<u>Standard Summary Project Fiche – IPA centralised programmes</u> (Regional / Horizontal programmes ; centralised National programmes)

1. Basic information

1.1 CRIS Number: 2007/19322

1.2 Title: Improving Structural Capacity of the Serbian Statistical Office in view of approximating European Statistical System (ESS) requirements

1.3 ELARG Statistical code: 02.18

1.4 Location: Serbia

Implementing arrangements:

1.5 Contracting Authority: EC Delegation

1.6 Implementing Agency: N/A

1.7 Beneficiary: Serbian Statistical Office (SORS); Project manager to be appointed before start of the project

Financing:

1.8 Overall cost: 2 million EUR1.9 EU contribution: 2 million EUR

1.10 Final date for contracting: 3 years after the signature of the Financing Agreement

1.11 Final date for execution of contracts: 5 years after the signature of the Financing Agreement

1.12 Final date for disbursements: 6 years after the signature of the Financing Agreement

2. Overall Objective and Project Purpose

2.1 Overall Objective:

Approximating of Serbian Statistical System to the European Statistical System requirements

2.2 Project purpose:

The project aims at completing the upgrading of SORS infrastructure in order to ensure further sustainable approach to EU *acquis* in statistics. It will ensure continuation with the ongoing 2002 CARDS project on national accounts and tackle areas identified as priority by the European Commission (agriculture statistics). The project shall also consolidate the internal activities that support statistical production and statistical dissemination.

2.3 Link with AP/NPAA / EP/SAA

The European Council, in its Decision concerning European Partnership with among others Serbia¹, highlighted the harmonisation of statistics with ESS standards as both short and medium term priorities. Among those, the Council Decision declares a priority to "Build up institutional capacity to produce and publish basic statistical data harmonised with European

¹ "COUNCIL DECISION of 30 January 2006 on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Serbia and Montenegro including Kosovo as defined by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of 10 June 1999 and repealing Decision 2004/520/EC" (2006/56/EC) Official Journal of the European Union L35, 7.2.2006

standards in the area of business statistics, labour market statistics and national accounts" sic. Agriculture statistics are specifically mentioned among the short-term priorities.

The most recent progress report concerning Serbia² acknowledges well advanced preparations in several areas of statistics yet shortfalls of structural nature are still identified.

2.4 Link with MIPD

The MIPD covers the need to continue strengthening the Serbian statistical system in general and SORS in particular to enable the production of official statistics of good quality. Additionally, the MIPD covers the need to develop Serbia's capacity to manage its macroeconomic data processing and monitoring including implementing a new agricultural census and improving the national accounts.

2.5 Link with National Development Plan (where applicable)

N/A

2.6 Link with national/sectoral investment plans (where applicable)

On the basis of the Council Decision (mentioned in this document) a National Strategy of Serbia for accession to the European Union was adopted by the Serbian Government, where it is explicitly stated that institutional capacities for production and dissemination of basic statistical data in the field business, agriculture, labour market and national accounts statistics have to be further developed.

In the National strategy, the following priorities are defined: enable a dynamic development of official statistics; create a basis for getting the most relevant statistic indicators; direct the development of official statistics towards the harmonisation of standards, classifications, methodologies and statistical practices with the world standards; increase the comparability of official statistics with the statistics of other countries and international organisations, and promote the role and significance of official statistics in society and boost its wider use.

3. Description of project

3.1 Background and justification:

Isolated from the international statistics community during the nineties, the Serbian statistical office resumed its international contacts at the start of the new century, successively within the frame of the Former Republic of Yugoslavia, the Union of Serbia and Montenegro and the Republic of Serbia further to the independence of Montenegro in May 2006.

Major political changes did not undermine the progress of the institution towards modernisation of its infrastructure and statistical methodology and processes. Together with external assistance, a lot has been done on autonomous resources and impact of foreign technical assistance finds in the Serbian Office good ground for successful achievements.

² Serbia 2006 Progress Report, Commission Staff Working Document, COM(2006)649final, SEC(2006)1389 of 8 November 2006

The main mission of SORS, as the body responsible for official statistics in Serbia and therewith the leader of the national statistical system, is to make sure that all users can find statistical data relevant for their needs in terms of indicators, timeliness and comparability in time and in place, to facilitate the access and interpretation of the statistical data, and to meet quality expectations. A main role is the coordination of all statistical activities in the statistical system in order to ensure coherence in the harmonisation with international standards and principles. SORS is not the only producer of official statistics, but as the system of production is quite centralised and SORS holds responsibility for the larger part of the official statistics produced in the country.

Through the assistance received during the past five years, and thanks to some restructuring of the institution, SORS is better prepared today to face the immense challenge of approaching EU *acquis* in statistics. However, assistance had produced a patchwork of new knowledge and processes unevenly distributed within the institution itself and not incorporated in a real global institutional strategy. Indeed, previous technical assistance logically addressed some priority areas involving relevant staff, leaving some other areas or parts of the institution out of the upgrading process. Nowadays, SORS lacks skilled human resources in some specific fields, partly due to areas having developed and therewith generated new needs and partly due to some areas remaining behind, because they have not been included in assistance programmes. Nonetheless, SORS can count on a quite sound management organisation and structure that allows taking the best possible benefit of existing resources.

In order to enable SORS to achieve a coherent development of its activities in the frame of its obligations, it would be necessary to complete the upgrading of its internal infrastructure.

3.2 Assessment of project impact, catalytic effect, sustainability and cross border impact (where applicable)

The project through the activity 'Infrastructure for producing National Accounts' should ensure a continuation of the investments carried out in the frame of the ongoing CARDS 2002 project (National Accounts in line with European System of Accounts 95) and should represent important value added in terms of impact in this strategic field of statistics. The project through the support to 'Preparation of an agriculture census' will provide a real image of the structure of agriculture in Serbia and create a statistical register of agricultural units that should be used in all agriculture surveys. The activity 'Upgrading of ICT system' will ensure coherence between all activities and data (mainly the structural data such as structural business statistics (SBS) and National Accounts). Finally, the implementation of new or improved dissemination and communication policies would inter alia rationalise indispensable internal contacts between SORS staff.

3.3 Results and measurable indicators:

Results 1. Improved technical and conceptual infrastructure for the production of annual national accounts according to ESA95 requirements; 2. Completed conceptual, technical and financial preparation of/for agricultural census in Serbia and link Objectively verifiable indicators - European System of Accounts ESA95 - Handbook of Input – Output Table, Compilation and Analyses, UN 1999; Action plan, pilot census carried out, census documents prepared;

between agricultural census and future register of agricultural holdings;

3. Improved and rationalised use of Information and

Communication Technologies;

4. Upgraded and rationalised means of internal and external communication and dissemination of information. and adopted;

Strategy for development of ICT

adopted;

Action plan, strategy and rules drafted

3.4 Activities:

Activity 1

Infrastructure for producing National Accounts, namely the development of Supply and Use tables, metadata system and agricultural accounts and further development of price indices. In addition, the project will continue the upgrading of methodology of constant price calculations of GDP and of seasonal adjustments (taking into account that the SBS and SBR, essential basis for NA system are currently under development within a Swedish bilateral project). This component will be the direct continuation of the support currently provided by the CARDS national programme 2002.

Activity 2

Preparation of an agriculture census. This census is very much needed to provide a real image of the structure of agriculture in Serbia and to create a statistical register of agricultural units that should be used in all agriculture surveys. The last census of agriculture in Serbia goes back 40 years, which means that the institution does not possess any experience or knowledge in this specific field. Considering that agriculture sector accounts for 13.5% in the last Serbian GDP figures (2006), producing statistical data on agricultural holdings constitutes an absolute priority. By comparison, Member States are obliged to carry out a comprehensive survey of agricultural holdings every ten years and three interim surveys each decade. This sector is one of the priority sectors mentioned by the EU strategic documents and concerns the whole Western Balkans area. The Statistical Master Plan put 2009 as the year to conduct the census.

Activity 3

Upgrading of the IT system. The functional design of the IT system, a uniform development of databases and applications and the staff understanding of the office needs have not evolved together with the reforms in the statistical departments. This project will aim at improving the situation as the smooth running of the IT system and a global ICT policy are important factors when producing quality statistics..

Activity 4

Developing communication and dissemination. The user-orientation is an area which only recently has received attention from SORS. Progress can be noticed in this field, but further actions are needed to acquire harmonisation and coherence. A communication strategy, including policy for communication with the media, should be elaborated and implemented.

Dissemination policy and rules should also be improved, especially the public announcement of the SORS dissemination calendar. The website should be improved through a content management system. Such system allows non IT specialists to create and update web content through the definition of a hierarchical structure of editing permissions. Internally, statistical departments started to cooperate, but there are huge shortfalls in documentation of the activities, the methodology and the development plans and in its internal share.

The activities will be carried out through one service contract.

3.5 Conditionality and sequencing:

The counterpart personnel of the beneficiary must be appointed before the launch of the tender process. Allocation of working space and facilities by the beneficiary for the technical assistance before the launch of the tender process must be done.

The beneficiary must participate in the tender process in accordance with EU regulations.

All key stakeholders must endorse the Terms of Reference and specifications. Moreover seeing the unclear definition of responsible bodies for agricultural census in the statistical system, it is necessary to sign before the launch of the tender process Memorandum of Understanding between SORS and Ministry of Agriculture to define the respective role of the respective parties in this matter.

In addition the conduct of the agricultural census is depending on the financial capacity to cover the census costs, SORS together with the Ministry of Agriculture must organise a donors' meeting gathering international and bilateral donors together with Serbian authorities in order to discuss the financing of the agricultural census at an early stage of the project.

If the conditions are not met, suspension or cancellation of projects will be considered.

3.6 Linked activities

The first national CARDS technical assistance in the field of statistics started early 2005 and is still ongoing. The project is implemented by the Italian national institute of statistics, in partnership with the central statistical offices of Hungary and Sweden. The objective of the project is to start building up a system of accounts and bring GDP compilation closer to the methodology of the European System of Accounts (ESA95). Development of price indices and implementation of a Structural Business Statistics survey are important components of the project, as they constitute important input for GDP. The project amounts to approximately 1.2 million Euro and will end in November 2007.

In the frame of the CARDS National Programme 2005, EU funded the upgrading of the 14 regional statistical offices mainly responsible for data collection and field operations throughout Serbia. Until January 2008, this project is providing an ambitious training programme covering Management and Organisation, Information Technology, Economics and European Structures and Functioning. This project had also a supply component and 17 vehicles were delivered to the head office and regional offices and will facilitate field work and transportation of material.

The CARDS National Programme 2006 has funded a 1 million Euro procurement of IT hardware and software that were needed to support the implementation of new methodology.

SORS is also included in the CARDS Regional programmes on statistics. The programmes gather all CARDS countries in common activities of training, exchanges of experiences and pilot projects. The Regional CARDS 2001 supported external trade statistics, purchasing power parity (PPP), business statistics and improved knowledge about EU statistical standards and the European Statistical System. The second Regional project - CARDS 2003 - started in July 2006 and is focusing on labour market statistics, external trade statistics, migration statistics and purchasing power parities. In addition, the regional programmes have a technical assistance component including participation at Eurostat meetings, trainings and study visits as well as consultations to the statistical offices.

Furthermore, a horizontal project is planned under the multi-beneficiary IPA 2007 that will be designed to build on previous CARDS regional programmes as well as expand on the areas covered.

The statistical system is benefiting or has benefited from the assistance of other donors. These include:

OECD, Eurostat and EFTA – Regional projects on Non Observed Economy aimed at achieving exhaustiveness in national accounts. Phase II is ongoing.

The Swedish Development Agency (SIDA) has been supporting through Statistics Sweden agriculture statistics, economic statistics, business register, short term statistics, SBS, energy statistics and energy balances, IT development and IT training, survey methodology, monitoring of sector performance, household budget survey, labour market statistics, cooperation with users and human resource training. In addition, the SIDA Regional project is supporting environmental statistics, statistical methodology and gender statistics. Among others, this regional project has improved the quality of waste and air pollution statistics, has trained staff for survey implementation, questionnaire design, sampling techniques, compliance with the EU requirements and has improved cooperation with users and producers of official statistics.

SORS is also an active partner in many other projects, funded by EU or other donors that have an impact on statistics (for instance Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme of the World Bank; Support to the development of SME; Energy strategy).

3.7 Lessons learned

EU assistance was first present at the Statistical Office when, in the period November 2001 – March 2002, Eurostat and UN/ECE combined efforts to define and finance an assessment of the statistical system of FRY. Today the results of this assessment study are still used to define the needs and design the assistance projects in the sector. The assessment has resulted in the elaboration of the first master plans of statistics, whose updating and approval are listed in the Council priorities. It has also been the occasion to point out to the need for specific legislation for statistics, the adoption of which should be a priority of the new legislature.

Approximating EU acquis in statistics requests full understanding and knowledge of complex methodologies and legal acts adopted by the European Statistical System. Statisticians of SORS got rapidly acquainted with those needs, understood the extent of the challenge and

eagerly took part in the various programmes of assistance offered to them, in which they are showing outstanding ownership.

4. Indicative Budget (amounts in million **€**)

		SOURCES OF FUNDING										
	TOTAL COST	EU CONTRIBUTION			NATIONAL PUBLIC CONTRIBUTION					PRIVATE		
Activities		Total	% *	IB	INV	Total	% *	Central	Regional	IFIs	Total	% *
Activity 1	2	2	100	2								
contract 1.1	2	2	100	2								
contract 1.2												
Activity 2												
contract 2.1												
contract 2.2												
TOTAL	2	2	100									
* expressed in % of the Total Cost												

5. Indicative Implementation Schedule

Contracts	Start of	Signature of	Project		
	Tendering	contract	Completion		
Contract 1.1	T+Q1	T+Q2	T+Q10		

All projects should in principle be ready for tendering in the 1ST Quarter following the signature of the FA

6. Cross cutting issues (where applicable)

Development Policy Joint Statement by the Council and the European Commission of 10 November 2000 establishes that a number of Cross-cutting Issues shall be mainstreamed into EC development co-operation and assistance.

Cross-cutting issues will be addressed in the project so as to comply with the best EU standards and practice in that area and in a way which demonstrates how they will be dealt with within the project's framework, its activities and outputs.

Cross-cutting issues will be addressed in a proactive manner, and will present a specific component of projects (at all levels of projects' development, starting from the project identification stage). Synergies between the projects and the objectives of will be identified and developed. Also, the projects' objectives and activities need to be screened in order to ensure they won't impact negatively on gender equality, minorities' inclusion and environment.

Finally, the beneficiary will make sure its objectives, policies and interventions have a positive impact on and are in line with the main principles of gender equality, minorities' inclusion and environment.

6.1 Equal Opportunity

Reliable statistical data need to be based on definitions and classifications that, taken together, can reflect adequately different data on all citizens, including women.

Throughout the duration of the project, steps will be taken to guarantee equal opportunity of access to project activities and benefits.

6.2 Environment

Environment will be considered a major cross-cutting issue in almost all segments of implementation of the future activities related to agriculture census.

6.3 Minorities

Modernisation of the statistical system should ensure that systematically disaggregated data (by gender and age), as well as comprehensive information on specific groups such as refugees, IDPs and minorities (notably the Roma, which is a poorly documented group) are produced. Given their relevance for the assistance to Serbia, more data and statistics about these vulnerable groups will serve as an improved basis for managing programs in other sectors (as well as for monitoring their implementation).

ANNEX I: Logical framework

LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR Project Fiche

LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR Project Fiche		Programme name and number			
Improving Structural Capacity of the Serbian Statistical O Statistical System (ESS) requirements	Office in view of approximating European	Contracting period expires 5 years after the signature of the Financing Agreement	Disbursement period: expires 6 years after the signature of the Financing Agreement IPA budget: 2 million EUR		
		Total budget : 2 million EUR			
			1		
Overall objective	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification			
Approximating of Serbian Statistical System to the European Statistical System requirements	Statistical Requirements Compendium (reference document for the acquis in statistics)	Council Decision and Action Plan for the implementation of the European Partnership adopted by the Serbian Government			
Project purpose	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions		
Improvement of intuitional capacities for production and of basic statistical data in the field of national accounts, agriculture statistics, upgrading ICT system and dissemination in general: -Infrastructure for producing National Accounts -Preparation of an agriculture census -Upgrading of the ICT system -Developing communication and dissemination	Statistical Requirements Compendium (reference document for the acquis in statistics)	- EC Progress Report - Eurostat Progress Report - Report from SMIS (Statistical Information Management System) - Annual Statistical Report	-Top management sufficiently committed in the project -adequate technical and financial support of institutions involved -sufficient professional skills of stuff		
Results	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions		
Improved technical and conceptual infrastructure for the production of annual national accounts according to ESA95 requirements Conceptual, technical and financial preparation of/for agricultural census in Serbia and link between agricultural census and future register of agricultural holdings prepared Improved and rationalised use of Information and Communication Technologies	- European System of Accounts – ESA95 - Handbook of Input – Output Table, Compilation and Analyses, UN 1999 Action plan, MoU with Ministry of Agriculture adopted strategy for development of ICT	1) -Regularly reports of Eurostat, IMF, World Bank and other international organisations, -methodology published 2)- results of pilot census published , Action plan for the conducting of the census prepared , methodology published	-sufficient professional skills of stuff -Conducting pilot census according to schedule -good cooperation with Ministry of Agriculture Top management sufficiently committed in the project		
Upgraded and rationalised means of internal and external communication and dissemination of information.	Action plan, strategy and rules drafted and adopted	3) lower cost and more flexible PC platform prepared and implemented 4) Intranet and (advanced) web site	-Top management sufficiently committed in the project -sufficient professional skills of stuff		
Activities	Means	Costs	Assumptions		
1.1 implementing of Supply and Use tables for the production of national accounts 1.2 upgrading of data sources and methodology for the production of National Accounts	Training, hands-on technical assistance, study visits and eventual traineeship	0.55 mil €	-sufficient professional skills of stuff		
1.3 defining and development of agricultural accounts					
1.4 elaboration and implementation of a system of metadata					
2.1 Definition of the needs, current situation and context, objectives and activities to be carried-out			-Conducting pilot census according to schedule		
2.2 Preparation of the methodology for the agricultural census			-good cooperation with Ministry of Agriculture		
$2.3\ Preparation$ and conducting Pilot census, testing the questionnaire and other instruments and documentation	Training, hands-on technical assistance, study visits and eventual traineeship	1.0 mil €			
2.4 Setting and testing of starting version of register of agricultural holdings	visus and eventual transcessip				
3.1 Preparation of short-term and medium-term plan for a restructuring of					

ICT system 3.2 Preparation of the feasibility study that is presenting and analysing organisational, financial and technical implications of a change of platform	Training, hands-on technical assistance, study visits and eventual traineeship	0.25 mil €	Top management sufficiently committed in the project
4.1 Definition and implementation of an external and internal communication and dissemination strategy and policy			
4.2 Implementation of software for intranet mail, content management system and website management.	Training, technical assistance and study visits/traineeship	0.20 mil €	-Top management sufficiently committed in the project -sufficient professional skills of stuff

ANNEX II: amounts (in \bigcirc) Contracted and disbursed by quarter for the project

Contracted	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	
Contract 1.1		2.0									
Contract 1.2											
Contract 1.3											
Contract 1.4											
Cumulated		2.0									
Disbursed											
Contract 1.1		1,200,000	140,000	140,000	140,000	140,000	140,000	100,000			
Contract 1.2											
Contract 1.3											
Contract 1.4											
••••											
Cumulated		1,200,000	1,340,000	1,480,000	1,620,000	1,760,000	1,900,000	2,000,0000			

ANNEX III

Description of Institutional Framework

Serbian Statistical Office is in charge of implementation and monitoring of this project. The work, mandate and authorisations of the Office are regulated by the Law on Ministries (adopted on May 15, 2007 (Official Gazette of Republic of Serbia no. 48/07) – i.e. Article 30.

ANNEX IV

Reference to laws, regulations and strategic documents

General:

- Constitution of the Republic of Serbia
- Law for the Implementation of the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia
- National Strategy for Serbia and Montenegro's Accession to the European Union
- Action Plan for the Implementation of the European Partnership
- Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
- Law on Ministries

Statistics:

- The Statistical Surveys Act ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 83/92);
- The Regulation Act on Defining of Statistical Surveys ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 26/2007)
- The Strategy of the Official Statistics Development in the Republic of Serbia ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 111/06)
- Draft Law on Official Statistics: to be adopted

Reference to AP /NPAA / EP / SAA

The European Council, in its Decision concerning European Partnership with among others Serbia³, highlighted the harmonisation of statistics with ESS standards as both short and medium term priorities. Among those, the Council Decision declares a priority to "Build up institutional capacity to produce and publish basic statistical data harmonised with European standards in the area of business statistics, labour market statistics and national accounts" sic. Agriculture statistics are specifically mentioned as among short-term priorities.

The most recent progress report concerning Serbia⁴ acknowledges well advanced preparations in several areas of statistics yet shortfalls of structural nature are still identified.

Reference to MIPD

In line with MIPD priorities it is necessary to develop Serbia's capacity to manage its macroeconomic and strategic national economic planning and forecasting and provide conditions for growth and sustainable development of all communities. In that sense it is necessary to

³ "COUNCIL DECISION of 30 January 2006 on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Serbia and Montenegro including Kosovo as defined by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of 10 June 1999 and repealing Decision 2004/520/EC" (2006/56/EC) Official Journal of the European Union L35, 7.2.2006

⁴ Serbia 2006 Progress Report, Commission Staff Working Document, COM(2006)649final, SEC(2006)1389 of 8 November 2006

support statistical office and other responsible institutions to improve socio-economic data processing and monitoring.

Reference to National Development Plan

N/A

Reference to national / sectoral investment plans

On the basis of the Council Decision (mentioned in this document) a National Strategy of Serbia for accession to the European Union was adopted by the Serbian Government, where it is explicitly stated that institutional capacities for production and dissemination of basic statistical data in the field business, agriculture statistics, labour market and national accounts have to be built.

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ANNEX V

Details per EU funded contract (*) where applicable:

Infrastructure for producing National Accounts, namely the development of Supply and Use tables, metadata system and agricultural accounts and further development of price indices. In addition, the project will continue the upgrading of methodology of constant price calculations of GDP and of seasonal adjustments (taking into account that the SBS and SBR, essential basis for NA system are currently under development within a Swedish bilateral project). This component will be the direct continuation of the support currently provided by the CARDS national programme 2002.

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