



Federal Statistical Office

INFORMATION



★ Statistical Cooperation with Transition and Developing Countries ★ Edition II / 1999 ★

Technical Cooperation in Statistics with Central and Eastern European Countries and the New Independent States

Project on Regional Statistics of the Russian Federation

Mr. Surinov, head of the Department on International Cooperation in the Russian Federation's National Statistical Office, visited the Federal Statistical Office in Berlin and the Statistical Offices of Brandenburg, North Rhine-Westphalia and Bavaria. He presented a new project on Russia's regional statistics. These statistical offices of Germany will be charged with the following issues: "Coordination and Planning of Statistical Activities at the Regional Level" and "Setting up a Basic Concept for the Collection, Processing, Storing and Dissemination of Statistical Information at the Regional Level". The Russian Federation's restructuring of regional statistics will be supported through Tacis funds and a World Bank loan, too. National Statistical Institutes of the EU are encouraged to participate in this project as well.

Berlin Branch has moved to Bonn

The Berlin Branch Office and the former "Center for Central and Eastern Europe" have moved to Bonn. The Center has been merged into the newly created Subdivision "Statistical Cooperation with Transition and Developing Countries". After eight years, the former head, Mr. Janke, has been succeeded by Mrs. Moore. From August 1999 on, the new Bonn subdivision will provide national and international users with its well-known consulting and coordination services. The Wiesbaden unit of the new subdivision which is headed by Dr. Richter will continue its work as before.

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Reorganization of Phare Statistical Cooperation

On the basis of the EU Commission's accession strategy, the technical cooperation with the Phare countries, mainly with the accession candidates, is being reorganized as well. A *"Management Group on Statistical Cooperation Phare"* has been established, and the commercial consulting company "CAMIRE Estadística S.L." has been commissioned by Eurostat to manage the programs. A team of consultants of the company has meanwhile taken up the coordination activities in Luxembourg. A newly set-up secretariat will organize the meetings of the "Management Group". The first meeting was held at Eurostat in Luxembourg from 22 to 23 April 1999.

The new "Management Group" has in fact emerged from the Eurostat Steering Committee for the Phare program. The reorganization is expected to improve and harmonize the consulting activities.

Tacis: Business and Industry Statistics

At the meeting of the Tacis Steering Committee from 17 to 20 May 1999, the Federal Statistical Office set forth the former and future cooperation in "business statistics" with the Tacis countries. The focus is on projects with the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

From the Federal Statistical Office's point of view, adequate planning of the projects requires a long-term budget or funds. Furthermore, the partner countries need much more time for the coordination of projects than formerly expected. Long-term contracts are recommended as well as flexible short-term reactions on an unforeseen development.

Since 1995 Tacis support and assistance has been focused on providing advice on the methodological and organizational framework

of modern industry statistics. This included the harmonization of each statistical system in the transition countries with international standards. Proposals and recommendations have been made on the set of variables in industry and on the survey and calculation procedures, taking into consideration the demand of national users in the partner countries.

In all advised countries, each system of short-term and long-term industrial indicators had been redesigned. Statistical information has been collected on "incoming orders" and on "orders on hand" in Russia since 1997 and in Belarus since 1998. In Belarus, it was difficult to implement this innovation, because many enterprises were not used to recording their incoming orders. In Ukraine, turnover and incoming orders have been recorded on a monthly basis since early 1999. The State Offices for Statistics of Bavaria and North Rhine-Westphalia are supporting these projects in Belarus and in Ukraine.

After several discussions on different calculation methods of indices on orders as well as on production and turnover, new index methods have been developed. They are influenced by German methodology.

In 1998 Ukraine and Belarus introduced a new classification system for recording economic activities and for covering production in industry. The system was deduced from "NACE" and "PRODCOM".

The classification of industrial products, economic activities in industry and groups of producers to record the industrial output was implemented by Minstat Belarus in line with the procedure proposed by Germany. The same applies to the selection of industries to conduct a survey on "incoming orders" and "orders on hand".



Ceremony on the move of the Berlin Branch Office

A ceremony held in the German capital of Berlin on 25 June 1999 was devoted to the move of the Federal Statistical Office's Berlin Branch and its "Center for Central and Eastern Europe". Representatives of federal and state authorities as well as of the media took part in this ceremony.

The Secretary of State of Germany's Federal Ministry on Interior Affairs, Mrs. Zypries, and the President of the Federal Statistical Office, Mr. Hahlen, focused on the achievements of the Consulting and Training Center in Berlin. They also referred to the success of the unification of East and West German statistics and to the successful implementation of technical cooperation with the Central and Eastern European transition countries. They pointed out that the technical cooperation would be continued after the move from Berlin to Bonn.

International Conference on "Measuring Inflation"

The fourth annual international conference of data "producers" and "users" was held in Rostock from 27 to 28 May 1999. The sessions were organized by Prof. Dr. Elsner, Deputy Director of the Statistical Office of Berlin. The conference was hosted by the University of Rostock, represented by Prof. Dr. Kück. It was held in the "Haus der Begegnung", a new international meeting center in Rostock. The first international conference had been held at the Statistical Office of Berlin in 1995 and the second one at the European University "Viadrina" in Frankfurt (Oder). The third conference took place - again with Polish support - at the University of Leipzig.

Data "producers" and "users"

The series of conferences have significantly improved the dialogue between the "producers" of official statistics and the "users" of statistical data. Their purpose is to exchange practical and methodological know-how and experience and to offer proposals on issues for studies as well as for diplomas, doctoral theses, and research projects. The conferences are looking beyond na-

tional boundaries and they contribute to the harmonization of European price statistics.

Germany's statistics on inflation were presented by experts from the Federal Statistical Office of Germany and the Statistical Offices of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania and Thuringia. Speeches were held by representatives of Germany's Federal Bank (Deutsche Bundesbank) and experts of the universities of Potsdam, Frankfurt (Main), Magdeburg and Leipzig.

All participants appreciated the Polish contribution on the methodological problems to measure inflation in Poland. The discussion focussed on procedures of obtaining the information required prior to Poland's accession to the EU. There was also discussion on the issue "cost-of-living versus consumer prices" and on the rearrangement of the family budget surveys taking into account the new types of households.

The closing discussion approved that the conference once again had been very useful. The next conference is planned to be held in Potsdam in the year 2000.

Statistics on Domestic Trade in the Russian Federation

Brochure on Domestic Trade

The Russian Federation's State Committee on Statistics, Goskomstat, published a brochure on domestic trade statistics in May this year. The brochure presents the contributions to the domestic trade seminar last year and the questionnaires drafted during the implementation of the project.

Seminar on Domestic Trade

A seminar on "Statistical Recording of Competition on Commodity Markets" took place in the Russian Federation at the State Committee on Statistics, Goskomstat, from 4 to 6 December 1998. The German participants were sent from the Federal Statistical Office, the "Monopolies Commission", the "Institute for Trade Research" at Cologne University and from the "ifo-Institute" in Munich. The Russian participants came from Goskomstat, the Department on Domestic and Foreign Trade Affairs, the "Economic Research Center" of the Government of the Russian Federation, the "Institute for Enterprises and Market Analyses" at the Academy for



Economics and from the “Anti-Monopolies Commission”.

Competition

The project on domestic trade was aimed at developing procedures for recording competition on different commodity markets. The experience of both the Russian and German experts proved to be very useful.

Staff from 29 regions of the Russian Federation took part in the seminar. The participants got basic know-how for recording competition on commodity markets and for using all statistical instruments available. The discussions focused on issues, such as the definition of competition and commodity markets, the description of the variables and the reporting units, and the selection of enterprises and the evaluation of the data.

The representatives from Russia, including the Vice-President of Goskomstat, Mr. Rybak, appreciated the meetings of experts and the seminars for recording data on the commodity market in the Russian Federation.

The Russian Federation intends to apply these new statistical instruments for the observation of one selected commodity market in 30 regions every quarter as of 1999.

Reliability of Economic Data in Countries in Transition

Technical cooperation is aimed at harmonizing procedures on data collection, data processing and data analysis, and the legal and institutional framework for official statistics in the transition countries. Evaluations performed by independent experts prove that harmonization and the adoption of international standards have made considerable progress in the Phare countries. The preconditions for initiating accession negotiations with EU candidate countries can be regarded as fulfilled. The success achieved by harmonization of statistics has been pointed out by the EU Commission and Eurostat as well.

Doubts about the quality of data

Despite a successful harmonization of the framework, many economic experts point out their doubts about the reliability and quality of the economic data provided by the transition countries. In one of the Phare reports on statistics, Mr. Henning Christophersen, former Vice President of the European Commission, criticized the informative value of the data. The Director General of the Lithuanian Department of Statistics has also admitted that the reports and information provided by the enterprises are in many cases inadequate to cover information on the economy.

The six leading German economic research institutes indicated their doubts about the reliability of the data provided by the transition countries as well. They stated in their 1998 compendium on the state of the economic and the reform process in Central and Eastern Europe that several obstacles would still have to be overcome. One of the most severe problems to be solved for improving information on the Central and Eastern European national economies is to improve the statistical data basis.

The legal and institutional framework

A precondition for providing reliable and comparable data is the implementation of a well-functioning system of finance and business accounting in the enterprises of the transition countries. The experience gained with reforming the new Federal States in Germany proves that the creation of such a new system is a long-term task. In most transition countries, this institutional precondition has still to be established, and experience with the framework has to be gained. The “legal concept of auditors” is one of the pillars. Another aspect is the viability of those institutions in transition countries which collect information on registered enterprises, on the establishment of new enterprises etc. and on the liquidation of old companies.



Republic of Moldova

The Thuringian Statistical Office has also been charged with implementing Tacis projects of the European Union. The office supports the restructuring of official statistics in the transition countries of Central and Eastern Europe and in the New Independent States.

Restructuring official statistics

Technical cooperation between Thuringia and the "Department of Statistics and Sociological Analysis of the Republic of Moldova" are focusing on energy statistics as well as on investment, construction and housing statistics.

The major objectives of cooperation are to adapt official statistics in Moldova to the standards of a market-oriented economy, to produce data going in line with European standards, and to collect, process and evaluate statistical data taking into account the demand of Moldovan users.

The Thuringian Statistical Office also assists the Moldovan statistical office in establishing modern procedures for collecting, processing and evaluating statistical data.

During the first phase of this cooperation project, two consultations took place in the National Statistical Office of the Republic of Moldova in Chisinau in October 1998. In exchange, Moldovan statisticians visited the Thuringian Statistical Office in spring 1999.

Energy statistics

The Department of Statistics in Chisinau was recommended to take decision on the re-

structuring of statistics on energy and water supply. The restructuring is to take into account Germany's energy statistics.

During their visit to Thuringia, the Moldovan statisticians got information on the operations to provide data on energy statistics. The focus was on procedures to print addresses automatically and to check questionnaires electronically. The tables and indices compiled and published served as basic models to present overviews on Moldovan energy statistics, considering the standards of the European Union.

Business register and crafts industry

The establishment and management of a business register and its central function in compiling statistics were presented. Each local unit and each enterprise is recorded in that business register. They can be identified via auxiliary variables such as the name of the firm, its address, and its industry. The procedures of business registration or deregistration and of file-based surveys were also presented.

The Thuringian Statistical Office provided to the experts of the Department of Statistics and Sociological Analysis detailed information about conducting a sample survey and about processing and evaluating the data in the crafts industry. The methodological bases of a sampling plan as applied in German crafts reports and its territorial stratification were presented, too. Based on the results published, there was discussion on the disadvantages of sampling procedures and on the problems to get representative data.

Statistics on construction of housing

The statistics on "building permits" and the statistics on the completion of buildings were proposed as adequate short-term indicators to provide information on the economic performance in the construction industry. The statistics are also a basis for updating the stock of buildings and dwellings in Moldova.



Multinational Activities



Statistical Office of "Schleswig-Holstein"

East-West Cooperation

Since the beginning of social and economic reforms in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CECs), Germany's official statistics and the institutions of the European Union (EU) and the EU Member States have assisted the transition towards democracies and market economies.

The German cooperation activities are implemented by the Federal Statistical Office, the Statistical Offices of different Federal States and by several research institutes. The Statistical Office of "Schleswig-Holstein" has been charged with the training of "multipliers". The seminars were organized by the Federal Statistical Office for staff from the new states of the former Soviet Union (CIS). On the basis of cooperation agreements between Schleswig-Holstein and various CECs, bilateral training programs were implemented, too.

Agricultural statistics

The assistance provided by the Statistical Office of Schleswig-Holstein was focused on its experience in agricultural statistics. The restructuring of these statistics is a precondition of the accession to the European Union. The increase in the number of smaller family-based agricultural units has forced the CECs to manage the restructuring of agricultural statistics. Apart from agricultural production, the new statistics have to cover the changing structure of agricultural units as well.

The experts from the transition countries were advised on the following topics of agricultural statistics:

- National, regional and European legislation on statistics
- cooperation with statistical offices on the municipal level

- statistics on agricultural production, surveys on agriculture, surveys on horticulture
- register of agricultural units
- on-line processing of agricultural statistics
- procedures for the dissemination of regional results to the Federal Statistical Office and to Eurostat, and for the publication of regional results, including information services.

Estonia

Owing to its geography, Schleswig-Holstein has traditionally had close contacts with the countries bordering the Baltic Sea. Those contacts have been deepened since the "opening" of the former "Eastern Bloc". The relations with the Republic of Estonia have also been improved recently. The Ministries of Agriculture of both Schleswig-Holstein and of the Republic of Estonia signed a declaration on bilateral cooperation which at first covered the period 1991 to 1996. It then was prolonged to cover a period until the year 2000. Bilateral cooperation has been focused on the promotion of education and training in agricultural statistics and on the exchange of experts as well.

Hungary

Invited by the Ministry of Economics of Schleswig-Holstein, a Hungarian delegation of experts and managers charged with affairs in agriculture and forestry visited the statistical office of Schleswig-Holstein. As Hungary is implementing a federative system, the Hungarian delegation was interested in getting information on Germany's system. The focus was on procedures of data collection in the German Federal States and on the legal framework as well as on the integration into the national and European statistical system. Advice was given on the state of cooperation with organizations and institutions also active in agriculture.



Cooperation Activities



Summary for April to June 1999

29.3.-1.4.1999 in Bucharest (Romania)	⇒ Experts of the Statistical Office of Berlin advised the "National Commission for Statistics of Romania" on the use of modern information technology. The focus was on the Internet, on databases, on meta-information systems as well as on data processing also on the regional level.
12.-16.4.1999 in Wiesbaden (Germany)	⇒ Statisticians from the Ukraine were given information on publishing and disseminating statistical data to different users. The library, the press office, and the printing office of the Federal Statistical Office were also presented.
12.-16.4.1999 in Prague (Czech Republic)	⇒ A delegation headed by the President of the Bavarian Office for Statistics and Data Processing visited the Czech Statistical Office. The exchange of experience focused on obtaining information on the Euroregions along bilateral borders.
13.-16.4.1999 in Suhl and Erfurt (Germany)	⇒ The experts from Uzbekistan got information on the system of energy statistics in Germany. The focus was on the up-to-date standards of the EU on the implementation of energy statistics.
14.-16.4.1999 in Prague (Czech Republic)	⇒ An expert of the Federal Statistical Office informed experts of the Czech Statistical Office about the system of Germany's statistics on domestic trade. Information was given on Germany's experience in implementing EU regulations on short-term economic statistics, on business statistics, and on registers.
19.-21.4.1999 in Wiesbaden (Germany)	⇒ During their visit to the Federal Statistical Office, experts of the Central Statistical Office of Hungary were informed about the "Federal Health Information System", procedures of setting up and using databases, as well as about the "Data Warehousing" concept and its implementation by the ORACLE program.
19.-23.4.1999 in Wiesbaden, Düsseldorf, and Saarbrücken (Germany)	⇒ Advice to experts from Kazakhstan focused on the Statistical Yearbook of the Federal Republic of Germany. At the Office for Data Processing and Statistics of North Rhine-Westphalia, detailed discussions were held on managing publications. A highlight of this consultation was the presentation of the very modern printing facility in Saarbrücken and its various printing techniques.
20.-23.4.1999 in Wiesbaden and Saar- brücken (Germany)	⇒ Experts of the Federal Statistical Office and the Statistical Office of the Saar gave advice to Hungarian statisticians on the procedures to implement surveys on the economic performance and the business structure in retail trade in Germany.
22.-23.4.1999 in Luxembourg	⇒ The first meeting of the "Management Group for Statistical Cooperation with Phare Countries" focused on evaluating the progress made in Phare countries with regard to the European "Acquis Communautaire", i.e. the European statistical standards.



Cooperation Activities



Summary for April to June 1999

24.-30.4.1999 in Berlin and Potsdam (Germany)	⇒ Consultation by Romanian statisticians at the Statistical Office of Berlin was focused on the "statistics on building permits". The consultation was completed by visits to local "permitting agencies" in Berlin and Potsdam and to experts charged with city and regional planning at Berlin's Technical University.
27.-30.4.1999 in Almaty (Kazakhstan)	⇒ The national statistical office of Kazakhstan was advised on issues such as covering output in construction. The project is funded by the GTZ project "construction price statistics". Also discussed were procedures to cover indices on construction prices for the Republic of Kazakhstan by data provided by enterprises.
29.-30.4.1999 in Bucharest (Romania)	⇒ By the expert mission Romanian statisticians were assisted to implement the population census in Romania. There was also an exchange of experience on different procedures and methods to cover population. A visit of Romanian experts to the Statistical Office of the Free State of Saxony is planned for autumn 1999.
3.-6.5.1999 in Wiesbaden (Germany)	⇒ During this study visit the experts from Kyrgyzstan were informed about data technologies of various Internet providers. The consultation will improve the Internet services of the National Statistical Committee (Natstatkom) of the Kyrgyz Republic. It is recommended to charge also the different Natstatkom departments to improve the Internet offer of the Committee.
3.-7.5.1999 in Wiesbaden and Berlin (Germany)	⇒ During the study visit of experts from the "National Commission for Statistics of Romania", the different transport statistics were presented. The focus was on road, air, and railway transport statistics as well as on statistics of inland waterways transport and maritime transportation. Major issues dealt with were data sources, data collection methods, indicators and their definitions, as well as dissemination of statistical data.
4.-7.5.1999 in Almaty (Kazakhstan)	⇒ The Tacis project on "Publications and Public Relations" supports the Agency for Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan to implement marketing activities. This includes pricing and designing of publications, and the management of marketing activities. Also, a conference was held on how to improve the dialogue between users and producers of statistics.
10.-12.5.1999 in Tashkent (Uzbekistan)	⇒ Staff members of the "State Department for Statistics of the Republic of Uzbekistan" and external users of statistics participated in the seminar on "Relations to Users and Dissemination Policy". It was recommended to improve and promote public relations with the press, radio, and television, to acquire new user groups, and to set up an information center.
12.-18.5.1999 in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) and Almaty (Kazakhstan)	⇒ In Bishkek, experts of the Statistical Office of Berlin presented the European and German systems of investment statistics to statisticians of Kyrgyzstan. Investment statistics of Kyrgyzstan were also evaluated. Statisticians from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan were advised on investment statistics in Almaty. Discussions focused on the questionnaire for a survey of domestic and foreign investment of enterprises, which was drafted and presented by Kazakhstan.



Cooperation Activities



Summary for April to June 1999

17.-21.5.1999 in Schwerin (Germany)	⇒	Statisticians of the National Commission for Statistics of Romania got advice on the methodology of structural surveys in agriculture at the Statistical Office of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. They gained information on the agricultural census of 1999, which is being held now all over Germany. The register of agricultural units and the statistics on crop were also discussed.
17.-21.5.1999 in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan)	⇒	The participants in that seminar were informed about basic principles of different sampling procedures. They were also informed about the implementation of sample surveys in Germany.
17.-20.5.1999 in Luxembourg	⇒	At the meeting of the "Steering Committee on Tacis Program" the strategy of statistical cooperation and the agreements between the EU and the CIS partner countries were discussed. More attention will be paid to long-term planning and coordinating of international and bilateral cooperation activities.
17.-21.5.1999 in Schwerin (Germany)	⇒	The study visit of statisticians from Romania to the Statistical Office of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania focused on agricultural surveys and agricultural censuses as well as on registers of agricultural units. Statistics on crop and cultivation were also presented.
21.5.1999 in Wiesbaden (Germany)	⇒	The Deputy Chairman of the State Department for Statistics of Georgia visited the Federal Statistical Office to discuss future bilateral cooperation projects.
25.-28.5.1999 in Potsdam, Düsseldorf, and Munich (Germany)	⇒	Experts of the Federal Statistical Office and of the Statistical Offices of Brandenburg, North Rhine-Westphalia, and Bavaria met to coordinate a new Tacis project on regional statistics to support the Russian Federation. It is intended to charge Germany with the management and coordination of two sub-projects.
25.5.-4.6.1999 in Kamenz (Germany)	⇒	The study visit of Kyrgyz statisticians was focused on the implementation of a census in agriculture. Consulting at the Statistical Office of the Free State of Saxony was focused on the legislation on agricultural statistics, the processing program labeled "AGRA", on sample units, on registers and address files as well as on data collection, and public relations activities.
27.-28.5.1999 in Rostock (Germany)	⇒	Participants in the international conference on "measuring inflation" came from the Federal Statistical Office, the Statistical Offices of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania and Thuringia, and Germany's Federal Bank (Deutsche Bundesbank), as well as from the universities of Potsdam, Frankfurt (Main), Magdeburg, and Leipzig. As for the reform countries, experts came from Poland, Lithuania, and Ukraine.
31.5.-4.6.1999 in Kiev (Ukraine)	⇒	At the "Advanced Training Center of Ukraine" in Kiev, experts of the Federal Statistical Office and the Thuringian Statistical Office held a seminar on "domestic trade statistics". Staff members of the State Committee for Statistics of Ukraine and users of statistical data participated.



Cooperation Activities



Summary for April to June 1999

2.-8.6.1999 in Baku (Azerbaijan)	⇒ During their mission, experts from the Statistical Office of Berlin recommended to the statistical offices of Azerbaijan and Georgia to introduce international standards as well as modern statistical procedures for electronic data compilation and processing to cover investment in construction.
7.-11.6.1999 in Moscow (Russia)	⇒ Experts from France and Germany were informed about the progress made in restructuring the national classification system in the Russian Federation. General problems of the "NACE" system and special questions of national subdivisions were issues of discussion.
14.-16.6.1999 in Wiesbaden (Germany)	⇒ Methods and principles to calculate the value added of the domestic product on a quarterly basis were presented. The Russian experts presented the results and their calculations on industry statistics, which were in line with the German system.
14.-16.6.1999 in Stuttgart and Hanover (Germany)	⇒ At the Statistical Offices of "Baden-Wuerttemberg" and "Lower Saxony", experts from the Czech Statistical Office gained information on the up-to-date geographical information system, on regional accounts, and on the provision of regional statistical data.
21.-23.6.1999 in St. Petersburg (Russia)	⇒ At that meeting, Tacis projects were evaluated which had been implemented in the Russian Federation over the last four years by statisticians of the Federal Republic of Germany and of EU member countries. The meeting was attended by experts from Eurostat, CESD, and the Federal Statistical Office to prepare future cooperation with the Russian Federation.
23.-25.6.1999 in Berlin (Germany)	⇒ At the Statistical Office of Berlin, experts of the National Commission for Statistics of Romania obtained information on the hotel and accommodation statistics and on cooperation activities on this issue. The delegation visited the "International Congress Center" and the "Company for Tourism Marketing" in Berlin.
28.-30.6.1999 in Kiev (Ukraine)	⇒ The advice on industry statistics of Ukraine was focused on the methodology of calculating the production index at the national and regional level, an index which had been drafted and set up by Ukraine.