



TWINNING CONTRACT

GE 21 NDICI ST 01 23

Further Strengthening of the Georgian Statistical System

MISSION REPORT

on

Component 1:

Methodological soundness in Standards and Classifications in line with the EU requirements enhanced

Sub-Component 1.3:

Demographic and population statistics developed

Activity 1.3.1:

MS best practices and MS DESAP implementation examples

Mission carried out by
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Tbilisi, Georgia
September 10-13, 2024

Further Strengthening of the Georgian Statistical System

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List of Abbreviations

- EU = European Union
- BC = Beneficiary Country (Georgia)
- ESS = European Statistical System
- UN FPOS= United Nation's Fundamental Principles
- ESCoP= European statistics Code of Practice
- DESAP = the generic checklist for a systematic quality assessment of surveys in the European Statistical System (ESS)
- GSBPM = Generic Statistical Business Process Model
- GAMSO = Generic Activity Model for Statistical Organizations
- MR = Mandatory results
- MS = EU Member State (Finland, Germany, Italy)
- PL = Project Leader
- RTA = Resident Twinning Advisor
- SR = Sub-results
- STE = Short-term Expert

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1. General comments

This mission report was prepared as a part of the EU Twinning Project “Further Strengthening of the Georgian Statistical System”.

The purpose of the activity was to discuss the aim of the Activity 1.3.1 on DESAP and to show MS best practices in quality auditing, self-assessment, and MS DESAP implementation examples. The consultants would like to express their thanks to all officials met for the active discussions and valuable information they received during the mission.

The views and observations stated in this report are those of the consultant and do not necessarily correspond to the views of EU, Statistical Office of Georgia, Statistics Finland or Statistics Germany.

2. Status at the beginning of the mission

This was the first mission of the Twinning project on Activity 1.3.1. on DESAP. The aim of the mission was to demonstrate experiences of Statistics Finland and Destatis in quality auditing and self-assessment, to present EU and UN requirements and recommendations in this area and to showcase the DESAP questionnaire published by EUROSTAT, including how it has been implemented, adapted and further developed at Destatis. The focus was on discussions to identify good practices and challenges in self-assessments.

Geostat experts explained that within the Global Assessment of the National Statistical System of the Republic of Georgia in 2019, Geostat was encouraged to establish a system whereby all statistical divisions undertake a quality self-assessment of their statistical outputs on a regular basis. The results of the self-assessments, together with resultant action plans, should be submitted to the high-level committee on quality.

In discussions with Geostat experts, we received information about the previous work carried out in these domains at Geostat, including the prior support of Statistics Sweden in the preparation of quality mapping and quality audit exercises.

3. Status of mission results

The purpose of the mission stated on the ToR were fully met.

- Discuss Quality Management within the GSBPM framework
- CoP vs GSBPM as the basis for quality self-assessments
- Self-assessment vs Auditing
- MS Quality Assessment best practices
- MS DESAP implementation examples

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- Geostat current self-assessment practice assessed, and future self-assessment objectives defined
- Indicators for GE-DESAP model drafted (how to adapt DESAP)

On **Tuesday**, all the participants presented themselves and gave a short overview of their competences. Additionally, the tasks and duties of Methodology and Quality Management Division were discussed.

After the general discussion, the discussion continued on two items; a) ESS Code of Practice, ESS QAF and European Regulation 223/2009 and b) UN FPOS and FPOS Implementation Guidelines. The discussion continued with two country examples on quality management: a) Destatis Quality Management and b) Finland Quality Guidelines. At the end of day, Geostat gave an excellent presentation on Quality Management, quality mapping, quality audits and quality self-assessments already conducted in Geostat.

Quality mappings were conducted and evaluated for all important regular statistics production processes in 2014–2015. In 2018, the Methodology and Quality Management Division started the quality audit of the statistical processes based on the experience gained from quality mapping. In 2023, a self-assessment questionnaire was developed based on ESCoP, following the example of Statistical Office of Armenia. Statistics Sweden has provided remarkable assistance in mapping, audit, and self-assessment activities.

Geostat already has a lot of experience in audit and self-assessment work, processes, and duties. The experts took this into account, when planning future days activities.

On **Wednesday**, the day started introducing Eurostat DESAP questionnaire, question types etc. DESAP was created over 20 years ago and it is not fully aligned with the newest version of GSBPM, EU statistical law (223/2009), other later created recommendations and reception of administrative data in use of statistical production. Destatis showed how they adapted DESAP for their use and in which aspects they created an advanced version of DESAP. Destatis' DESAP is a tool for self-assessment, which was conducted on predefined occasions. Only specific predefined occasions resulted in an obligatory conduction of DESAP self-assessment. The use of the tool was mainly voluntary or self-responsible. Destatis decided to terminate the use of this tool in 2018 and instead introduced the Quality Guidelines of the Federal and Land Statistical Offices, which are strongly aligned with GSBPM and have a stronger obligatory character.

Also experience from Finland on statistical quality auditing was presented. In Finland, the self-assessment is combined with quality auditing process as this brings more objectivity in the assessment process. At the end of day, also the differences between auditing and self-assessment was discussed.

Destatis' DESAP-questionnaire and instructions, as well as Statistics Finland's self-assessment questionnaire were given to Quality Units.

On **Thursday**, the morning session continued with country examples on the process and results of quality assessment. After the country examples, the practical work on Geostat DESAP began. The discussion focused on strategic and operational goals of self-assessment work, how to choose statistics for self-assessment (pre-defined occasions), the process and organization of self-assessment activities, and the material and training is required.

On **Friday**, the work started on Thursday continued, and points were clarified where needed. The output of this discussion was prepared on a PowerPoint titled "Concluding slides finalized" which is attached to this mission report. A SWOT analysis on self-assessment activity was also discussed and documented.

On Friday, the “home work” and next mission’s (25-28.3.2025) draft agenda was planned and agreed. Deputy Executive Director Mr. Paata Shavishvili was met, and results of mission were described.

4. Recommendations for the future (short and long term)

Recommendation for Geostat in short term

- Develop the self-assessment questionnaire.
- Develop the process for pilot tests and templates for reports.
- Develop supporting documents for statisticians (manual, checklist, standard presentation).
- Identify the reference documentation to be used in self-assessment.

Recommendation for Geostat in long term

- Develop the process of self-assessment of their statistical outputs for all statistical divisions on a regular basis, including a reporting structure (e.g. on the results and resultant action plans).
- Develop an IT-solution /IT-questionnaire for self-assessment.
- Improve reporting of self-assessment outcomes (recommendations, best practices, weaknesses)
- Extend the self-assessment model to ONA’s and train the ONAs’ personnel on the model of self-assessment.

5. Outstanding issues and next steps

Tasks to be concluded before the next missions by Geostat:

- Preparation of an adopted/improved questionnaire based on DESAP by the quality unit and further improved by pre-pilots (selected statistical divisions) – taking into account the discussions on possible improvements during the first mission.
- Preparation of a standard presentation (e.g., with short instructions on goal, structure of questionnaire, what has to be done, who is to be involved, why is the statistic chosen)
- Preparation of an adopted manual/instruction (to support the statistical divisions on how to fill in the questionnaire, what to consider when organizing the self-assessment workshop)
- First draft of the process for conducting self-assessment based on DESAP.
- Conduct 1st meeting: Information meeting” with 2-3 people of one statistic involved, before the questionnaire is sent.
- Conduct 2nd meeting to train the people involved on how to fill in the questionnaire.
- Preparation and organization of the self-assessment workshop, which will be conducted during second mission.
- Send all the prepared documents to experts from Finland/Germany: mid-February 2025

Tasks to be concluded before the next missions by experts:

- Experts will go through the prepared material and make notes on possible improvement areas.
- Experts will plan the next mission agenda and required material.

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The next activities to take place:

- 25-27.3.2025 in Tbilisi
- 1st Day: Reviewing the drafts of materials prepared by Geostat (questionnaire, standard presentation, manual/instructions, process,..)
- 2nd Day: Conduction of the self assessment Workshop (for one pilot) with the following aims:
 - Test and further improvement of questionnaire
 - Test and further improvement of process
 - Test and further improvement of the materials
 - Getting results of quality assessment of pilot
- 3rd Day: Review /Evaluation of Workshop and summarazing identified improvements to questionnaire, process, materials, results
- 4th day: Discussing and taking the decision, if further pilots will be needed and conducted (whether within another mission or GEOSTAT on their own)

Annex 1. Terms of Reference

EU Twinning Project GE 21 NDICI ST 01 23
Further Strengthening of the Georgian Statistical System

Component 1:

Methodological soundness in Standards and Classifications in line with the EU requirements enhanced

Sub-Component 1.3:

Demographic and population statistics developed

Activity 1.3.1:

MS best practices and MS DESAP implementation examples

Dates: 10 - 13 September 2024

*Hosting Institute: National Statistics Office of Georgia
30, T. Dadiani St., 0180 Tbilisi, Georgia*

0. Objective, Mandatory results and Sub-results for the components 1–3

Objective:

Present how quality self-assessment is carried out in MS's – Identify how it should be carried out in GeoStat, specifically with regards DESAP and the self-assessment of GeoStat statistical surveys.

Mandatory results (MR) and Sub-results (SR) under each MR

- **MR 1:** Methodological soundness in standards and classifications in line with the EU requirements enhanced
 - **SR 1.3** The Self-assessment survey based on DESAP introduced
 - **Prerequisite(s):** none

1. Purpose of the activity

- Discuss Quality Management within the GSBPM framework
- CoP vs GSBPM as the basis for quality self-assessments
- Self-assessment vs Auditing
- MS Quality Assessment best practices
- MS DESAP implementation examples
- GeoStat current self-assessment practice assessed, and future self-assessment objectives defined
- Indicators for GE:DESAP model drafted (how to adapt DESAP)

2. Expected output of the activity

- Mission Report
- DESAP translated to Georgian
- BC should have a good understanding of DESAP and how it is used/implemented in MS's
- BC should have a toolbox for the implementation of GE:DESAP (the adapted self-assessment model designed for GeoStat based on DESAP and other best practices)

- BC should have the needed skills for running a pilot self-assessment based on the GE:DESAP model.

3. Participants

MS Experts

- Ms. Leena Storgårds, Senior Advisor, Statistics Finland
- Ms. Irina Meinke, Project Lead “Register of institutions and collective living quarters”, Destatis Germany

BC Experts

- Mr. Teimuraz Gogishvili, CL Counterpart, Head of Methodology and Quality Management Division, National Statistics Office of Georgia
- Ms. Julieta Beraia, Chief Specialist, Methodology and Quality Management Division, National Statistics Office of Georgia
- Mr. Levan Tserediani, Chief Specialist, Methodology and Quality Management Division, National Statistics Office of Georgia
- Ms. Maia Gogiberidze, Chief Specialist, Methodology and Quality Management Division, National Statistics Office of Georgia

Twinning team

- Mr. Marko Ylitalo, RTA
- Ms. Irma Gabunia, RTAA

4. Resources

Translation and interpretation will be provided throughout the activity if needed.

5. Agenda

Date	Place	Topic
Tuesday – 10 Sept. 10:00 – 13:00 14:00 – 17:30	Meeting room	Welcoming, acquaintance, program of the activity (Marko Ylitalo) MS: Introduction to Quality Management (EU, UN, MS)
Wednesday - 11 Sept. 10:00 – 13:00 14:00 – 17:30	Meeting room	MS: Summary and conclusion from day 1 MS: The structure and content of DESAP MS: The structure and content of DESAP self-assessment in Germany and quality-audits in Finland MS: Outlook on self-assessment and auditing activities
Thursday – 12 Sept. 10:00 – 13:00 14:00 – 17:30	Meeting room	MS: Summary and conclusion from day 2 MS: The process and results of DESAP self-assessment in Germany and quality audits in Finland MS: General documentation and communication in self-assessment/auditing Workshop: Discussion on Geostat self-assessment; aims, process, organization, questionnaire etc.

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Friday – 13 Sept. 10:00 – 13:00 14:00 – 17:30	Meeting room	MS: Summary and conclusion from day 3 Workshop: Preparation Pilot self-assessment by GeoStat MS: Summarizing the week Decision on activities before the next mission: BC & MS Plans for next mission Final remarks and thanks
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Annex 2. Plans for Geostat self-assessment



Self Assessment: General / Strategic Goals

Assessment and improvement of the quality

- Commitment of GEOSTAT to European standards / EU Acquis as well as the compliance with the law of Statistics of Georgia
- Increase quality culture and awareness about quality aspects in the national statistical system
- Identify weaknesses and strengths, identify improvement actions and prioritize them
- Identify and spread best practices around the whole organization to help standardize and harmonize statistical processes
- Top management get summarized information for decision making concerning improvements done and resource management (pre-condition: commitment of top management)



Self Assessment: Operational Goals (I)

0. Optional: Mandate from the executive director to develop and implement self assessment based on DESAP

- Executives director give mandate to methodology department / quality unit to conduct self assessments based on DESAP (including pilots)

1. Preparation of the questionnaire for self assessment and defining of the process

- Open: which tool to use? / in which format (excel/word)?
- Quality unit works out a first draft of the process and responsibilities
 - Discussion of the first draft within the pre-pilot
- Development of the questionnaire / adaptation of the questionnaire
 - Quality unit works out a first draft with first improvements in accordance with input of sub-component 1.3 on DESAP
 - Optional online meeting with experts (e.g. december or january)
 - Selected statistical units are consulted for further improvements (questionnaire sent by mail for preparation, afterwards discussion on improvements) [pre-pilot]



Self Assessment: Operational Goals (II)

2. Conduction of pilots for testing and further improvements

- Choosing and contacting the pilots /statistics departments a) to **test** the process of self assessments (refining/defining the occasions/criteria for conduction etc) and b) to **test** the questionnaire for further improvements of the questionnaire and c) to **get results of quality assessment of pilot**

3. Finalize a) the questionnaire and b) the process

- ...

4. Mandatory: Mandate from the executive director to develop and implement self assessment based on DESAP

- Executives director give mandate to methodology department / quality unit to conduct self assessments based on DESAP (including pilots) and for the defined process

5. First („real“ / tested) self assessments are conducted

- According to the final defined process (see step 3)



First Ideas: Pre-defined occasions / criterias for conducting DESAP self assessment

- **Before** dramatical change of statistical processes (mandatory)
 - **After** (e.g. 1 year) dramatical change of statistical process (optional)
- **When users have severe complains about quality of statistical products** (optional) / **Before producers** (like Eurostat, World Bank, IMF, etc.) are conducting Compliance Visits or Sectoral Reviews (optional)
 - **open: to be defined what are severe complaints**
- **Decision of top management level** (mandatory)
- **Key persons leaving a statistic / dramatic turnover of employees with direct impact on the statistical production process** (optional)
- **Decision of statistical department** (optional)
- **Decision of Methodology and Quality division** (mandatory)
 - **open: is there special criteria needed for decision of the methodological and quality division?**

First Ideas: Process/Organization/Responsibility/Timetable

- General information meeting for the Head of statistical departments involved in the self assessment to inform about the self assessment in general (responsible: quality unit)
 - Content: short instructions on goal, structure of questionnaire, what has to be done, who is to be involved, why is the statistic chosen (see standard presentation)
 - General information meeting just for statistical departments which are chosen next for self assessment (prioritizing)
- Statistical departments name the participants for self assessment (responsible: head of the department)
 - Recommendation by the quality unit: 2-3 persons per statistics
- Fixing the date of self assessment and sent the questionnaire and other relevant material (responsible: quality unit)
- Planing and organization of workshop (responsible: quality unit)
 - Reserving room, defining what role who takes, duration of the workshop,...



First Ideas: What materials are required? (I)

- Finalized questionnaire for self assessment
 - Manual with instructions how to fill in the questionnaire of self assessment
- Standard presentation (for the General information meeting)
- Reference material (optional)
 - Law on official statistics (LOS)
 - Routine descriptions for statistical process
 - Metadata description
 - Methodological guidelines
 - Policy documents and guidelines (revision policy, etc.)
 - Classifications





First Ideas: What materials are required? (II)

- Evaluation questionnaire after self assessment (only for pilot)
 - Aim: Evaluate the process and questionnaire of the pilots
- Follow up Report
 - Development and adaptation of a standard template for the follow up report on the basis of the standard template of quality audits already existing
 - „Detailed“: identify and plan the improvement actions which were identified during the self assessment (mainly for the quality unit and statistical department)
 - „General“: Summary for high level management (pre-conditions **when a certain amount of self assessments** were conducted or enough results / best practices were identified)



First Ideas: What kind of training/process is required?

Pilot

- Conduct 1st meeting „Information meeting“ with 2-3 people involved, before questionnaire was sent
- Sending questionnaire to the statisticians
- ~After 2 weeks: Conduct 2nd meeting to train them how to fill in the questionnaire (teach about different questions,..)
- 2-3 months time to fill in the questionnaire by each person involved + sent it to Finland/Germany
- Conduction of Workshop (~1 day)

First Ideas: What kind of training/process is required?

„real“ self assessment

- Conduct 1st meeting „Information meeting“ with 2-3 people involved, before questionnaire was sent
- Sending questionnaire to the statisticians
- ~After 2 weeks: Conduct 2nd meeting to train them how to fill in the questionnaire (teach about different questions,..)
 - → could be eliminated, after pilots are finished, when „real“ self assessments start
- 2-3 months time to fill in the questionnaire by each person involved + sent it to Finland/Germany
- Conduction of Workshop (~1 day)
 - → could be eliminated for some statistics, when „real“ self assessments start?



First Ideas: Improvements / adaptations on DESAP questionnaire (content / structure)

- Eliminate all non relevant questions (e.g. concerning paper questionnaire, scanning,..)
- Adding questions derived from finland/destatis questionnaire
- Still open: which format of the questionnaire (word, excel, web based online questionnaire,..) => first idea: for pilots on excel, for „real“ self assessments probably web based online questionnaire
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Before 2nd mission: Preparation needed by GEOSTAT

- Preparation of adopted/improved **questionnaire** by quality unit and further improved by pre-pilots
- Preparation of **standard presentation**
- Preparation of adopted **manual/instruction**
- First draft of **process** for conducting self assessment based on DESAP
- ➔ Sent these documents to experts of finland/germany: **mid february 2025**

- Conduct 1st meeting „Information meeting“ with 2-3 people involved, before questionnaire is sent
- Conduct 2nd meeting to train the people involved on how to fill in the questionnaire (informa about different questions,..)
- Sent the questionnaire to the persons involved / 1 month time to fill in the questionnaire by each person involved (and sent it to the experts Finland/Germany by mid february 2025)
- Preparation and organization of workshop



During 2nd Mission: First draft of Agenda / Aims

- **1st Day:** Reviewing the drafts of materials prepared by Geostat (questionnaire, standard presentation, manual/instructions, process,..)

- **2nd Day:** Conduction a Workshop (for **one** pilot) with the following aims:
 - Test and further improvement of questionnaire
 - Test and further improvement of process
 - Test and further improvement of the materials
 - Getting results of quality assessment of pilot

- **3rd Day:** Review /Evaluation of Workshop and summarazing identified improvements to questionnaire, process, materials, results

- **4th day:** Discussing and taking the decision, if further pilots will be needed and conducted (whether within another mission or GEOSTAT on their own)





Self Assessment: SWOT-Analysis (I)

Strengths	Weaknesses
Ready to go / already available / no need to invent something new	„Outdated“ DESAP questionnaire → need for adaptation and resources Eurostat DESAP does not enough taking into account GSBPM (Destatis DESAP does) → need for adaptation and resources
Ressource saving vs. quality auditing	
Ressource saving for quality unit	Ressources taken from statistical units and maybe others
Conduct more self assessment per year than quality audits	
DESAP suits well the actual model of organization of GEOSTAT	
Provides useful information on quality	
High committment of executive director	

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Self Assessment: SWOT-Analysis (II)

Opportunities	Threads
Increase the quality culture and awareness	Lack of sufficient capacity of the staff to adapt and use DESAP self assessment
Spreading best practices	Lack of possibility to implement DESAP self assessment to outside of GEOSTAT like ONAs
Fulfilling eurostat and international requirements / EU acquis	Adaptations to DESAP aren't enough to meet the expectations and aims and identifying useful improment actions
Better involvement of top management and helping in decision making	Structural reorganization might cause further adaptations needed to DESAP (european version)
Adaptations / improvements to DESAP can easily be done (good basis exists)	Lack of sufficient awareness/committment of the statistical department involved in the process

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