Twinning Project Fiche

Support to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics in Improving the Quality of Official Statistics

IL/12

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List of abbreviations

AA	Association Agreement
AP	Action Plan
BC	Beneficiary country
ES CoP or CoP	European Statistics Code of Practice
EC	European Commission
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
ESS	European Statistical System
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
FWC	Framework Contract
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
ICBS	Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILITA	Israeli Law, Information and Technology Authority
MEDSTAT	Statistical co-operation programme between EU and Mediterranean countries
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MUC	Micro-data Under Contract
MS	Member State (of the EU)
NII	National Insurance Institute
NA	National accounts
NSS	National statistical system
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAO	Programme Administration Office
PCS	Public Council for Statistics
Qi	The i'th Implementation Quarter of the Twinning Project
RAS	Remote Access System
PUF	Public Use File
RDC	Research Data Centre
SO	Statistics Ordinance
TA	Technical Assistance
ToR	Terms of Reference
TAIEX	Technical Assistance and Information Exchange Instrument
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNSD	United Nations Statistical Division

1 Basic information

1.1. **Programme**: Support to the ENP Action Plan 2011-2012 (Israel) and Support to the ENP Action Plan 2013 (Israel) (ENPI/2011/023-121; ENPI/2012/024-115)

1.2. **Twinning number**: IL/12

1.3. **Title**: Support to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics in Improving the quality of official statistics.

1.4. **Sector**: Statistics

1.5. **Beneficiary country**: Israel

2 Objectives

2.1 Overall objective

The general objective is to improve the quality and international comparability of Israel official statistics.

2.2 Project purposes

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The project purpose is to support the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS) in aligning official statistics with the EU and other international organizations standards, guidelines, and best practices.

- To support ICBS in setting up an organisational unit responsible for quality management as an overarching process toward the production of statistics in the National Statistics System (NSS), and capacity building of the staff;
- To support ICBS in improving its Micro data services to the research community;
- To support ICBS in establishing infrastructures suitable for the production of agricultural statistics;
- To support ICBS in developing a methodology based on an extensive use of geo-spatial tools in survey management.

2.3 Contribution to the Implementation of European Neighbourhood Policy

The EU/Israel Action Plan[1] stipulates several areas and issues requiring improved statistical underpinning, and the Action Plan lists Statistics as an area where increased awareness of EU and international statistical methods and possibilities for further harmonisation could be achieved.

[1] http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/action_plans/israel_enp_ap_final_en.pdf

3 Description

3.1 Background and justification

In view of the enlargement of May 2004, the European Union (EU) adopted on 11 March 2003 a new framework for its relations with its neighbours, including Israel. In a Communication called “Wider Europe - Neighbourhood: A New Framework for the Relations with our Eastern and Southern neighbours”, the European Commission underlined that the objective of the so-called European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is to develop an area of prosperity and anchor a "ring of friends" with whom the EU can enjoy close, peaceful and fruitful relations. The overall goal of ENP is to foster the political and economic reform process, promote closer economic integration, legal and technical approximation and sustainable development.

The central element of the ENP is the bilateral ENP Action Plans agreed between the EU and each partner. The EU-Israel ENP Action Plan (AP) was adopted on 11 April 2005. It sets out the joint ambition to develop closer relations as anticipated in the conclusions of the Essen Council of December 1994 which stated inter alia that: “The European Council considers that Israel, on account of its high level of economic development, should enjoy special status in its relations with the EU on the basis of reciprocity and common interest…” On that basis, the EU and Israel concluded an Association Agreement (AA) in 1995 that entered into force in 2000, and developed relations further in the context of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

The AP refers to the field of statistics as follows:

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- Increase awareness of EU and international statistical methods in relevant statistical areas, and examine the possibility of further harmonisation;
- Elaborate a strategy for increased awareness of European standards in the relevant statistical areas, including foreign trade;
- Enhance co-operation with relevant Commission services;
- Improve co-operation on establishment of statistics on trade in services and migration statistics.

In the field of Statistics, Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009 on European statistics has established a legal framework for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics. The Regulation states that European statistics shall be developed in conformity with the statistical principles set out in Article 338 of the Treaty on the functioning of the EU and further elaborated in the European Statistics Code of Practice, namely, that: ‘the production of Union statistics shall conform to impartiality, reliability, objectivity, scientific independence, cost-effectiveness and statistical confidentiality; it shall not entail excessive burdens on economic operators’.

In 2012, with its proposal to amend Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 the European Commission addressed the challenges to the credibility of European statistics identified in Communication COM(2011) 211 ‘Towards robust quality management for European statistics’. The legislative procedure has being finalised. The text meets the objectives of the revision of the European statistical law as formulated in the European Commission’s proposal, with the overall purpose of strengthening the ESS and maintaining a high degree of credibility for European statistics.

In particular, the amending regulation requires that heads of NSIs coordinate all activities at national level for European statistics and that they have the sole

responsibility for deciding on processes, statistical methods, standards and procedures, and on the content and timing of statistical releases and publications for all European statistics. Heads of NSIs must neither seek nor receive instructions from national governments or other bodies. Similarly, the Director-General of Eurostat has the same rights and obligations. The procedure for the recruitment of heads of NSIs and of the Director-General of Eurostat must be transparent and based on professional criteria. Moreover, the text also includes several elements which will be for the European Commission to implement, notably regarding: the professional independence of the Director-General of Eurostat; an annual statistical dialogue with the European Parliament; and the establishment of commitments on confidence in statistics by the Member States with the European Commission reporting on them.

More recently, on 19th May 2015, the amendment of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European Statistics, COM(2012) 167, has been adopted reinforcing the principles of professional independence, coordination of the national statistical systems and the need to establish Commitments on Confidence.

The EU-Israel Association Agreement of 1995 mentions the following two areas of cooperation: approximation of laws (art. 55) and Information Infrastructures and Telecommunications (art. 52). In line with the general pattern of harmonisation of official statistical practices and with the specific projects of the EU on statistics in the Mediterranean area, this twinning project aims at strengthening Israel's capacity of statistical production, according to European standards, in order to reinforce bilateral cooperation, by sharing harmonised data collection and dissemination practices.

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3.2 Linked activities

ICBS has actively participated in the various phases of the MEDSTAT Programme. The MEDSTAT Programme, in the framework of the EUROMED cooperation, was initiated in 1996 (MEDSTAT I, 1996-2003), renewed in 2006 (MEDSTAT II, 2006-2009) and again in 2010 (MEDSTAT III, 2010-2013). This project aimed at reinforcing State partners' capacity regarding statistical production as well as at harmonising national standards of neighbouring countries' statistics bureaus to European standards. Activities within this project included training of statisticians, technical assistance, exchange of good practices and support in data collection and dissemination; these activities focus on six thematic sectors: including agriculture, energy, migration, social statistics, transport, trade and balance of payments; and cross-cutting themes of training and dissemination. Medstat IV is about to be launched in 2016 for a duration of 4 years until 2019.

The EU/Israel Action Plan[2] stipulates several areas and issues requiring improved statistical underpinning, e.g. in relation to best practices on social problems of post-industrial societies, and sustainable development. In particular, the Action Plan lists Statistics as an area where increased awareness of EU and international statistical methods and possibilities for further harmonisation could be achieved. ICBS has also made use of the short-term assistance tool, TAIEX (Technical Assistance and Information Exchange Instrument), for study visits, experts visits and workshops in specific areas.

[2] http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/action_plans/israel_enp_ap_final_en.pdf

Third, more generally, globalization is generating a growing need for data, for coordination of data production and for harmonization of statistics with internationally accepted standards. Since Israel became a member in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 2010, additional pressure is put on the ICBS to enhance and develop statistics and to harmonize existing information with the standards used by that organization.

Finally, a previous Twinning project (2013-2014, IS12/ENP-APFI/08), "Support to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics in the development of National Accounts, Education Statistics, Survey Methodology, ICBS Website and Coordination of Israel National Statistical System" awarded to Denmark, Danish Statistical Institute, namely Statistics Denmark, successfully supported the ICBS in aligning its statistical production with EU best practices. Some of the work achieved set the background for the new Twinning project, specifically:

ICBS adopted in 2014 strategic objectives and principles of practice for years 2015-2020. The objectives and principles, derived from the European Statistical Code of Practice include commitment to quality of statistics, among which:

- Definition of a National Quality Assessment Framework
- Ongoing quality improvement
- Development and improvement of statistical methods
- Ongoing improvement of the professional level of ICBS staff
- Adoption and implementation of international standards and framework for statistical metadata
- Having an updated central system for documenting and managing metadata
- Using metadata system in management of production processes

In the domain of surveys, recommendations where made which laid the basis for component D in this new Twinning project (details in Component D background paragraph).

3.3 Results

The envisaged results of the twinning project have been divided into four components as follows:

A – Quality management of official statistics
B – Micro-data services to researchers
C – Infrastructures for agricultural statistics
D – Methodological and geo-spatial tools for improving the quality and the efficiency of field surveys

Component A - Quality management of official statistics

Background and justification

Official statistics in Israel is mainly produced by ICBS, but also by Ministries and national institutions that form together the NSS. However, since statistics is not core business of other institutions than ICBS they often lack the power to engage their top management in investing resources in statistics development. They use their administrative data generated via their daily functioning and not designed for statistical purposes. Moreover, the statistics produced is not always in line with international standards.

A lesson learned in the previous Twinning project is that there is a need for ICBS and its partners in the NSS to develop infrastructures, in order to engage modernization of the production processes of official statistics. European and international standards should be adopted – inter alia, the European Statistics Code of practice (ES CoP), which has been formally adopted by ICBS top management in 2014. At the same time, following the State Comptroller's report, ICBS management started promoting mechanisms for coordination of the NSS, to streamline and ensure the quality of official statistics produced.

As part of this Twinning project, ICBS is willing to foster quality management and assessment of official statistics in Israel, both in ICBS and in the NSS. The main objective is to bring the NSS partners to acknowledge the need for the NSS to act as one system, adhering to agreed on quality standards.
Moreover, the Statistics Code of Practice for the European Neighborhood South countries, approved in Luxembourg in May 2015, refers to all producers of official statistics in the NSS as follows:

> ***Principle 4: Commitment to Quality.*** *The National Statistical Institute and other producers of official statistics are committed to quality. They systematically and regularly identify strengths and weaknesses to continuously improve process and product quality.*
>
> ***Principle 16: Coordination and Cooperation.*** *Coordination and cooperation in statistics contribute to the improvement of the quality of official statistics in the national statistical systems of the ENP-South countries.*

8 Furthermore, on 19th May 2015, the amendment of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European Statistics, COM(2012) 167, has been adopted reinforcing the principles of professional independence, coordination of the national statistical systems and the need to establish Commitments on Confidence.

Mandatory result

MR1: The establishment of an organizational system (organizational unit and work processes) responsible for the Quality Management of official statistics in ICBS and in the NSS.

Indicators of achievement:

IA1: Formal organizational structure including a designated unit, referents in ICBS and in the NSS, task forces and committees (with well-defined mandates) proposed

IA2: Working procedures, methods and tools defined for all interfaces, including agreements, memoranda of understanding and raising awareness strategy.

IA3: Multi-year national work plan for the implementation of the quality principles in the NSS elaborated

IA4: Training program on quality policy and on the implementation of quality standards in the relevant bodies in the NSS

IA5: Staff trained to evaluate the quality of processes and statistical outputs generated in ICBS and in the NSS.

IA6: Legislation proposed regulating the certification of statistical products or organizational units in the NSS (such as the Information and Statistics Division in

the Bank of Israel), as complying with the required national quality standards for official statistics.

Component B – Micro-data services to researchers

Background and justification

The ICBS and the Public Council for Statistics efforts to encourage research and to make micro-data accessible for researchers met only limited success till now.

However different solutions have been implemented: Establishment of Research Rooms under ICBS auspices, delivery of MUC files to researchers (Micro-data Under Contract), establishment of a remote access system to MUC files held at ICBS, establishment of a research room in the Bank of Israel providing remote access to files held at ICBS, PUF – Public Use files available to all users, tailor-made PUF files available to researchers on request.

Other alternatives are being implemented, or considered: Research rooms in ICBS branches in Haifa and in Tel Aviv, remote access system, remote execution system, research rooms in government offices, and research rooms in academic institutions.

Many decisions are to be made in order to make micro-data accessible to researchers, including: Selection of an effective set of accessibility options; which institution can be authorized for research; definition of a researcher who is entitled to conduct research, which research programs are legitimate, what are the rights and duties of researchers; agreements with external micro-data providers; pricing policy; establishment of information security rules, technological infrastructures and appropriate legal framework.

The Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS) has been sensitive to the needs of researchers for micro-data access for many years, beginning with its provision of micro-data files for research to the Hebrew University Social Science Data Center beginning in the 1980's. As academic research demands grew for more detailed micro-data, the need to set parameters for access became crucial.

Even though Israel is a small country, researchers are asking for easier physical access to data for research. On the basis of ICBS experience setting up a RAS for MUC access, ICBS created an RAS for the Bank of Israel, for access to RDC files. Even though this new system suffers from the same legal and administrative complications of the physical RDC, institutions of higher education and other research facilities in Israel have expressed keen interest in creating for them Remote Access Research Data Centers.
While ICBS would like to meet the needs of the researchers, it is also keenly aware that its current legal framework is an impediment to creating a streamlined system that will make access simpler and less expensive, without compromising on the need to protect confidentiality and privacy. The ICBS is also aware that increasing access to multiple institutions via remote access will create a burden on ICBS departments and employees that it cannot accept. And finally, ICBS is aware that other NSI's have created and established successful RDC, both physical and with remote access. Instead of reinventing the wheel, ICBS can and should take advantage of the experience of others in overcoming the issues that currently hobble its existing RDC legal/administrative/technological infrastructure.

The ICBS has initiated steps to change the legal framework by which it provides access to data for researchers. In 2013, Prof. Eckstein was again asked to chair a committee on behalf of the Public Council for Statistics, this time to address changes in the current legislation that would expressly allow access to micro-data for research and that would set the parameters for access to anonymized but confidential micro-data for research purposes. The proposed changes are informed, in general, by legislation in the European Union (in particular, the ESS) and individual European countries. However, the process is very slow, and it is not supported by any group or individual with practical experience in managing a successful RDC program outside of Israel.

Mandatory result

MR2: Setting up an overall program for providing researchers with access to micro-data, based on the analysis of the current situation and a designated strategic plan.

Indicators of achievement:

IB1: Report and analysis of the current situation adopted (and identification of gaps to be bridged);

IB2: Strategic Plan elaborated for providing researchers with access to micro-data;

IB3: Organizational and technological implementation plan, including data security, proposed;

IB4: Formal organizational structure proposed;

IB5: Training program defined for the staff

IB6: Policies and procedures adopted to manage each interface (e.g. data providers, research institutes, researchers, thematic units…)

IB7: Relevant legislation proposed

Component C - Infrastructures for agricultural statistics

Background and justification

The current structure of the agricultural economy in Israel is not clear enough and there is a need for further characterization. The main economic activity of many small farms is not always agricultural, but not taking into account those farms in the statistics would result in an under-estimate of the agricultural activity of Israel.

In many cases, administrative files do not provide comparable data, in terms of size, that would allow clear threshold settings. However, there is a need to improve their usability for the creation and maintenance of a register of farms.

Last agriculture census was conducted in 1981, 34 years ago, and an extensive survey was conducted in 1995. Over these years the agriculture industry underwent numerous changes that affected the statistics in Israel, among others: The privatization of the agricultural sector, a change in the composition of the economic activities in farms, and a major decrease in the activity of organizations and associations of farmers (which were the main providers of data on agricultural activities).
The quality of many of the current administrative sources is poor and they cover only parts of the agricultural activities. As accurate and reliable agricultural data remains very important for various stakeholders, the ICBS and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) agreed on the upgrade of the agricultural infrastructure for the improvement of the quality of the Agriculture statistics, starting with the establishment of a farm register.
Efficient cooperation with the MARD will contribute to the successful implementation of the project. It is recommended that the Ministry is closely involved in relevant activities. Finally there is a need to combine business data with GIS layers in order to complete the picture on the Agricultural sector.

Mandatory result

MR3: Setting an overall program for the establishment and maintenance of a farms register to be used as a framework for agricultural statistics.

Indicators of achievement:

IC1: Mapping of all the available data sources and identifying new sources of information

IC2: A methodology is developed for the integration of different administrative sources for the establishment of farmers frame.

IC3: A methodology is developed for the maintenance of farmers register.

IC4: A plan is established to produce farms statistics based on administrative data, GIS layers and direct data collection.

IC5: Questionnaires are drafted and fit needs of direct data collection

IC6: A methodology is set for determining the size threshold for defining a farm.

IC7: A plan is established for routine data collection from various sources for agricultural statistics.

Component D – Methodological and geo-spatial tools for improving the quality and the efficiency of field surveys

Background and justification

The ICBS is regularly improving the quality and efficiency of field data collection in surveys. Nonetheless, no attempt was ever made to achieve this goal through optimal use of geo-spatial tools. Geo-spatial tools can support field surveys from the early stage of sample design up to the dissemination phase. In this Twinning project, ICBS seeks to focus on fieldwork management and monitoring, following the recommendations of the experts in the previous twinning project. More specifically: The daily management of field interviews should be improved: Data collection in several surveys should be combined and be performed by the same interviewers; local response rates should be identified by areas,

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in order to be able to address region-specific problems. Geo-spatial technologies can support the identification and analysis of regional under-coverage, and enable rapid reaction and handling of problematic "hot spots ".

There are two main sampling frames: The Population Register – for sampling individuals and households, and the Dwelling Register for sampling dwelling units. Currently, all field surveys conducted by ICBS are sampled after geocoding of each unit in the sampling frames. ICBS conducts four main field surveys - Labour Force Survey, Household Expenditure Survey, Social Survey and Longitudinal Survey. However, the samples of these surveys are drawn separately for each survey. Moreover, the distribution of the workload units between the field interviewers is also performed independently for each survey, which has its own constraints dictated by its methodology: data collection period, time span feasible for collection, reference period, and so on.

Effective and economic work processes would maximize the time allocated by interviewers to data collection and minimize travelling time. ICBS is looking for a methodology that would yield optimized planning and allocation of workload units to interviewers, to reduce travelling time and increase data collection time, by combining data collection for various surveys while taking into account their respective constraints.

The second possible contribution of geospatial methodology deals with the optimal management of the fieldwork in real time. The goal is not only to achieve high response rates (ICBS enjoys a field response rate of 80% and more), but also to identify under-coverage areas and pockets of nonresponse in the midst of data collection and reallocate resources for their optimal treatment. In the current situation, problematic areas of coverage are acknowledged only at the end of the fieldwork.

Mandatory result

MR4: Optimization of field workload allocation using geo-spatial tools for managing field surveys in designated areas.

Indicators of achievement

ID1: Reduced costs of field surveys through the use of spatial management tools (GIS)

ID2: Methodological paper of managing and monitoring field work using spatial analysis during data collection process.

ID3: Design specification of a geo-spatial application, to monitor and manage non-response and under-coverage areas in field surveys, at different levels of spatial resolution.

3.4 Activities

The activities below are indicative.

Component A - Quality management in official statistics

Activity A.1	Vision, mission, policy and strategy for quality
Time schedule	Q2
Subject	Presentation of the current situation in ICBS, presentation of EU experience in different member states with different challenges presented by the structure of statistical production in the NSS.
Methods	Workshop and consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS and NSS staff
Duration	4 working days
Output	Activity report and recommendation for updated quality policy and quality strategy. Q3: Draft NSS policy and strategy discussed in the Public Council for Statistics and approved by ICBS management.
Indicators of Achievement	IA1, IA3, IA6.

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Activity A.2	Training Course: Introduction to the CoP
Time schedule	Q3
Subject	Presentation of relevant EU quality standards and guidelines (GAMSO, GSBPM…). Introduction to the EU Code of Practice and its specific indicators, including the experience accumulated in the EU member states.
Methods	Workshop and consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS and NSS staff
Duration	4 working days
Output	Activity report and training modules
Indicators of Achievement	IA2, IA4, IA5

Activity A.3	Tools and methods for quality implementation and management
Time schedule	Q4
Subject	Review of the NSS statistical products and statistical activities. Presentation of tools and methods for quality assessment and quality implementation, and materials produced by EU member states.
Methods	Workshop and consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS and NSS staff
Duration	4 working days
Output	Activity report and recommendation for tools and methods to be adopted.
Indicators of Achievement	IA1, IA2, IA4, IA6.

Activity A.4	Study visit for high level officials
Time schedule	Q4
Subject	Organizational structure for quality and quality related issues, tools and processes for monitoring quality and branding official statistics.
Methods	Study visit
Resources	BC: 3 ICBS staff, 3 NSS staff
Duration	3 working days
Output	Activity report
Indicators of Achievement	IA1, IA2

Activity A.5	Study visit for managers or referents for statistical quality in the NSS
Time schedule	Q5
Subject	Organizational structure for quality and quality related issues, tools and processes for monitoring quality and branding official statistics.
Methods	Study visit
Resources	BC: 3 ICBS staff, 3 NSS staff
Duration	3 working days
Output	Activity report
Indicators of Achievement	IA1, IA2

Activity A.6	Implementation of quality evaluation
Time schedule	Q5
Subject	Evaluation in practice using acquired tools, according to accepted standards.
Methods	Workshop
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS staff (only)
Duration	4 working days
Output	Activity report, quality assessments
Indicators of Achievement	IA2, IA4, IA5

Activity A.7	Raising awareness strategy
Time schedule	Q6
Subject	Discussions with the NSS partners on possible coordination mechanisms for the management of quality in the NSS. Draft of raising awareness strategy.
Methods	Workshop and consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS and NSS staff
Duration	4 working days
Output	Activity report and recommendation for strategy and tools. Possible presentation of tools in the twinning closure event.
Indicators of Achievement	IA2

Activity A.8	2016-2020 Work-plan
Time schedule	Q6
Subject	Having agreed on quality strategy and implementation tools, a multi-year work-plan is to be drawn, following examples from EU Member States.
Methods	Workshop and consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS and NSS staff
Duration	4 working days
Output	Activity report and recommendations for a multi-year program for the implementation and management of quality of official statistics in Israel, incl. a training program for the ICBS and NSS staff who will implement quality management and assessment.
Indicators of Achievement	IA1, IA3, IA4, IA6.

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Activity A.9	Legislation concerns
Time schedule	Q7
Subject	Coordination of the NSS via the monitoring and management of the quality of statistics produced is only partially covered by the Statistics Ordinance. Furthermore, the production of official statistics in the statistical units in the Ministries should be independent by law of political influence. Quality standards should also be applied to administrative data produced in the Ministries and used for statistical purposes.
Methods	Workshop and Consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS and NSS legal staff
Duration	4 working days
Output	Activity report and recommendations for legislation amendment.
Indicators of Achievement	IA6.

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Component B – Micro-data services to researchers

Activity B.1	Position analysis and presentation of Research Data Centre experience in Europe
Time schedule	Q1
Subject	In order to decide how to proceed, it is first essential to establish what infrastructure already exists in ICBS, including administrative, technical, legal and technological aspects. It will also be necessary to establish where ICBS proposal for amending legislation stands and the possible outcome of ICBS legislative initiative. Secondly, MS experts will provide the background on how RDCs in Europe function. Essential topics should include the legal framework, administrative framework, process flow, budget, technology, human resources and training.
Methods	Workshop and consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS, National Insurance Institute (NII) and the Israeli Law, Information and Technology Authority (ILITA) staff.
Duration	4 working days
Output	Activity report and recommendations
Indicators of Achievement	IB1, IB2, IB7

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Activity B.2	Workshop on researchers' experience, needs and expectations
Time schedule	Q2
Subject	Relevant stakeholders from academia and the government sector will discuss their experience with the current system of access to ICBS micro-data, including use of the RDC. They will expose their point of view on advisable strategies to be implemented. Discussions with MS experts on researchers' needs and their implication on the policy and the strategic objectives to be considered.
Methods	Workshop and consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS, researchers from the government and from the academy
Duration	4 working days
Output	Activity report and recommendations on policy and on strategic objectives.
Indicators of Achievement	IB2, IB4, IB7

Activity B.3	Study visit to RDC in various member states, and ESS
Time schedule	Q3
Subject	It is essential to see how the RDC functions in fact in the EU, including meeting with the staff responsible for various aspects of operation. This will be an opportunity to ask questions and to see first-hand how different RDCs function.
Methods	Study visit
Resources	BC: 5-7 ICBS, NII and ILITA staff
Duration	3 working days
Output	Activity report
Indicators of Achievement	IB2, IB3, IB4, IB6

Activity B.4	Technological infrastructures and information security
Time schedule	Q4
Subject	Making data accessible to researchers depends on, among others, technological infrastructures supporting procedures and processes, as well as on information security procedures and regulations. ICBS will present the current state. MS experts will present EU knowledge and experience. Discussions will be carried on to better understand what settings should be considered for the future.
Methods	Workshop and consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS and ILITA staff
Duration	4 working days
Output	Activity report and recommendations on strategic technological objectives for making micro-data accessible to researchers under information security constraints.
Indicators of Achievement	IB1, IB2, IB3

Activity B.5	Organizational structure, procedures and processes, and training plan
Time schedule	Q5
Subject	Based on the accumulated knowledge so far, specific proposals related to the organizational unit dealing with making micro-data accessible, should be prepared, along with a training plan to the designated staff. Procedures and supporting documentation should be developed to manage each interface (e.g. data providers, research institutes, researchers, thematic units, confidentiality committee...).
Methods	Workshop and consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS staff
Duration	4 working days
Output	Activity report and recommendation on organizational structure, working processes and procedures, training plan.
Indicators of Achievement	IB4, IB5, IB6

Activity B.6	Procedures and processes: Follow up
Time schedule	Q6
Subject	Follow up on previous activity with focus on processes within the organization: confidentiality policy and techniques, preparation of generic data files, etc.
Methods	Consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS staff
Duration	4 working days
Output	Activity report and recommendations
Indicators of Achievement	IB4, IB5, IB6

Activity B.7	Strategic plan and work-plan
Time schedule	Q6
Subject	Reflection on the recommendations given. Draft strategic plan for making micro-data accessible for researchers. First work-plan for the short-run.
Methods	Consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS
Duration	4 working days
Output	Activity report, recommendations on strategic-plan and work-plan.
Indicators of Achievement	IB2, IB3, IB4, IB7

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Activity B.8	Legal implications
Time schedule	Q7
Subject	Reflection on the recommendations given from legal perspective. Presentation of the law in MS. Discussions about possible amendment needed in the Statistics Ordinance in Israel.
Methods	Consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS, ILITA legal staff.
Duration	3 working days
Output	Activity report, recommendations on legal.
Indicators of Achievement	IB7

Component C - Infrastructures for agricultural statistics

Activity C.1	Data sources for agricultural statistics and farms frame
Time schedule	Q1
Subject	There is a need to map and evaluate the available data sources and identify new sources in order to establish a solid base for farms frame. Presentation of available data sources in ICBS. Presentation of MS experience. Discussion regarding possible data sources for agriculture statistics.
Methods	Workshop and consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS and Ministry of Agriculture (MOAG) staff
Duration	3 working days
Output	Activity report and recommendations for a list of data sources
Indicators of Achievement	IC1, IC2

Activity C.2	Methodology for the implementation of the recommendations adopted regarding the establishment of farms frame
Time schedule	Q3
Subject	Methodology for the integration of different administrative sources for the establishment of farms frame. As the sources do not agree with each other, there is a need to compile an algorithm in order to reach a comprehensive and accurate list of farms.
Methods	Workshop
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS and MOAG staff
Duration	3 working days
Output	Activity report and recommendations for a methodology, Including a method for the integration of different administrative sources into a farm register and its maintenance.
Indicators of Achievement	IC2, IC3

Activity C.3	Study visit to the Statistical Office of an EU Member State
Time schedule	Q5
Subject	A study visit to the Statistical Office of an EU Member State, which relies both on administrative data as well as survey data (including GIS data), in order to compare experiences regarding the preparation and updating agricultural statistics and learn how these data serve the relevant stakeholders.
Methods	Study Visit
Resources	BC: 3 ICBS staff and 2 MOAG staff
Duration	3 working days
Output	Study visit report
Indicators of Achievement	IC4, IC5

Activity C.4	Work-plan for farms frame and draft questionnaire for agricultural survey
Time schedule	Q5
Subject	Farms frame follow-up and draft work-plan, Drafting a survey questionnaire for agricultural statistics.
Methods	Consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS staff
Duration	3 working days
Output	Activity report, farm statistics work plan, and an adapted questionnaire for data collection
Indicators of Achievement	IC2, IC4, IC5

Activity C.5	Long-term work plan for agricultural statistics
Time schedule	Q7
Subject	A methodology is set for determining the size threshold for defining a farm. Reviewing the work done so far and drafting a long-term routine data collection from various sources for agricultural statistics.
Methods	Consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS and MOAG staff
Duration	3 working days
Output	Activity report and recommendations.

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Indicators of Achievement	IC6, IC7

Component D - Methodological and geo-spatial tools for improving the quality and the efficiency of field surveys

Activity D.1	Position analysis of methodology to allocate interviewers' workload in multi-field surveys
Time schedule	Q1
Subject	Methodologies for improving the design of field surveys (households) using geo-spatial tools, taking into account the constraints dictated by each survey (reference time, time allocated to filling in the questionnaires etc.). Presenting current situation in ICBS regarding planning field surveys, sampling, and the allocation of a workload to an interviewer. Presenting EU MS experience. Discussion on recommended methodologies.
Methods	Workshop and consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS staff
Duration	4 working days
Output	Activity report and recommendations on how to improve planning of field work using geo-spatial tools.
Indicators of Achievement	ID1, ID2, ID3

Activity D.2	Monitoring differential progress in field surveys using geo-spatial tools
Time schedule	Q3
Subject	Monitoring progress and specific under-coverage (geographical, demographic etc.), using geo-spatial tools. Presentation of current state in ICBS, state of the art in EU MS and discussion on recommended methodologies.
Methods	Workshop and consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS staff
Duration	4 working days
Output	Activity report and recommendations on how to improve planning of field work using geo-spatial tools.
Indicators of Achievement	ID1, ID2, ID3

Activity D.3	Study visit to EU Member State
Time schedule	Q4
Subject	GIS & GPS tools in field surveys.
Methods	Study visit
Resources	BC: 6 ICBS staff (surveys, methods, GIS)
Duration	3 working days
Output	Activity report
Indicators of Achievement	ID1, ID2, ID3

Activity D.4	Specifications of a geo-spatial application
Time schedule	Q5
Subject	Design specification of a geo-spatial application, to monitor and manage non-response and under-coverage areas in field surveys, at different levels of spatial resolution
Methods	Consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS staff
Duration	4 working days
Output	Activity report and recommendations on specifications for geo-spatial application
Indicators of Achievement	ID3

Activity D.5	Review of progress
Time schedule	Q7
Subject	Review of methodology paper on effective planning of field work operation (multi-survey sampling and workload allocation). Review of specification paper on monitoring progress and identifying differential under-coverage.
Methods	Consultations
Resources	MS: 2 experts BC: ICBS staff
Duration	4 working days
Output	Activity report and recommendations.
Indicators of Achievement	ID1, ID2,ID3

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3.5 Means/Input from the Member State Partner Administration

It is foreseen that, after the selection of the MS partner(s), the MS project leader and RTA will travel to Israel to prepare the project and in cooperation with the Israeli partners jointly draft the twinning contract including the detailed work plan

3.5.1. Profile and tasks of the Project leader

The Project Leader will be based in the Member State and will be responsible for the overall management of the project and the co-ordination of activities performed and ensures the overall quality of the services provided on site. He/she will have the overall responsibility for the implementation of all twinning activities.

The tasks and profile of the Project Leader:

- A university degree in statistics, economics or another relevant discipline;
- A minimum of 10 years of relevant professional experience in a national statistical office;
- Extensive experience in management of statistical projects;
- Knowledge of the EU Acquis on statistics;
- Good analytical and organizational skills;
- Experience in solving co-ordination and co-operation issues;
- Well-developed interpersonal skills as well as skills in mediation, and experience of working with the various levels of governments;
- English working language.

3.5.2. Profile and tasks of the Resident Twinning Advisor

The Resident Twinning Advisor (RTA) will be based in Israel and will be responsible for carrying out the activities on site. In particular, the RTA will ensure the completion of planning and preparation, engage and supervise short term experts required for activities, ensure training and study visit performances and manage the individual components of activities according to specified budgetary and other targets. The RTA needs to be present in Israel for the entire duration of the project.

The tasks of the RTA:

- Supervision and on-site coordination of all activities performed during the project lifetime;
- Supervision of short-term experts;
- Day-to-day advice to the staff of project beneficiary institution;
- Professional support for the project activities;
- Permanent contact with RTA counterpart;
- Monitoring project implementation and timely proposals for corrective measures;
- Contribution to preparation of reports under the project;

The profile of the RTA:

- A university degree in statistics, economics or another relevant discipline

- A minimum of 10 years of relevant professional experience in a national statistical office
- A minimum of 3 years professional experience of project and/or team management
- Advanced knowledge of microeconomic statistics and quality management
- Knowledge of the EU Acquis on statistics
- Good analytical and organisational skills
- Well developed interpersonal skills as well as skills in mediation, and experience of working with the various levels of governments
- Fluency in written and spoken English language.

3.5.3 Profile and tasks of the short-term experts

Short-term experts are expected to provide support in the development of methodologies e.g. questionnaire design, modification of methodologies, training and evaluation of results etc. The Twinning Contract will elaborate the precise number, tasks and working days of short-term experts.

The profile of short-tem experts:

- University degree in statistics, economics or another relevant discipline;
- Working knowledge of written and spoken English;
- Computer literacy;
- At least 5 years of relevant professional experience in a national statistical office;
- At least 5 years of professional experience in official statistics in areas that are relevant for the project components to be covered;
- Ability to provide on-the-job transfer of practical know-how through participation in the implementation of project tasks;
- Proven experience as trainer of government officials (for training activities).

Profile and tasks of the RTA assistant

The RTA assistant will be recruited and funded by the project. He/she will be of Israeli nationality and be working together with the RTA the whole duration of the project. The RTA assistant will provide logistical/administrative support, technical translation and interpretation services to the RTA to facilitate the implementation of the Twinning project activities and assist in the preparation of working documents, organization of seminars, trainings and study tours. The profile of the RTA assistant will be specified by the RTA and the RTA-Counterpart who will handle his/her recruitment following the provisions of the Twinning Manual.

The profile of the RTA assistant:

- University degree in a relevant discipline;
- Very good command of written and spoken Hebrew and English;
- Computer literacy;
- Relevant professional experience in statistics would be an asset.

4 Institutional Framework

The ICBS was established shortly after the creation of the State of Israel, as an autonomous unit within the Prime Minister's Office. The ICBS is headed by the Government Statistician, who also serves as the Director of the CBS, with a Public Council for Statistics advising him.

ICBS will be responsible for the implementation of the project. Within ICBS, International Relations and Statistical Coordination Department is in charge of coordinating the activities. Indirect project beneficiaries will be policy makers, data collectors, data users among which are: international organizations, the academic and research community and the public at large.

ICBS shall also ensure that appropriate personnel are made available to work with the EU Twinning partner. Counterparts for each activity will be appointed to facilitate implementation. Since one assumption in the Twinning project fiche is the capacity of ICBS to deal with certain concepts without foreign assistance, it is of paramount importance that these persons will be selected thoroughly with required skills to carry on the development efforts.

The Israeli Twinning partner is responsible for the selection of participants for the study tours and trainees (in consultation with the EU partner) and shall ensure the staff is made available and released from their duties during their training/study tours. ICBS will provide appropriate training facilities properly equipped for all training activities foreseen and implemented in the course of this twinning project.

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ICBS will be required to make available the necessary infra-structure for the MS partner to carry out its tasks. Office space and equipment, including access to computer, telephone, fax, etc, and the professional use of that equipment should be available to the RTA from day one of her/his arrival.

5 Budget

The total budget amounts to € 1,200,000.

6 Implementation arrangements

6.1 Implementing Agency responsible for tendering, contracting and accounting

The Implementing Agency which will be responsible for tendering, contracting and accounting of this twinning project is the Delegation of the European Union to the State of Israel. The person in charge is:

Ms Inga Navardauskiene
Head of Operations Section
Delegation of the EU to the State of Israel
Address: 5-7 Shoham Street, Ramat Gan, Israel
Postal Address: P.O. Box 3513 Ramat Gan, 52136 Israel
Tel: + 972-3 600 0921
Fax: + 972-3 613 7770
e-mail: Inga.Navardauskiene@eeas.europa.eu

Assistance to the Delegation in the management and administration of the Twinning Programme is provided by the PAO (within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel)

Mr David Nezer
Director

EU Cooperation programmes, Economic Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

9, Yitzhak Rabin Blvd. Jerusalem, 91035, Israel
Tel.: + 972-2-5303054
Fax: + 972-2-5303298
Email: David.nezer@mfa.gov.il

6.2 Main Counterpart in the BC

The nominated main counterparts in the BC are:

Project Leader: Yoel Finkel, Associate Government Statistician.

RTA Counterpart: Batia Attali, International Relations and Statistical Coordination Department.

Component leaders:

Olivia Blum - Component A: Improvement of the quality of official statistics;
Batia Attali – Component B: Development of research services;
Moshe Yanai – Component C: Methodological redesign of agricultural statistics;
Nitzan HaCohen – Component D: Geo-spatial management of field surveys

Steering Committee

The Project Leader will report to the contracting authority and to a Steering Committee (SC) that will be established at start. The SC will consist of the following members:

- BC Project Leader and MS Project Leader
- RTA and BC Counterpart to the RTA
- Representative of the European Commission
- Representative of the Twinning Programme Administration Office (PAO)

Other representatives from the European Union, including Eurostat, may be invited to participate in a technical capacity, as and when necessary. Representatives from international statistical organizations, international donor community, organizations representing the providers and users of statistics and ICBS experts could be invited as observers as and when necessary.

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7 Implementation schedule (indicative)

7.1 Launching of the call for proposals

June 2015

7.2 Start of project activities

Start of project activities is indicatively foreseen for March 2016.

7.3 Project completion

Completion is foreseen for February 2018

7.4 Implementation period duration

The implementation period duration is 24 months.

8 Sustainability

The exchange of knowledge with counterparts in corresponding EU MS institution is expected to provide in-depth knowledge on statistical working methods and methodologies that will enable BC experts to continue to adjust their statistics to European standards in a timely manner beyond the lifetime of the project.

9 Crosscutting issues

Equal opportunity principles and practices in ensuring equitable gender participation in the project will be guaranteed. Environmental aspects are not relevant for the project.

Whenever applicable, the following issues should be mainstreamed into the project activities:

- Management issues;
- Quality performance from a citizen's perspective

Communication and Visibility

The project shall draw up a communication plan that will ensure visibility for the activities themselves as well as for EU support throughout the implementation of the project. Proposals to be received from Member States should include proposals for communication and EU visibility. Based on these, the communication plan will be finalised with the Beneficiary administration, the Member State and the EU Delegation in the inception phase of the project[3].

[3] Rules on visibility for EU projects can be found at:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/documents/communication_and_visibility_manual_en.pdf

10 Conditionality and sequencing

The project is conditional on ICBS management involvement in adopting new methodology to upgrade official statistics based on EU and international standards. The Twinning project fiche has been drafted by ICBS, which commits itself to make the contributions stated in the fiche.

Regarding sequencing of project activities, see under components above.

The work-plan of twinning project proposals should take into account the different period of national holidays in Europe and in Israel.

Contributions expected from the Beneficiary include:
- Provision of office accommodation, computers, international telephone line, internet access, printer, and photocopier to RTA, RTA's assistant and MS experts,
- Provision of suitable venues, catering and equipment (projector) for workshops, training sessions and conferences that will be held under the project.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: Logical Framework Matrix

Support to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics in the-Improvement of the quality of official statistics		Programme name and number: IL/12	
The Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics		Total budget : 1,200,000 EUR	Duration: **24 months**
Overall Objective	**Objectively verifiable indicators**	**Sources of verification**	**Assumptions**
The general objective is to improve the quality and international comparability of Israel official statistics.	- Improved quality assessment and quality management in the NSS - Improved accessibility to micro-data for researchers - Improved methodology for Agriculture statistics - Improved data collection methods	- EU Country Report - Reports of Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS) - ICBS website	
Project purpose	**Objectively verifiable indicators**	**Sources of verification**	**Assumptions**
The project purpose is to support the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS) in aligning official statistics with the EU and other international organizations standards, guidelines, and best practices:		- ICBS website - Eurostat country report - Interim Quarterly Reports from this twinning	- Ongoing political and budgetary support to the ICBS - Ongoing good co-operation with other administrative bodies in the NSS
To support ICBS in setting up an organisational unit responsible for quality management as an overarching process toward the production of statistics in the National Statistics System (NSS), and capacity building of the staff;	An organizational system is established (organizational unit and work processes) responsible for the Quality Management of official statistics in ICBS and in the NSS.		
To support ICBS in improving its Micro data services to the research community;	An overall program for providing researchers with access to ICBS micro-data is adopted		
To support ICBS in establishing infrastructures suitable for the production of agricultural statistics;	A program for the establishment and maintenance of a farms register is adopted.		
To support ICBS in developing a methodology based on an extensive use of geo-spatial tools in survey management	The field workload allocation using geo-spatial tools for managing field surveys is optimized.		

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Mandatory results	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of verification	Assumptions
Component A **MR1:** The establishment of an organizational system (organizational unit and work processes) responsible for the Quality Management of official statistics in ICBS and in the NSS.	1 Formal organizational structure including a designated unit proposed 2 Working procedures, methods and tools 3 Multi-year national work plan for the implementation of the quality principles in the NSS elaborated 4 Training program implemented 5 Staff trained to evaluate quality 6 Legislation proposed	- ICBS website - Eurostat country report - Interim Quarterly Reports from this twinning	- ICBS staff available for implementation of the projects. - Support from the PCS and from the top-management of ministries and institutions producing official statistics in the NSS
Component B **MR2**: Setting up an overall program for providing researchers with access to micro-data, based on the analysis of the current situation and a designated strategic plan.	1 Report and analysis of the current situation adopted 2 Strategic Plan elaborated 3 Organizational and technological implementation plan proposed, including data security 4 Formal organizational structure propsoed 5 Training program defined 6 Policies and procedures to manage interfaces adopted 7 Relevant legislation proposed	- ICBS website - Eurostat country report - Interim Quarterly Reports from this twinning	- Ongoing good cooperation with research institutions, academy and researchers - ICBS staff available for implementation of the projects
Component C **MR3**: Setting an overall program for the establishment and maintenance of a farms register to be used as a framework for agricultural statistics.	1 Mapping of available and new data sources 2 A methodology integrating administrative sources in farms frame 3 A methodology for maintaining farms register 4 A plan to produce farms statistics 5 Draft questionnaires 6 A threshold for farm definition 7 A plan for routine data collection for agricultural statistics	- Eurostat country report - Interim Quarterly Reports from this twinning	- Ongoing good cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture - ICBS staff available for implementation of the projects
Component D **MR4**: Optimization of field workload allocation using geo-spatial tools for managing field surveys in designated areas.	1 Reduced costs of field surveys 2 Methodology on managing and monitoring field work with geo-spatial tools 3 Design specification of a geo-spatial application	- Interim Quarterly Reports from this twinning	- ICBS staff available for implementation of the projects

ANNEX 2: IMPLEMENTATION CHART

Twinning project timeframe																																						
Year	**2015**									**2016**												**2017**												**2018**					
Month	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2		
Project phase	**Tendering and contracting**												**1st quarter (Q1)**			**2nd quarter (Q2)**			**3rd quarter (Q3)**			**4th quarter (Q4)**			**5th quarter (Q5)**			**6th quarter (Q6)**			**7th quarter (Q7)**			**8th quarter (Q8)**				
NSS Quality management	Indicators																										IA5			IA4	IA3		IA1	IA2	IA6			
	Activities																**A.1**				**A.2**		**A.3**		**A.4**	**A.5**		**A.6**	**A.7**		**A.8**		**A.9**						
Micro-data for research	Indicators																IB1				IB2										IB3	IB4			IB6 IB5	IB7		
	Activities													**B1**				**B2**			**B3**			**B4**		**B5**		**B6**		**B7**			**B8**					
Agriculture Infrastructures	Indicators																	IC1						IC2		IC3		IC4		IC5			IC6			IC7		
	Activities														**C1**						**C2**				**C3**							**C4**						
Geo-spatial tools in surveys	Indicators																												ID3				ID1		ID2			
	Activities														**D1**				**D2**					**D3**			**D4**				**D5**							

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ANNEX 3: Background information about the ICBS

Organization of the ICBS; Departments and Domains (as in March 2015)

- **Government Statistician Office**: Legal Advisor, Information and Media Relations, Data Security Officer, Internal Auditor and Public Complaints, International Relations and Statistical Coordination, Coordination of the NSS, Data Communication and Dissemination.
- **Demography and Census**: Integrated Census Planning and Development, Demography, Health and Vital Statistics, GIS and Geography
- **Chief Scientist**: Leading Economic Indicators, Social and Economic Research,
- **Education and Teaching Staff**: Education Statistics, Higher Education, Teaching Staff, Education Register, Longitudinal Educational Research
- **Macro-economics:** National accounts, Balance of Payments, International Accounts, Foreign Trade, Gross Domestic Product and uses of Resources, Capital Formation and National Balance Sheet Accounts, General Government Accounts, Social Services Accounts and Domestic Product by Industry.

- **Micro-economics**: Consumer Prices and PPP, Input Prices, Prices in Industry and Services, Consumption and Finances, Labour Statistics, Wages Statistics, Consumer Confidence, Israel Longitudinal Survey of Families
- **Economic Infrastructures**: Construction and Local Authorities, Transportation and Communications, Agriculture, Environment and Energy
- **Business Economics** Industry and Business, Input and Output, Business Register and Classifications, Business Surveys, Job Vacancy and Business Tendency Surveys, Tourism
- **Statistical Methodology**: Statistical Analysis, Statistical Methodology, Census Methodology, Census Planning and Evaluation, Data Processing
- **Surveys**: Surveys Planning – Households, Business – Field Data-collection Centre, Telephone Data-collection Centre
- **Administration and Human Resources**: Quality and Excellence, Planning and Organization, Material Resources, Security, Budget and Costing, Industrial Engineering and Management, Human Resources, Training and Social services
- **Information Technology**: Applications Development, Technology Infrastructure, Internet, GIS, Quality Assurance
- **Local branches**: Headquarters in Jerusalem and two regional centres, Haifa and the North, Tel Aviv and Central Area & the South.

ICBS Vision and Strategic Objectives

> "The ICBS, as the professional organization responsible for the official statistics of the State of Israel, is committed to providing updated, qualitative and independent statistical information, for a wide variety of users in Israel and abroad".

ICBS strategic objectives and principles of practice for 2015-2020 derive from the European Statistical Code of Practice that was adopted by ICBS, as follows:

1. Users orientation statistical production, while addressing changing needs
2. Commitment to quality
3. Micro-data confidentiality
4. Development of statistical information
5. Cooperation and coordination with producers of official statistics in the NSS
6. Ensuring on-going cooperation of data suppliers
7. Managerial, operational and economic efficiency

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1 Users oriented statistical production, while addressing changing needs

#	Strategic Objectives	Activities toward the objectives
1	Users oriented dissemination policy	1.1 Definition and formulation of dissemination policy as part of the general strategy of ICBS 1.2 Regulation of the relations with customers as part of the dissemination policy 1.3 Build online dissemination paths for different groups of customers on the website – Reorganization of the information on the website, powerful search engine, improving user-machine interfaces by new technological tools and by metadata system. Data oriented website, supporting flexible products, free queries and allowing for personalized generation of statistical data. 1.4 Dissemination of updated information on social networks (Twitter, Facebook). 1.5 Increase the involvement of users in the definition of information items to be disseminated and their accessibility modes by feedback questionnaires, users and uses surveys, focus-groups etc. 1.6 Develop/purchase a system for monitoring and managing demands and needs of the public addressing ICBS by e-mail and on the phone. 1.7 Increase the use of statistics and evidence-based decision making, by public relations, supporting material (Pamphlets, promotion videos, seminars and workshops etc.), and designated campaigns to foster relations with mass media. This is aiming to have actual and potential users be aware of data availability. 1.8 Ongoing meetings with DGs of Ministries, with statistics producers, data suppliers and potential users. 1.9 Implement an active policy with regard to misuse of statistical data.
2	Single point access to all information items and services for users and customers	2.1 Establish a single source dissemination to enhance efficiency, standardization and harmonization of content. 2.2 Establish one statistical database as the only source for all disseminated data and statistical products. 2.3 Give users access to full scale, user friendly, macro database with non-confidential data (non-identified and non-identifiable). 2.4 Enforce single gate for dissemination, by supporting procedures and tools. 2.5 Manage dissemination with full control and monitoring tools 2.6 Develop and maintain a documentation system for all tailor-made data provided to customers (complete logs). 2.7 Provide designated training to writers of press releases in subject matter units, including dissemination procedures and writing guidelines
3	ICBS website as the main dissemination centre / access point to all information authorized to be published	3.1 All published information answers clear criteria of quality and relevance to the public 3.2 Reorganization of the website and its presentation. 3.3 Building a generic tables-generator 3.4 Powerful search engine covering all disseminated information and infrastructures to support development (like thesaurus). 3.5 Development and implementation of quality control procedures on services. 3.6 Equal accessibility to all

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2. Commitment to quality

#	Strategic Objectives	Activities toward the objectives
1	Defined NQAF – National Quality Assessment Framework	1.1 Formulation of a policy on statistical quality, adoption of national and international standards for quality frameworks 1.2 Adoption and adjustment of standard tools for managing and evaluating statistical quality
2	Ongoing quality improvement	2.1 Produce and make available, updated statistical information available to all: Publication according to pre-planned and published ARC-Advanced Release Calendar (monthly, quarterly and yearly statistics). 2.2 Produce reliable statistics, evaluated by quality criteria set in the ICBS dissemination policy (relevance, coherence, confidentiality, transparency etc.) 2.3 Implement a multi stage and integrated evaluation plan, based on self assessment, peer review, and metadata analysis, of processes and products in ICBS and in the NSS 2.4 Review the actual use of official statistics in decision making processes 2.5 Measure public trust in statistical data 2.6 Publication of quality reports and recommendations for improvement 2.7 Update work-plan (and capacity building, if required) for the implementation of the recommendations, monitor implementation of the recommendations and report findings in the following evaluation report.
3	Development and improvement of statistical methods	3.1 Develop and implement advanced statistical methods in addressing problems of non-response, impact of research methods, small area estimation, time series analysis, imputation, statistical disclosure. 3.2 Set up qualitative and uniform sampling frames for integrated and "smart samples" 3.3 Integrate multi-source information for generating more reliable estimates
4	Ongoing improvement of the professional level of ICBS staff	4.1 Set up and implement workers training policy adapted to roles and functions: required core competences, advanced competences and special competences. 4.2 General training of workers to be better acquainted with the world of knowledge of ICBS 4.3 Verify that workers know and understand the statistical concepts used in ICBS
5	Adoption and implementation of international standards and framework for statistical metadata	5.1 Select and adjust metadata standards for the production of clear and meaningful statistical information: provide quality declarations, explanations and definitions, online glossary of terms and system of FAQ -"frequently asked questions", standardization in the presentation of the information 5.2 Training workers 5.3 Adoption of documentation standards in the business processes of statistical production

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6	Having an updated central system for documenting and managing metadata	6.1 Review current status 6.2 Set up documentation objectives regarding the four central components of the system: concepts, quality declarations, variables, classifications and codes. 6.3 Characterize uses of the system: building and updating quality declarations, supporting internal processes, providing metadata to the website and to the international organizations. 6.4 Choose/purchase/adjust the system to the required standards. 6.5 Plan the implementation of metadata projects 6.6 Set up an organizational structure to enable the implementation. 6.7 Train workers to use the system and to produce metadata 6.8 Ongoing uploading of metadata to the system and automatic generation of dissemination metadata 6.9 Characterize and implement processes of metadata quality control
	Using metadata system in management of production processes	7.1 Harmonize metadata 7.2 Questionnaires design and production 7.3 Define files for users 7.4 Measure and document needs and satisfaction of internal and external users

3. Confidentiality and accessibility of individual data

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#	Strategic Objectives	Activities toward the objectives
1	Strengthening information security and maintain data confidentiality	1.1 Strengthening data security in accordance with the requirements of the governmental system
2	Accessibility of individual data to researchers	2.1 Define policy and specific strategic plan for providing researchers access to individual data, aiming to balance security and confidentiality rules, while fostering research. 2.2 Improve the legal infrastructure for making un-identified individual data accessible to researchers. 2.3 Build technological infrastructures for the implementation of the strategic plan 2.4 Operate a system for accessing individual records and maintain it. 2.5 Ensure the allocation of budget and human resources for uninterrupted and efficient operation.

4. Development of statistical information

#	Strategic Objectives	Activities toward the objectives
1	Production of census information, using non-traditional methods	1.1. Check alternatives to the traditional census to serve as the main infrastructure of the statistical system 1.2. Develop and improve census methodology
2	Statistics for specified geographic areas and population groups	2.1 Development, improvement and accessibility of spatial statistics by fixed geographic areas and for custom-made areas (on demand) 2.2 Development and improvement of regional indices 2.3 Development and improvement of statistics of ethnic and other minorities
3	Input-output tables	3.1 Plan and implement the production of input-output tables once in 5 years.
4	Well-being and sustainable development statistics	4.1. Complete breakdown of and comparison between population groups for the available indicators 4.2. Conduct ongoing Time -use Survey for the completion of missing indicators 4.3. Methodological development of new indicators 4.4. Develop sustainability indicators according to capital approach 4.5. Development of resilience indicators 4.6. Cooperation with the National Economic Council and government ministries in establishing an ongoing process for checking and updating the indicators 4.7. Regular annual publication of quality of life indicators and sustainability indicators
5	Green Growth	

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5. Cooperation and coordination with producers of official statistics in the NSS

#	Strategic Objectives	Activities toward the objectives
1	Strengthening the NSS to efficiently answer information needs	1.1 Use PCS to understand the long term needs of the NSS 1.2 Set up a multi-year statistical work plan for the whole NSS, that reflects the needs as reflected by all producers 1.3 Regulate the NSS with MoUs – Strengthen relations with government Ministries and other national producers of statistics 1.4 Legislation supporting NSS needs
2	Coordination of the NSS in adherence to international quality standards	2.1 Empower the Public Council for Statistics to implement its coordination functions as defined by the Statistical Ordinance 2.2 Define official statistics and core statistics 2.3 Determine policy as of the binding standards and their adjustments to the reality in Israel 2.4 Set up a detailed work-plan for adopting the standards 2.5 Systematic support, guidance and cooperation with research units and information units in public organizations 2.6 Division of labor within the NSS regarding the production of official statistics 2.7 Set up policy regarding the involvement, cooperation and coordination of ICBS with the international organizations and with NSIs abroad 2.8 Coordination within the NSS for representation at conferences and working groups and for data transmission to international organizations and other entities abroad. 2.9 Signing MOUs with national statistical institutes abroad
3	Assessment of quality and completeness of official statistics produced by the NSS	3.1 Sharing technological platforms and generic tools 3.2 Develop technological infrastructure for collecting information (assessment questionnaires) and reporting assessment results 3.3 Training personnel to perform the evaluation 3.4 Evaluation of the actual coverage and quality of the official statistics produced 3.5 Branding the statistics produced by the NSS as official statistics
4	Building a statistical information center for all official statistics in Israel	4.1 Adjust ICBS website to give access to all / most official statistics 4.2 Spivac Committee: decision-making and work plan for the development of a socio-economic data center 4.3 Implementation of the recommendations of the committee for making data available to the general public 4.4 Manage and coordinate between the agencies about contents and accessibility

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6. Ensuring on-going cooperation with data suppliers

#	Strategic Objectives	Activities toward the objectives
1	Regulation of relations with data suppliers	1.1 Build inventory of administrative files and define updating procedures: content, updating frequency, contact person in ICBS 1.2 Set up MOUs agreements with administrative bodies 1.3 Transparency of procedures and rules of data security and data confidentiality 1.4 Strengthening ties with data sources for increasing motivation to participate in surveys
2	Reduced response burden in business surveys	2.1 Set up an overall management system of sampling units, research units and reporting units in all business surveys 2.2 Create dependent and "smart" samples in sampling small businesses 2.3 Locate and reduce duplications in the questionnaires 2.1 Check necessity of questions in questionnaire 2.4 Develop and calculate periodical indicator for response burden 2.5 VIC (Very Important Companies) treatment 2.6 Develop internet questionnaires 2.7 Measure perceived response burden, using short feedback questionnaire
3	Reduced response burden in household surveys	4.5 Ongoing search for alternative data sources (administrative databases, registers) 4.6 Integration of data sources: administrative sources and surveys 4.7 Setting up a policy with regard to inclusion of a family in samples of several surveys 4.8 In panel surveys – reducing re-questioning 4.9 Locating and reducing duplications in the questionnaires 4.10 Checking necessity of questions in questionnaire 4.11 Reducing the number of visits of a family in the same survey to the efficient essential minimum 4.12 Special treatment of weak populations like the elderly 4.13 Development of internet questionnaires

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7. Managerial, operational and economic efficiency

#	Strategic Objectives	Activities toward the objectives
1	Managerial efficiency	1.1 Develop general strategy, updated every three years, clear to all people, motivated by strategic objectives, and includes leadership, building capacities and HR planning 1.2 Define and manage prioritization policy 1.3 Clear definition of objectives and feasibility of their achievement 1.4 Set up objective criteria for evaluation of alternatives and priorities order 1.5 Plan flexible margins in terms of objectives and requested inputs for their accomplishment, to enable answering unexpected needs (contingency) 1.6 Measure the effectiveness of results vis-à-vis budget, objectives and outliers, and plan amendment action 1.7 Increase ICBS influence on the direction of statistical development by increasing its involvement in the international decision-making hubs. 1.8 Implementation of ICBS role as the leader of the NSS entails allocation of adequate resources and building capacity to reach common NSS goals.
2	Operational efficiency	2.1 Collect relevant information by domain, check alternatives and compare costs 2.2 Assign person responsible for reviewing procurement and alternative processes 2.3 Reduce production time, using technology – computerization of surveys 2.4 Create working environment for analyzing evaluation outcomes and for monitoring implementation of recommendations 2.5 Integration of tools in ICBS 2.6 Increase output by international, bilateral and multilateral activities
3	Economic efficiency	3.1 Manage and improve procurement and tenders processes 3.2 Efficient use of economic resources 3.3 Improve the ability to use administrative data 3.4 Expand data collection processes using technological means (internet, files…) 3.5 Improve infrastructures and databases to serve more users in cross sectional domains 3.6 Improve hardware and software systems 3.7 Down root generic work processes, identical methods; using GSBPM 3.8 Develop or adopt generic systems in use, in statistical organizations around the world 3.9 Ongoing use of international aid tools (TAIEX, Twinning, Reviews)

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