



## **TWINNING CONTRACT**

**GE 21 NDICI ST 01 23**

### **Further Strengthening of the Georgian Statistical System**

## **MISSION REPORT**

**on**

### **Component 2:**

Demographic and population statistics developed.

### **Activity 2.1.2:**

Population Register - Experiences in Using Administrative Data from MS Countries

Mission carried out by  
Ms. Kaija Ruotsalainen, Statistics Finland  
Mr. Robert Winkler, Destatis  
Ms. Nicoletta Cibella, ISTAT  
Ms. Angela Chieppa, ISTAT

**Tbilisi, Georgia**

**February 25-28, 2025**

**Version: Final**

**Authors' names, addresses, e-mails**

Ms. Kaija Ruotsalainen  
MS Component Leader  
Senior Adviser  
Statistics Finland  
Työpajankatu 13  
00580 Helsinki  
Finland  
Tel: +358 29 551 3599  
Email: kaija.ruotsalainen@stat.fi

Mr. Robert Winkler, Destatis  
STE on Component 2  
Associate at Federal Statistical Office  
Federal Statistical Office (Destatis)  
Gustav-Stresemann-Ring 11  
65819 Wiesbaden  
Germany  
Tel: +49 06 11752013  
Email: robert.winkler@destatis.de

Ms. Angela Chieppa  
STE on Component 2  
Senior Researcher  
Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT)  
Via Cesare Balbo, 16  
00184 Rome  
Italy  
Tel: +39 06 46734537  
Email: chieppa@istat.it

Ms. Nicoletta Cibella  
STE on Component 2  
Senior Researcher  
Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT)  
Via Cesare Balbo, 16  
00184 Rome  
Italy  
Tel: +39 06 46734741  
Email: cibella@istat.it

## List of Abbreviations

- AD = Administrative data
- EU = European Union
- BC = Beneficiary Country (Georgia)
- MR = Mandatory results
- MS = EU Member State (Finland, Germany, Italy)
- PL = Project Leader
- RTA = Resident Twinning Advisor
- SR = Sub-results
- STE = Short-term Expert

## Table of contents

1. General comments.....	5
2. Status at the beginning of the mission .....	5
3. Status of mission results.....	6
4. Sustainability of the achievements.....	8
5. Recommendations for the future (short and long term).....	8
6. Identification of needs for additional support .....	9
7. Outstanding issues and next steps .....	9
0. Objective, Mandatory results and sub-results for the component 2.....	10
1. Purpose of the activity 2.1.2.....	11
2. Expected output of the activity .....	11
3. Participants.....	11
4. Resources .....	11
Annex A. Tentative programme.....	12

## **1. General comments**

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

The purpose of the activity was to share country experiences and best practices in using administrative data for population statistics and in building a statistical population register. The aim was also to discuss administrative data sources concerning the population and their suitability and availability for statistical use. In addition, the activity aimed to discuss with key stakeholders in meetings to increase cooperation and to build a common vision on the use of integrated administrative data to enhance quality of both statistical and administrative outputs.

The assessment of administrative data is closely linked to component 2.3, particularly in the development of a data catalog. All sources currently used in Geostat, including those used for economic statistics, could potentially be used effectively as source data for the population register and population statistics.

The consultants would like to express their thanks to all officials and individuals met for their kind support and valuable information received during the mission, and which greatly facilitated the work of the consultants.

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

## **2. Status at the beginning of the mission**

This was the second mission of the Twinning Project’s Component 2. The main focus of this sub-component is the roadmap for establishing of the population register in Georgia. International best practices and standards will be considered during the development work. In this context, the current situation was discussed during the mission.

The purpose of the mission was to share country experiences and best practices in using of administrative data for population statistics and in building a statistical population register. Geostat experts were interested in learning more about the statistical processing of administrative data for demographic and census dissemination purposes, as well as understanding the steps and milestones other countries had taken to establish a population register.

There was also a need to share the vision and benefits of using a population register with stakeholders, as well as a need for a more detailed description of data sources that public administration could provide. For this reason, a seminar to address these issues with key data providers was organized during the mission. Additionally, one aim of the seminar was to increase cooperation between all stakeholders.

In earlier discussions with Geostat experts, consultants have received information about the previous TAIEX project, the topic of which was the establishment of a population register. The results of the previous TAIEX round will also be taken into account in the on-going project.

### **3. Status of mission results**

The results stated in the ToR were fully achieved. Significant progress has been made in enhancing awareness of the Population Register's importance and in staff training (MR of project). Significant progress has also been made toward the expected outcomes (mandatory results of Subcomponent 2.1). The seminar with stakeholders enhanced awareness of the Population Register's importance and stimulated debate. Staff training, particularly for Geostat staff, led to a more concrete reconsideration of statistical processes making use of administrative data, through discussions with MS experts.

**On Tuesday**, the participants of activity 2.1.2 were welcomed and introduced. The aim of this activity was explained to all participants. The first agenda item was sharing experiences on Census 2024 in Georgia by members of the Census Department of Geostat. It was noted that issues with the response rate arose due to a declining trust in context of the current political situation. Additionally, infrastructural problems and bad weather conditions contributed to a decline in response rates. Surveys in high-mountain regions were conducted in September 2024, while data on the rest of the population was collected in November 2024.

The dissemination of the preliminary results (total number of population by sex and rural/urban at the municipality level) will occur in June 2025, with the final results in June 2026. The data processing to obtain census outputs takes approximately 18 months and already involves the use of some administrative data from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, taxpayers' archive, and birth records. Special use is also made of Civil Register data through a data exchange system driven by personal ID number. GEOSTAT experts explained that it is essential to evolve this processing system to replace it with a more efficient system that leverages administrative data through a Population Register.

The second item on the agenda was a presentation of the experience on the German Census, focusing on the census-model and the use of administrative data.

The third item on the agenda was to get an initial overview of the current situation regarding the requirements for a population register in Georgia, also in preparation for the meeting with the groups coming on Thursday. GEOSTAT experts still need to evaluate whether to opt for a single population register managed at the administrative level or to also include a statistical register, as suggested by other MS consultants. Moreover, it appears that GEOSTAT has an unclear picture of or data structure of potential data owners. These potential data owners could contribute to improving a future population register compared to the current status.

GEOSTAT beneficiaries clarified that one of the expected results of the project is the "share of staff trained," which includes not only GEOSTAT staff but also stakeholders and data providers who must be properly trained.

**On Wednesday**, the presentation of Member States' experiences continued, with a particular focus on Italy's case, presented through "Register-Based Population Statistics: The Italian Approach to Integrating Administrative and Survey Data."

The "Signs of Life" methodology, used to harness the potential of administrative data and improve the quality of information for populating the population register, was the subject of an engaging and in-depth discussion with GEOSTAT experts. The discussion focused on analyzing the steps and processes needed for gradually replacing survey data with register-based data while ensuring the production of the same population outputs currently generated in the traditional demographic and census framework. This exchange of views and observations provided valuable insights to define possible key elements and milestones of the roadmap for the development of a register-based population system in Georgia. The second item on the daily agenda was to organize the meeting with data providers and stakeholders for Day 3. The discussion focused on the key issues local experts considered essential for the next day's meeting. The starting point was to highlight the benefits of using a register integrating all population data, such as timeliness, coherence, cost reduction, and increased availability of data for use. Another key point was the need to share detailed information about data sources. GEOSTAT experts presented a questionnaire and metadata grid to gather feedback from Member State experts. Finally, it was agreed to arrange speeches, one by GEOSTAT and one representing Member State experiences.

**On Thursday**, a seminar with the most important counterpart was held. In total, 12 participants of six different organizations attended this seminar. GEOSTAT presented their perspective on establishing a population register in Georgia, including the main products and dissemination of population data, as well as the identified data gaps, which could be solved by data of reliable and up to date population register. GEOSTAT also referred to the EU-Georgia Association Agenda for the period 2021-2027, where the goal of the establishment of population register is mentioned and increasing access to and use of administrative data for statistical purposes is a priority.

MS countries' experiences were also introduced, especially highlighting the importance the benefits of use of already existing data for statistical purposes.

The establishment of Population Register in Georgia will contribute to the improvement of population and demographic statistics and, in general, increase the efficiency of planning, implementation, and monitoring of activities by the state at the national and local levels.

There was a very interesting and lively roundtable discussion in which all data providers outlined, at least roughly, the data they hold. They also highlighted certain processes they undertake to address quality issues - processes that could be much more effectively managed through the full integration of different population data sources. Additionally, they pointed out the most significant issues of undercoverage and misclassification in their databases. Particularly noteworthy was the reference to ongoing projects aimed at improving population databases already planned by the Ministry of the Interior, as well as the emphasis on the crucial need for integrated and standardized management of addresses across different sources.

The seminar was very successful; all participants identified the need for reliable population data, and it was agreed to continue the data inventory with the help of the questionnaire made by GEOSTAT. This inventory already started in the meeting by presenting the questionnaire and providing a short overview of the data sources of each organization.

At the end of the workshop, GEOSTAT and MS experts immediately exchanged views to assess the outcomes and plan the next steps with stakeholders. Discussions began on the feasibility of creating a catalog of available sources with key metadata, alongside a detailed assessment questionnaire for

each source. It was proposed to continue with bilateral meetings, engaging one data provider at a time to facilitate the assessment process.

**On Friday**, the model for Statistics Finland's population data warehouse was presented and discussed. In addition, the first version of the roadmap for establishing a population register was further developed, and three possible options for progress were presented. The content of the next activity was discussed and agreed upon. The April activity will focus on analyzing the results of the first interview and modifying the assessment questionnaire based on the results. In addition, a first draft of the list/catalogue of data sources will be prepared, starting with those already available at GEOSTAT.

**Presentations conducted by the BC:**

- n/a

**Presentations conducted by MS:**

- Population register in Germany (Robert Winkler)
- Register-based Population Statistics: The Italian Approach to Integrating Administrative and Survey Data (Angela Chieppa and Nicoletta Cibella)
- Member States' experiences with the use of population register data (Kaija Ruotsalainen, Nicoletta Cibella, Angela Chieppa, Robert Winkler)

## **4. Sustainability of the achievements**

All parties agreed on the activity analysis. Should the need arise, adjustments can be made later through the rolling work plan.

## **5. Recommendations for the future (short and long term)**

One challenge is reaching an understanding and deciding on which organization should administer the population register. Consultants identified three possible options as data sources for producing high-quality population statistics. The implementation of these options must be realistically assessed to determine the most feasible one, which will then serve as the foundation for a concrete roadmap. The options are as follows:

**1. High-Quality Administrative Population Register:**

- In this option, the starting point is the existing civil register. The goal is to improve the quality of this register to meet the needs of all stakeholders. The register owner should be an entity outside, possibly the Ministry of Justice (as it is now). The update system must be created through close collaboration with various organizations, including Geostat. However, the process of improving the quality of the civil register is not under GEOSTAT's control.

**2. High-Quality Statistical Population Register:**

- In this option, the starting point is also the existing civil register. The register owner remains outside GEOSTAT; currently, it is owned by the Ministry of Justice. In this scenario, the quality of the source data is not sufficient for statistical needs. A separate statistical population register will be created and managed by GEOSTAT. Additional



data from other sources will be used to update the usual place of residence for the entire population, with the "Sign of Life" method being crucial for this purpose. The data in this register is solely for statistical and research use, and comparisons with the administrative civil register can be made at an aggregate level.

**3. Unified Population Data in the Administrative and Statistical Population Register:**

- Similar to option 2, but the result (usual resident population) can be updated in the civil register. Legislation will need to be reviewed, and changes may be required. Cf. Italian example.

A tool was also presented to facilitate better tracking and monitoring of the project related to the development of the roadmap. This tool includes key issues and work areas related to the construction of the register, along with an initial timeline for implementation.

## **6. Identification of needs for additional support**

Support for the development of a Register of Addresses. Standardization and unification of address catalogs/directories, including an address ID and/or normalized address name, is crucial for managing the integration with the register of buildings and plays a key role in managing “place of residence” and mobility/migration within the Population Register.

## **7. Outstanding issues and next steps**

Tasks to be concluded before the next missions:

- Bilateral meeting with one of the administrative data holders and review of the data content of the register: variables, update frequency, data sources, coverage, challenges, etc. The draft assessment questionnaire will be used during the meeting, allowing for its refinement and consolidation.

The next activity to take place:

Sub-component 2.1.: Activity 2.1.3. 1-4.4.2025 in Tbilisi

- Analyzing results of the first inventory and modifying the assessment questionnaire further
- First draft of a Catalogue for data sources
- Road map will be developed further

## Annex 1. Terms of Reference

# Terms of Reference

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

#### Component 2: Demographic and population statistics developed

#### Activity 2.1.2: Population Register - Experiences in Using Administrative Data from MS Countries Dates: 25 - 28 Feb 2025 Hosting Institute: National Statistics Office of Georgia 30, T. Dadiani St., 0180 Tbilisi, Georgia

### 0. Objective, Mandatory results and sub-results for the component 2

#### Objective:

Under this component, the action plan and strategy for the establishment of the population register will be available, and GEOSTAT will be ready to start producing population projections. The component is sub-divided into two sub-components, each with Mandatory Results (MR) with indicators of achievements associated with the sub-component, presented in table below.

The objective of the activity is to share country experiences and best practices on the use of administrative data for population statistics and in building a statistical population register. The aim is also to discuss administrative data sources concerning population and their suitability and availability for statistical use. In addition, the aim is to discuss with key stakeholders in personal meetings, increase cooperation, and build a common vision on the use of administrative data in statistics.

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

Sub-result 2.1: The roadmap for the establishment of the population register developed (4 indicators)	In line with international best practices and standards, this component will build the roadmap for the establishing a population register in Georgia. Indicators that assure this deliverable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A report on the assessment of adequate data sources and counterparts</li><li>• Number of the national workshop to increase awareness of the importance of the Population Register for the country.</li><li>• Share of relevant staff trained in the field.</li><li>• Final report and recommendations</li></ul>
Sub-result 2.2: Population projections established (5 indicators)	This sub-component aims at establishing population projections in Georgia. Indicators that assure this deliverable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Report on the assessment of existing data sources</li><li>• Recommendations of the software for population projections</li><li>• Recommendations on the methodology of the population projection at the regional and municipal level for the long and short-term projections</li><li>• Share of relevant staff trained of the population projections.</li><li>• Availability of results of the population projections at national and sub-national level</li></ul>
Key activities in Component 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MS Expert missions with meetings, workshops including presentations and sharing of best practices and hands-on training.</li><li>• Study visit(s) with hands-on demonstrations in Member State(s).</li><li>• Joint meetings with Geostat, data providers and key data user groups.</li></ul>

### **1. Purpose of the activity 2.1.2.**

- Country experiences from MS (presenting best practices)
- Assessment of the data sources (Description of the existing administrative data on population by data set has to be done) from the point of view of statistical production
- One-to-one meeting with the most important stakeholders
- Further planning for the establishing a population register in Georgia

### **2. Expected output of the activity**

- Common overview of the current situation regarding:
  - Activity report
  - MS presentations on the use of administrative data for population statistics.
  - Draft 0.1. of road map for establishing population register in Georgia based on discussions and BC's presentation of the existing and potential register to be used for population register
  - Meeting with key stakeholders and discussion with them on the use of their data for statistics.
  - A draft of the content for the next activity and the tasks to be completed before it.

### **3. Participants**

#### **MS Experts**

- Ms Kaija Ruotsalainen, CL, Senior Adviser, Statistics Finland
- Mr Robert Winkler, STE, Destatis
- Ms Nicoletta Cibella, STE, ISTAT
- Ms Angela Chieppa, STE, ISTAT

#### **GEOSTAT**

- Mr. Paata Shavishvili, Deputy Executive Director, National Statistics Office of Georgia
- Mr. Aleksandre Arabuli, CL Counterpart, Head of Population Census and Demographic Statistics Department, National Statistics Office of Georgia
- Ms. Mariam Jalaghonia, Chief Specialist, National Statistics Office of Georgia
- Ms. Donara Rukhadze, Chief Specialist, National Statistics Office of Georgia

#### **Twinning team**

- Mr. Marko Ylitalo, RTA
- Irma Gabunia, RTA-A

### **4. Resources**

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

### **5. Overall agenda**

- Day 1: Opening. BC and MS recap of the previous mission findings and recent developments, MS experiences on Population Register/Statistics
- Day 2: MS experiences on Population Register/Statistics (continue from day 1), BC's presentation of the existing and potential register to be used for population register
- Day 3: Meeting with stakeholder/s. Roadmap of the population register.
- Day 4. Roadmap of the population register. Planning the activities of the further activities. Summary and conclusion.

**Annex A. Tentative programme**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Topic</b>
<b>Tuesday – 25 Feb</b> <b>9:30 – 18:00</b>	Meeting room	Welcoming, practicalities, programme of the week BC and Marko Ylitalo
		Review of the previous mission findings and recent developments, STEs, Aleksandre Arabuli
		MS country experiences of the using administrative data in population statistics production (FIN, GER, IT)
		Wrap-up of the day (STEs), report writing
<b>Wednesday – 26 Feb</b> <b>09:30 – 18:00</b>	Meeting room	MS country experiences of the using administrative data in population statistics production (FIN, GER, IT)
		BC's presentation of the existing and potential register to be used for population register
		Wrap-up of the day (STEs), report writing
<b>Thursday – 27 Feb</b> <b>09:30 – 18:00</b>	Meeting room	Meeting with stakeholder/s (Online)
		Roadmap of the population register.
		Wrap-up of the day (STEs), report writing
<b>Friday – 28 Feb</b> <b>09:30 – 16:00</b>	Meeting room	Roadmap of the population register.
		Preparing the conclusions (STEs)
		Conclusions and next steps in comp. 2.1. (MS and BC)

**Abbreviations:**

*MS = EU Member State (Finland, Germany, Italy)*

*BC = Beneficiary Country (Georgia)*

**Annex 2. List of the participants of the seminar held on 27.2.2025**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Organization</b>
1	Kaija Ruotsalainen	STE	Statistics Finland
2	Nicoletta Cibella	STE	ISTAT, Italy
3	Angela Chieppa	STE	ISTAT, Italy
4	Robert Winkler	STE	Destatis, Germany
5	Aleksandre Arabuli	CL Counterpart, Head of Population Census and Demographic Statistics Department	National Statistics Office of Georgia
6	Donara Rukhadze	Chief Specialist, Population Census and Demographic Statistics Department	National Statistics Office of Georgia
7	Mariana Jalaghonia	Chief Specialist, Population Census and Demographic Statistics Department	National Statistics Office of Georgia
8	Marko Ylitalo	RTA	Twinning Team
9	Irma Gabunia	RTAA	Twinning Team
10	Nino Chakvetadze	Head of Data Management Department	National Agency of Public Registry (NAPR)
11	Ramaz Lomaia	Head of Statistics, IT Department	National Agency of Public Registry (NAPR)
12	Natalia Kopaleishvili	Chief Specialist, Population Registers Division, Department of Medical Statistics	National Center for Disease Control and Public Health
13	Davit Gubelidze	Head of Statistics and Analytics Service	Social Service Agency
14	Merab Asanidze	Head of the Analytics Division of the Strategic Development and Analytics Department	Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia
15	Giorgi Toliashvili	Head of the Registration and Restitution Division of the Department of IDPs and Eco-Migrants	The IDPs, Eco-Migrants and Livelihood Agency
16	Revaz Sakvarelidze	Chief Analyst, Information Processing and Analysis Division, Analytical Department	Revenue Service
17	Elguja Loliashvili	Head of the Information Processing and Analysis Division of the Analytical Department	Revenue Service

*Further Strengthening of the Georgian Statistical System*

18	Irakli Chelidze	Head of the Civil Registry and Population Registration Service	Public Service Development Agency
19	Avtandil Maghlakelidze	Head of Data Quality Management Service, Department of Information Technologies and Systems	Public Service Development Agency
20	Nikoloz Nikuradze	Data Engineer, Data Quality Management Service, Department of Information Technology and Systems	Public Service Development Agency
21	Elza Japoshvili	Deputy Director of the Information and Analytical Department	Ministry of Internal affairs of Georgia