

INTERNATIONAL  
CONSULTING

# ANNUAL REPORT

2020



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Annual Report 2020  
– International Consulting

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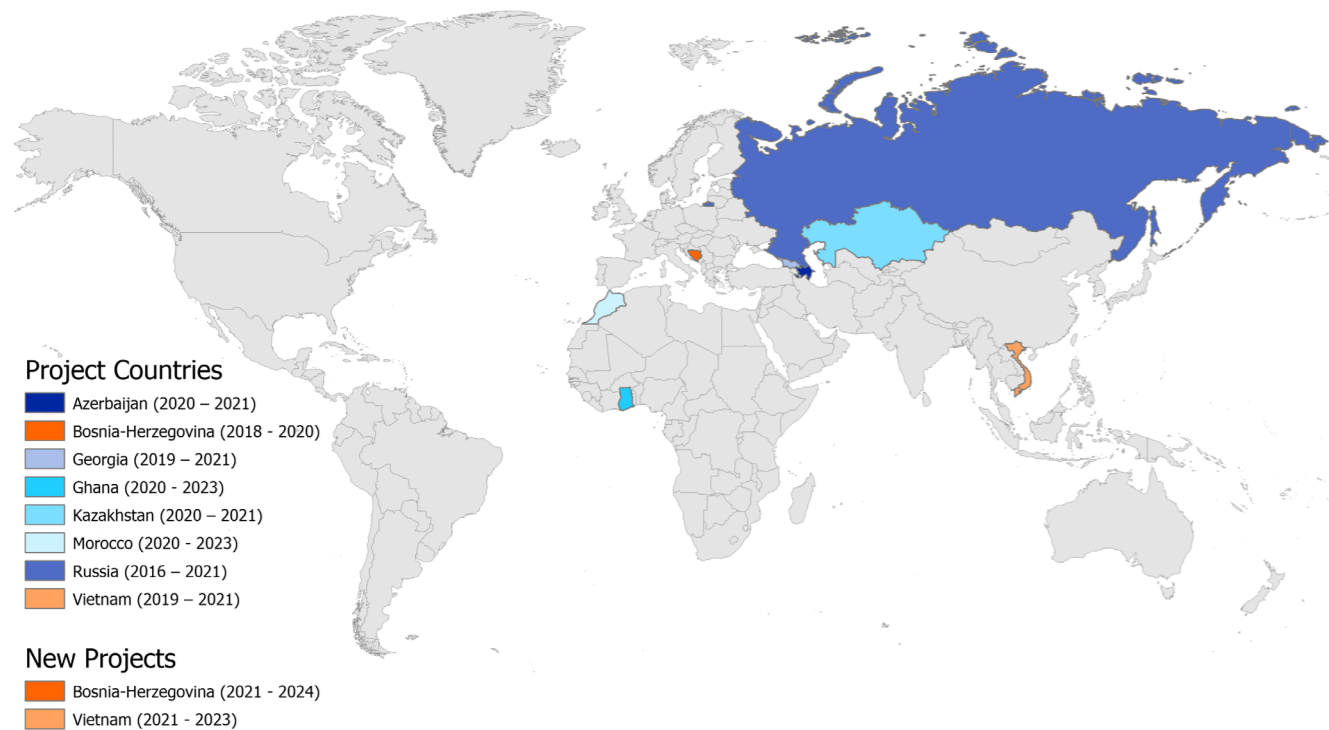
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# MAP OF PROJECT COUNTRIES

# INTRODUCTION: INTERNATIONAL CONSULTING AND STATISTICAL CAPACITY BUILDING



For the last 25 years Statistics Denmark has provided advice and capacity building to National Statistical Institutions and other producers of official statistics across the globe. We do so by incentive and demand from the EU, the World Bank and from bilateral donors like the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Their aim is to support sustainable statistical systems that provide policy makers, companies and citizens with data about private sector trends, labor markets, education, prices and availability of goods, tax collection and many others. Data that underpins and sustain governments' ability to make informed decisions on poverty reduction, green growth and many other key development issues. The statistical data also allows companies and organizations to make knowledge based decisions and citizens to participate in the democratic process on an informed basis.

Governments and international institutions alike have called upon a 'data revolution' numerous times when defining the Sustainable Development agenda. The need came about as a reaction to poor availability of data at the close of the Millennium Development process and the start of the SDGs. Goal number 17 in the SDGs, where capacity building on statistics is anchored, was defined for this very reason. That said, the availability of statistics and data is at the core of all the SDGs, not just as a key necessity in planning and monitoring, but also as a tool to build sustainable governance and institutional solutions.

By bringing our expertise to the world we can help our partners mitigate the need for independent, reliable and internationally comparable data. Thereby not only supporting our partner Statistical Institutions but also the policy goals of the EU and Denmark. In turn our staff liaise with their peers in partner Statistical Institutions – a professional relation that brings learning, new competencies and much appreciated questioning and challenges.

The latest Paris21 report shows how the funding for statistics, despite the call for a data revolution, is still fragmented and perhaps stagnant. Among the many competing development agendas the underlying need for data and statistics is sometimes forgotten.

In 2021 we at Statistics Denmark will take up the challenge in our international activities to better communicate what we do, why we do it and how data and statistics create added value for development policy and society at large.

The statistical production in Denmark is by large based on administrative sources and registers. The personal identification id, the company identity codes and the geographical location identifiers, in connection with numerous administrative registers, allow us to produce large amounts of high quality data, at a relatively low cost.

The register based system, the unique identifiers and the data sharing, were first developed in the 70'ies and onward, in a strong cross sectoral partnership between numerous government institutions. For this reason it also makes perfect sense that Statistics Denmark engages closely with relevant government sectors in Denmark when providing statistical capacity building globally.

In 2021 we will see more outreach stimulating strong cross sectoral activities. Under the auspice of the Strategic Sector Cooperation and Green Growth initiative under the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs we will work closely with other Danish line ministries on e.g. population statistics in Ghana, education statistics in Vietnam and digitalization and environment in Morocco.

2020 was very much a year dominated by COVID-19. Much needed physical meetings and trainings with our partners in Ghana, Vietnam, Georgia, Morocco etc. and planned visits to Statistics Denmark from our Statistical Institution partners around the world had to be cancelled. Slowly we learned how to shift our work to virtual meetings and other collaboration platforms and remote meetings became the new normal. Everyone have adapted well.

Last but not least – we would like to thank all our partner Statistical Institutions, our partners in the government, NGO's and other key stakeholders for their continued good cooperation and their patience and willingness to adapt to the rapid changes brought upon us by the COVID-19 pandemic. We look forward to continue the collective efforts to secure independent and reliable statistics around the world.

Carsten Zangenberg  
Director, Communication and Sales

# MOROCCO

# GHANA

## OBJECTIVE

The main objective of the strategic sector cooperation (SSC) between Haut Commissariat au Plan (HCP), Statistics Denmark (SD) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (MFA) is to ensure that the public debate in Morocco builds upon relevant and easily accessible statistics that supports informed decision-making.

## Key achievements in 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic has undeniably had a significant impact on our activities in Morocco, affecting both the overall project time schedule as well as shifting the format of planned missions from physical activities to virtual meetings and workshops. However, due to the high commitment to the project from the top management of the HCP, we have been able to do much more than first anticipated:

- **Supporting the formulation of strategies and guidelines**  
SD has supported HCP in the formulation of a wide range of strategies and guidelines that constitute the very core of official statistics and its contribution to a modern and informed society. This process has made HCP even more aware of the importance of focusing on and respecting core values of independence, objectivity and trustworthiness in the statistical production, as well as the importance that relevant and high quality statistics has on the society as a whole. During the project, these strategies will lead to a digital transformation of the data collection and processing done by HCP. Thereby improving quality and lowering costs at the same time.
- **Establishment of an informal statistics donor group**  
HCP is involved in several international cooperation projects, so in order to ensure donor coordination

the SSC project has actively supported the establishment of an informal donor group with participation of the World Bank as well as representatives from the UK, Italy and France to ensure a proper level of coordination and exchange of information. In addition, regular meetings are taking place with INSEE, the French national statistical institution, which has a long tradition of cooperation with HCP and is currently conducting activities on topics close to the SSC project.

## What's next?

- In the second half of 2021, we will start working on the green component of the project (waste and water) in close collaboration with the Danish Environmental Protection Agency (DEPA). This is an important part of SDG monitoring in Morocco.
- Moroccan, Danish and Norwegian experts will modernise the Statistical Business Register, using a generic system developed by SSB, the Norwegian national statistical institution. The new register will enable HCP to compile more detailed and solid information on Moroccan businesses ■



Jørgen Elmeskov, former Director General, Statistics Denmark, meets the press in Morocco. Photo: Charlotte Juul Hansen

## PROJECT FACTS

<b>Project name</b>	Support to Morocco's ongoing efforts to improve the quality and digitalisation of official statistics.
<b>Key topics</b>	Focus is to allow Haut Commissariat au Plan (HCP) to take advantage of the ongoing digitalisation of the Morocco society in general and the public administration especially. This involves developing a new IT strategy for HCP, electronic data collection, improving the use of administrative data and modernising the statistical business register. Also quality management and environmental statistics are addressed.
<b>Partner</b>	Haut Commissariat au Plan (HCP).
<b>Donor</b>	Strategic Sector Cooperation - Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)
<b>Period</b>	2020-2023

## Key achievements 2020

The project in Ghana commenced just at the same time as the COVID-19 pandemic started to spread around the world obviously affecting the implementation. Spring 2020 was used to adjust to the new working methods and the virtual set-up for the activities that we were eager to start. Gradually we found our way around the new modalities and managed to start working on some of the components of the project – such as:

- **Launching the GSS 5-year Corporate Plan**  
Just before the official start of the project and before the first COVID-19 lockdown, SD participated in the launch of the GSS 5-year Corporate Plan for 2020-2024 under the theme "Better data for better decisions". One of the core goals of the Corporate Plan is to increase usage of official statistics for improved national development and planning in Ghana wherefore we shared experiences working with administrative data in Denmark.
- **Mapping administrative data sources for demographic statistical production**  
During 2020, we slowly started our collaboration to enable GSS to publish demographic statistics based on administrative data sources. We started out with an assessment of the format and frequency with which data from the Birth and Deaths Registry (BDR) and the National Identification Authority (NIA) in Ghana can be transferred to GSS.
- **Drafting a Data Quality Assurance Framework**  
The purpose of the Data Quality Assurance Framework is to standardise the many aspects of statistical data collection and provide guidance to enhance data quality and consistency in the statistical production. The framework should ultimately apply to all data collecting and producing agencies in Ghana, thereby expanding the impact of the project beyond GSS. The formulation of the framework has encouraged GSS to recruit its first Quality Director ever.

## OBJECTIVE

The strategic sector cooperation between Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), Statistics Denmark (SD) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) lays down the foundation for a statistical system that should ultimately be based on fewer surveys, while at the same time ensuring more data and higher data quality. This is to strengthen the foundation for evidence-based decision making in Ghana and improving monitoring and reporting of the UN SDGs.



Virtual engagement regarding the drafting of a Data Quality Assurance Framework. Photo: Harrison Ofori

## What's next?

In 2021 the collaboration around the implementation of activities continues with the hope that we can soon meet again in person. SD is of course following GSS's engagement in the Housing & Population Census, which takes place in Ghana from June 2021, as it has direct relevance for the project. At the same time 2021 offers virtual engagement on project components such as:

- Improving the IT infrastructure at GSS to enable proper transfer and storage of data.
- Ensuring accuracy of economic statistics, including continued activities to rebase the Consumer Price Index and updating and improving the Unit Value Index.
- Strengthening synergies with other external stakeholders, including the private sector ■

## PROJECT FACTS

<b>Project name</b>	Strengthening official statistics in Ghana.
<b>Key topics</b>	Use of administrative data sources for statistical production, IT infrastructure, quality management, economic statistics, environmental accounts, dissemination and communication.
<b>Partner</b>	Ghana Statistical Service (GSS).
<b>Donor</b>	Strategic Sector Cooperation - Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)
<b>Period</b>	2020-2023

# VIETNAM

## OBJECTIVE

The Strategic Sector Cooperation (SSC) between the General Statistics Office of Vietnam (GSO), Statistics Denmark (SD) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (MFA) has to date been at the inception phase with a intention to formalise a longer-term collaboration between the institutions to allow for timely and relevant production and dissemination of statistics in Vietnam.

## Key achievements in 2020

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our ability to engage with GSO has so far been limited to on-line activities, primarily virtual meetings and webinars. However, despite the challenges 2020 still enabled us to pin down the content for our longer-term engagement. More concretely, 2020 involved the following activities:

- **Support in the formulation of "Viet Nam Statistical Development Strategy 2021-2030"**  
SD has been actively engaged in the formulation of Vietnam's future strategy for statistics. We had the opportunity to participate in a number of meetings as critical reviewer of the strategy and presenter on key thematic issues relevant to the strategy. Most recently, we provided considerable input to the direction around the orientation of social and environmental statistics in Vietnam.
- **Formulating a longer-term collaboration**  
Collaboration and coordination with Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Education and Training, Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as various departments of GSO is what 2020 will be remember for when it comes to the SSC engagement in Vietnam. Resulting in the formulation of a longer-term engagement where experts from SD on topics such as



Charlotte Juul Hansen, former Chief Advisor at International Consulting, Statistics Denmark, providing input to Vietnam's Statistical Development Strategy 2021-2030. Photo: Chu Thi Trung Hau

population statistics, education, Big Data and Environmental Accounts in the near future will engage in detail with our partner GSO.

## What's next?

In the second half of 2021, we will start up the longer-term cooperation with GSO lasting until 2023. We are of course excited to take on board this new project with the intention to support informed decision making through relevant and accessible statistics in Vietnam ■

## PROJECT FACTS

<b>Project name</b>	Support to Vietnam's ongoing efforts to improve the quality of official statistics.
<b>Key topics</b>	In 2020 the project was at the inception phase with a view to build a longer-term collaboration around population and migration statistics, education, Big Data and Environmental Accounts.
<b>Partner</b>	General Statistics Office of Vietnam (GSO).
<b>Donor</b>	Strategic Sector Cooperation - Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)
<b>Period</b>	2019-2021

# GEORGIA

## Key achievements in 2020

Despite a two month period of work plan revision and remote working adaptation due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic as much as 30 activities were conducted in 2020 of which unfortunately only 5 were conducted in-country. A lot of important work has been performed on the project topics, all of them being well underway towards reaching the 34 indicators that are targeted to obtain 24 expected project results. 4 indicators were accomplished in 2020:

- Initial yearly National Accounts according to System of National Accounts 2008 was released
- Labour Force Survey (LFS) questionnaire was updated according to ILO methodology, and changes were implemented in the collection instrument
- LFS was updated and produced according to latest relevant recommendations
- Imputation methodologies in LFS was introduced

## What's next?

A lot of hard work needs to be performed in 2021. Fortunately, the road has been paved well in 2020 for the project to reach its targets during 2021, some of them more or less already achieved, just missing the final touch and publication:

- Report on the sources and possible cure concerning Asymmetries in International Merchandise Trade Statistics has been written
- Unit Value Indicators in International Merchandise Trade are developed
- Tourism Satellite Accounts to be developed
- Short Term Indicators on Volume and Turn-over to be developed
- Feasibility Study on new and/or reworked Poverty Indicators has to be written

In the 2 years the Twinning project has been running at Geostat, other challenges than those initially formulated in the project have arisen. The Twinning

## OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of the project is to facilitate Georgia's approximation to the Union Acquis in the area of statistics, thereby supporting the association process. The project aims at supporting the staff at Geostat in building and expanding their knowledge on how to produce specific statistics according to European requirements.

project is pleased to assist on those issues as well, and look forward to continue with the training sessions in "R" software, assist in finalising the development of a Harmonized Index of Consumer Prices, read the Geostat IT strategy built upon the IT-sector review in which the Twinning project participated, and to assess the possibilities of developing Georgian Satellite Sports Accounts ■



The General Director of Geostat and the RTA opened the Twinning project two years ago with cake and champagne. Photo: Ekaterine Lobzhanidze

## PROJECT FACTS

<b>Project name</b>	Strengthening the Capacity of the Georgian National Statistical System - GE 16 ENI ST 06 18.
<b>Key topics</b>	External Trade Statistics, National Accounts, Business Statistics and Social Statistics.
<b>Partner</b>	National Statistics Office of Georgia (Geostat).
<b>Funding</b>	EU - Twinning project
<b>Period</b>	2019 - 2021 (possibly 4 months extension of the project)

## OBJECTIVE

The project is the third Twinning project between Statistics Denmark (SD) and the partners of National Statistical System (NSS) of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The overall objective is to modernise the NSS and align its products to European standards, thereby underpinning the country's status as an EU candidate country.

- **Tourism**  
During the project a survey of Tourism with approximately 9600 households from the entire country was conducted asking questions about length of holidays, destinations and modes of transportation. In the future it is our hope to shift the survey from face to face interviews to either telephone or web based data collection.
- **Other results**  
Among the projects' many other achievements are regional national accounts which has been compiled for the first time, new indices on architectural and engineering consultancies, and producer prices for construction of roads, bridges and tunnels.

## What's next?

In 2021 the work in Bosnia-Herzegovina resumes, now under the heading 'Further support to the reform of statistics system in BiH'. Finland and Sweden has joined the project on the EU member state side. The new project welcomes the Indirect Tax Authority as a new partner. The new project will continue the work already started and add new areas:

- Use of administrative data sources
- Continued work on Business Register and business statistics
- Agricultural statistics – moving towards a full agricultural census.
- Statistics on wages and earnings
- Monthly balance of payment statistics
- Strengthening of the Indirect Tax Authority ■



Touring Bosnia & Herzegovina on one of many missions. Photo: Charlotte Juul Hansen

## Key achievements in 2020

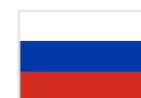
Except for the last couple of months, the project ran without being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the project period, many steps towards a modernised statistical system was completed through the introduction of new statistical products. Local staff worked hard and tirelessly with Member State staff from Denmark, Croatia, France and Finland. Among the major achievements were:

- **Quarterly balance of payment**  
In December 2019, the first release of quarterly statistics on international investment positions was published. A dashboard containing interactive charts and tables displaying trends in the Balance of Payments (BoP) and international investment positions was developed. The dashboard calculates the differences between two versions of the data, which allows the Central Bank to keep track of data revisions. A quality report for BoP was also compiled showing that the BoP from a methodological perspective is in good shape and errors are few.
- **Improved Statistical Business register**  
A Statistical Business Register provides a repository of information on businesses. It is used as a tool for the preparation of surveys on businesses' economic activities, and for carrying out statistical analysis of the business population. The statistical business register is the backbone of the statistical production related to companies and economic activities. A 5-year development path was defined and will allow profiling of enterprise groups.

## PROJECT FACTS

Project name	Support to the reform of the statistics system in Bosnia-Herzegovina - BA 15 IPA ST 01 17.
Key topics	National Accounts, Business Register, Structural Business Statistics, Service Producer Prices, Construction Prices, Tourism and Balance of Payment.
Partner	Statistical System of Bosnia-Herzegovina.
Funding	EU – Twinning project
Period	2018–2020

## RUSSIA



### Project facts

- **Name:** Strengthening statistical expertise in the Russian Federation project
- **Key topics:** Development of the statistical infrastructure, quality, national and macroeconomic accounts, government accounts, environmental, demography and Official Development Assistance statistics
- **Partner:** The Russian Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat)
- **Donor:** The World Bank
- **Period:** 2016–2021

### Project objective and key achievements in 2020

The project supports the Russian Federal State Statistics Service (Rostat) in becoming "a center of excellence" in statistics and enabling them to provide technical assistance in selected areas of statistics to government statistical services in other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). This is achieved through a consortium of partners managed by Statistics Denmark (SD).

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, only few meetings took place in 2020. 2021 will therefore focus on setting up the virtual missions between SD, other consortium partners and Rostat – first ones being on supply and use tables, which are popular tools of economic analysis, linking the macro- and industrial levels of the economy ■

## AZERBAIJAN



### Project facts

- **Name:** Support to the State Statistical Committee and the State Tax Service under the Ministry of Economy to strengthen collection, harmonisation, analysis, publishing and dissemination of business statistics – AZ/16/ENI/ST/01/19
- **Key topics:** Business statistics

- **Partner:** State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan
- **Funding:** EU – Twinning project
- **Period:** 2020–2021

### Project objective and key achievements in 2020

The consortium for the EU Twinning project is led by Statistics Finland and comprises of Statistics Denmark, Lithuania and Nederland. The objective of the project is to increase capacity among local operators to collect, process, harmonise, analyse, publish and disseminate business statistics measuring the performance of the private sector/Small & Medium Enterprises in Azerbaijan. From the Danish side the project involves some of our most experienced experts on business statistics that during 2020 familiarised themselves with virtual missions – a set-up that will continue in 2021 ■

## KAZAKHSTAN



### Project facts

- **Name:** Strengthening Statistical Capacity III - Kazakhstan Transport Statistics
- **Key topics:** Transport statistics
- **Partner:** The Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan
- **Donor:** The World Bank
- **Period:** 2020–2021

### Project objective and key achievements in 2020

The project is designed to provide advice on the compilation of high-quality transport statistics in accordance with international standards and best practices with a focus on individual entrepreneurs engaged in transportation of passengers and goods using vehicles. The first virtual session has taken place sharing knowledge from Statistics Denmark on the compilation of transport statistics using practices and examples from Denmark. A second mission will take place in 2021 ■

# OUR TEAM

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