

## International Consulting News 1/2006

### Foreword

Last year Statistics Finland was involved in 38 consulting projects, which was four less than the year before. The projects were, however, slightly bigger since the total number of experts participating in different missions grew from 104 in 2004 to 111 in 2005.

One of those was the EU Tacis Project on the Reform of Official Statistics in Moldova, which was successfully carried out in 2005. Statistics Finland participated in this project led by ICON-Institute in the areas of labour costs statistics, business statistics, transport statistics, and dissemination questions.

In Albania the Italian led twinning and IMF projects were phased out and the Swedish led twinning in Poland has been approaching its final stages.

Most of the beneficiaries were countries eligible in EU Phare, Cards or Tacis programs but some interesting new fields were also ploughed for future bilateral activities. All twinning projects mentioned in this report are funded by the EU.

In this issue of the Newsletter we concentrate on four specific topics:

1. Buildup of interviewer organisations
2. Croatian economic and financial statistics
3. Statistical co-operation with Russia
4. New challenges

### Buildup of interviewer organisations

Statistical surveys can be made in many ways but there are very few countries where interviewing has not been used at all. There are usually three options available - outsourcing, ad-hoc interviewers or in-house professionals - which have a clear impact on the quality of the results.

Statistics Finland has wilfully built up a professional interviewer corps since 1970's with continuous training on interviewing techniques, psychologies and survey specific methodologies. We are convinced that this has been the best solution from the quality/cost rate point of view

and easily adaptable to new interviewing technologies.

The demand for this knowhow has been growing in recent years in countries where ad-hoc based interviewing (i.e. hiring of students, housewives etc. separately for each survey) has traditionally been used.

In this decade our consulting services in this field have been rendered to Latvia and Croatia. In Latvia the work started with a light twinning and has been continued in a full scale twinning aimed at enhancing the Latvian social statistics. In Croatia interviewing activities are developed with the help of our representative in a labour cost twinning led by Denmark. We were also chosen to carry out a similar light twinning in the Czech Republic which will be started during this spring.

### Croatian economic and financial statistics

In addition to the above labour cost twinning Statistics Finland and Statistics Denmark have co-operated closely also in other areas of Croatian statistics. Statistics Denmark is leading a twinning project on regional national accounts where our experts also play a key role. In mid-February a new 2-year twinning project on the improvement of government financial statistics was started. This time Finland is the leading country with Denmark as a junior partner. Statistics Sweden is also involved in this project as a provider of short term experts.

### Statistical co-operation with Russia



*Mr Vladimir Sokolin, Head of Rosstat and Ms Heli Jeskanen-Sundström, Director General of Statistics Finland signing the bilateral cooperation programme for 2006-2007 in Helsinki, December 2005*

Bilateral cooperation between Statistics Finland and the Federal State Statistics Service of Russia, funded by the governments of both countries, continued in 2005. Activities on environment, price and financial statistics, electronic data collection and confidentiality were carried out. New cooperation plan for 2006-2007 was signed in December. It contains over ten different activity fields e.g. economic statistics, household surveys, statistical classifications, forestry statistics and tourism statistics.

Cooperation within the EU Tacis programme with Russia is starting again after some years. Statistics Finland is a partner in the component concerning the harmonisation of the Russian consumer price indices with the EU standards. Finnish expert will also participate in the development of the business register which is under the responsibility of the Federal Statistical Office of Germany.

### New challenges



Peru



Ethiopia

South-America and Africa have largely remained as white spots on the map of our consulting activities even though one of our retired colleagues played a key role in the development of the South-African population census a few years back in a Swedish project.

Due to the interest of the Peruvian statistical agency INEA to develop their short term economic indicators with the help of Statistics Finland and to the obvious change in the attitude of accepting statistical projects in bilateral development targets this may be slowly changing.

At the end of last year we made an exploratory mission to Lima to investigate the possibilities of reinforcing the statistical co-operation between the two countries. After this mission the Director General of INEI, Mr. Farid Matuk, paid a visit to Statistics Finland to continue these discussions and to investigate our register based census and business statistics environments. Based on these discussions the preparation of possible bilateral projects shall be continued between the two

institutions and the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Location of Ethiopia<sup>1</sup> and a lama doll in the Lima zoological garden advertising local souvenirs.

Preparations have also been initiated to launch a major statistics development program in Ethiopia as soon as the country's socio-political situation has been stabilised and will offer a solid platform for serious infrastructure and institution building activities.

### Consulting Activities in 2002-2005

	2002	2003	2004	2005
Projects	44	39	42	38
Study visits to Finland	33	15	26	22
- Participants	136	66	84	89
Expert missions abroad	48	43	86	82
- Experts	93	74	104	111

<sup>1</sup> Map extract from:  
[http://go.hrw.com/atlas/norm\\_htm/africa.htm](http://go.hrw.com/atlas/norm_htm/africa.htm)