroundings of Berlin, which concluded this study visit.



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14-15 November 2005 in Sofia	Twinning project with Bulgaria	<p>A joint mission of German and Danish experts concluded the work done on compiling a methodological basis for a survey on the "Use of Information and Communications Technologies in the Credit and Insurance Trade (NACE J)". The final version of the questionnaire was worked out jointly with Bulgarian colleagues and a draft version of explanatory notes to the questionnaire was compiled. Thus, the basis has been laid to implement the survey.</p>
		
17-18 November 2005 in Sofia	Twinning project with Bulgaria	<p>The Bulgarian Statistical Office was visited by an expert from the Federal Statistical Office to continue the consultations on the methodology of household budget surveys. A pilot survey, which will be based on the new methodology, is to be conducted so that a basis will be laid to improve the quality of data to be used in national accounts. This survey is to be conducted in addition to the regular survey. The contents of the questionnaire and plans regarding future work on this part of the project were discussed as well.</p>
		
21-23 November 2005 in Sofia	Twinning project with Bulgaria	<p>A joint trip of a Danish expert on registers and a Czech expert on the <u>black economy</u> served to renew the discussions on the improvement of Bulgarian business register data to be used as a basis for national accounts. In this connection the experts finalised the methodology of the pilot survey in the context of this project component and discussed further actions to be taken. To improve the database for national accounts, the questionnaire was supplemented by questions about those kinds of business activity that cannot be covered by ongoing surveys. The information obtained is to be used for the estimation of such kind of business activity.</p>
		
22-23 November 2005 in Sofia	Twinning project with Bulgaria	<p>A Danish expert carried on the consultations on the collection of data on expenditures and investments of enterprises on <u>information and communications technologies</u>. This concluded the elaboration of the survey methodology. In addition, it was possible to finalise the questionnaire and the survey plan. The advisory mission was terminated by a discussion about the implementation of the survey and a forthcoming training course for Bulgarian statisticians.</p>
		
22-23 November 2005 in Wiesbaden	PHARE programme 2003	<p>The goal of the visit was to provide help to the <u>Lithuanian</u> colleagues in estimating <u>the capital stock and depreciations</u> in Lithuania. In this context, emphasis was laid, in particular, on the Perpetual Inventory Method (PIM).</p>
		
29 November – 01 December 2005 in Belgrade	EU grant project for Serbia-Montenegro	<p>A workshop held during the final meeting on "<u>Strategic planning and management</u>" was used by an expert from the Federal Statistical Office to impart knowledge to participants about the concepts and practices of human resources management as an element of strategic planning and TQM and to deliberate jointly with participants on possible approaches, which would be in line with the framework conditions of Serbia-Montenegro. Another topic on which emphasis was laid in the discussion was related to the calculation of cost estimates for statistical inquiries.</p>
		
		



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Overview from July 2005 to December 2005

01-02 December 2005 in Prague 	PHARE programme 2003 <p>This meeting, based on the results of a first exchange of experience in April, continued the discussions with Czech colleagues on a system of <u>tourism satellite accounts</u>. The need for more practice-oriented definitions at the international level was shown, in particular, by the intensive discussion that took place about definitions and the terminology used and about their practical application.</p>
04-07 December 2005 in Wiesbaden 	Bilateral co-operation with China <p>IT specialists from the Chinese Statistical Office were made familiar with topics concerning the <u>IT strategy</u> of the Federal Statistical Office. Apart from system management, such topics as IT security were also in the focus of the discussions.</p>
05-09 December 2005 in Bonn and Düsseldorf 	Bilateral co-operation with Georgia <p>In the context of a study visit, the guests from Georgia were given a general review of <u>agricultural statistics</u> in Germany. The various statistical surveys were presented and their methodology was discussed. The Ministry of Agriculture was visited to discuss the European dimension of agricultural statistics and to speak about problems concerning the co-operation between the Ministry and the Federal Statistical Office. A unit entrusted with central market and price reporting concerning agricultural products gave an overview of the market price survey and the related publications. The Statistical Office of North Rhine-Westphalia in Düsseldorf quoted practical examples from the annual livestock census to explain to participants how data collection and processing work was done in the large surveys of agricultural statistics, which were conducted in North Rhine-Westphalia. In addition, the guests received a general idea of environmental statistics in Germany and of the household budget surveys conducted in the context of the microcensus.</p>
07-09 December 2005 in Sofia 	Twinning project with Bulgaria <p>To conclude work on a methodology for <u>Community statistics on income and living conditions</u> (EU SILC) two experts from the Federal Statistical Office met colleagues from the Bulgarian Statistical Office. The focus was on a discussion of survey documents. Many recommendations could be made regarding the design of documents and a manual for interviewers in Bulgaria. Another topic referred to the organisation of field work. Recommendations were worked out on how to establish contact with households and on how to train interviewers.</p>
13-15 December 2005 in Dresden  	PHARE programme 2003 <p>This action continued the work done on the German-Polish-Czech project of a "<u>Cross-Border Database</u>". This action focussed on technical issues related to improvements in the database needed to convert it into a user-specific customisable information system on the internet. Suggestions were discussed, in particular, relating to the data model, the user interface and the software technology to be used. Furthermore, scenarios were discussed regarding a possible division of labour in the project group for the next project development phase. The next meeting will make a detailed analysis and take a decision.</p> <p>Finally, the progress of work as specified by the latest meeting held in Prague in October was evaluated and further action was discussed, which would be needed for implementation.</p>

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