

**High-level Seminar on Global Assessments and Peer Reviews:  
Follow-up and next steps**

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Organised by EFTA – Eurostat - UNECE  
Hosted by the State Statistical Service of Ukraine (SSSU)

**Adapted Global Assessments and Light Peer Reviews:**

**History – Objective – Modalities - Next Steps**

Background paper for sessions 1 and 5

EFTA – Eurostat - UNECE

## I. Background and History

Coherent, reliable and internationally comparable statistics are crucial for the monitoring of social and economic progress of a country. Official statistics are essential tools for evidence-based policy making: They ensure transparency and accountability in the process of economic and social reforms, and enable decision makers to formulate policies and to monitor and evaluate their deliveries. In that respect, a national legal and institutional framework is a prerequisite for building confidence and trust in official statistics. Such a framework should secure and sustain the application of international and European standards and best practices for official statistics, including the UN Fundamental Principle of Official Statistics (FPs or the Principles) and the European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP or the Code).

In the course of the changes which followed the disintegration of the Soviet Union, followed shortly by the breakup of the Republic of Yugoslavia, newly established countries were confronted with the necessity to reform, and for most of them even to build up, their respective national statistical systems. The transition from a centrally planned to a market oriented economy, and the achievement of democracy, were the driving forces for a swift and complete transformation of official statistics. It was to sustain and guide these changes that the FPs were adopted by the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) in 1991, and endorsed the following year by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). The Principles had an immediate global outreach, and were adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission in 1994, with some minor amendments.

In parallel with the effort of the international community to sustain countries with economies in transition, and to develop their statistical capacities, an assessment tool was developed to evaluate the level of conformity of national statistical systems vis-à-vis the adopted international and European standards, including the FPs.

### Box 1: European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP) and FPs

The **European Statistics Code of Practice**, adopted in 2005 and updated in 2011, is not in contradiction with the FPs. On the contrary, the CoP relies on the FPs but goes further since it builds up on a common definition of quality in the European Statistical System (ESS). The CoP can be considered as an operational translation of the FPs and as such

targets all relevant areas from the institutional environment, through the statistical production processes to the final statistical products. The CoP may be relevant also for national statistical systems that are not formally part of the ESS but intend to gradually approach its values and standards.

The aim of this assessment tool was to provide a clear picture of the state of development of official statistics in a country, with the objectives of:

- supporting national statistical authorities to fix priorities and plan the development of a national statistical system that meets user's requirements in an effective and efficient way;
- promoting, amongst the government, users and other major stakeholders, the instalment of a sound legal and institutional framework for the sustainable development of official statistics, and ultimately to allocate the necessary financial and human resources to producers of official statistics;
- aiding international and bilateral partners to design, implement and coordinate their efforts and contributions to the development of national statistical capacities.

This assessment tool was named as a Global Assessment (GA), since it was not limited to the National Statistical Institute/committee (NSI), but rather the entire (global) National Statistical System (NSS), starting from its legal and institutional framework up to its deliveries.

In the framework of the statistical component of the Phare/CARDS assistance programme (to support the implementation of the Stabilisation and Association process (SAp) in the Western Balkans), Eurostat, in collaboration with EFTA, decided in 2001 to conduct GAs of the national statistical systems of Albania, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)<sup>1</sup>. The outcome and recommendations of the GAs were discussed in a Management Seminar in Dubrovnik in June 2002, where it was acknowledged that the GA reports provided valuable insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the respective national statistical systems. It was therefore agreed that they should be used by Eurostat to draft the new strategy for statistical co-operation in the Western Balkan region. A second round of GAs, with the support of the UNECE, was carried out between 2003 and 2005 and covered the national statistical systems of Bosnia Herzegovina (2003), Turkey (2003), FYROM (2003 – for the second time) and Albania (2005).

In 2007, the UNECE jointly with UNESCAP, and at request of the NSI, conducted a GA of Kazakhstan. This assessment built up on similar exercises conducted in the Western Balkans, with the main objective of supporting the preparation of a Statistical Master Plan (SMP) of the Statistics Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan, for the years 2008-2015. Later, during the preparation phase of the GA of Armenia, that took place in 2009, the partner organisations (EFTA, Eurostat, and UNECE) agreed that it would make sense to conduct such an assessment to all Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) countries.

The main reasons for conducting global assessments in EECCA countries in a more systematic and coordinated way were the following:

- to conduct GAs in a relatively short period of time in all EECCA countries for the preparation of statistical capacity building programmes with a strong regional component (e.g. ENP-East and SPECA);
- for the partner organisations, to efficiently manage the human and financial resources allocated to the assessments;
- to benefit from a positive dynamic among the partner organisations and the beneficiary countries, based on the success of similar assessments conducted in the Western Balkans and Turkey

It was therefore decided at the initiative and with the financial support of EFTA that the partner organisations would organise a Management Seminar for all EECCA countries in order to discuss the modalities and the objectives of global assessments to be conducted in the region. More or less at the same time Eurostat decided for the Western Balkan countries and Turkey to conduct a new round of GAs for pre-accession countries. However, it was decided for practical reasons, not to invite these countries to the Management Seminar.

The process came to a general conclusion in 2009 with the first Yalta conference: following the round of peer reviews in the EU Member States and EFTA countries between 2006 and 2008, the necessity of implementing similar reviews in the EU enlargement countries and in EECCA countries (European Neighbourhood and Central Asia) was discussed. It turned out that many countries wanted to undergo such kind of assessments, for similar reasons, which included

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<sup>1</sup> More or less simultaneously, GAs were also conducted by Eurostat in European countries outside the Western Balkans, in particular in candidate and pre-accession countries (e.g. Bulgaria in 2001)

enhancing trust in statistics among users; setting-up a sound legal and institutional framework for the NSS; strengthening the reputation of the NSI, and reinforcing its independence towards national and local authorities (Government, administration and other national agencies); and assessing the compliance of the NSS and its deliveries with European and international standards, including with the principles of the CoP.

The Yalta meeting agreed that two different kinds of assessments would be implemented. Adapted Global Assessments (AGAs) were to be based on the traditional GAs, with more focus on the compliance of statistical systems with international and European standards. For countries with a more advanced statistical system - mostly the EU candidate countries - another kind of assessment was chosen: Light Peer Reviews (LPRs). The methodology used for LPRs is very similar to the one of the peer reviews that were successfully conducted in the EU Member States and EFTA countries between 2006 and 2008, but focusing on selected areas.

While the GA was very well suited to assess the state of a statistical system by focusing on the legal and institutional environment, the PRs, especially targeting the more developed EU Member States, went a lot further, for example, in assessing quality commitment, and burden upon respondents. With the introduction of AGAs and LPRs, the existing gap between these two kinds of assessments narrowed considerably.

## **II. Light Peer Reviews (LPRs)**

### **Objectives and Benefits of LPRs**

In November 2009, Eurostat launched a three-year project aimed at conducting LPRs of the NSIs in the EU enlargement countries. Eurostat cooperated with EFTA in conducting these reviews.

A LPR was conducted during the period 2010-2012, in each of the Candidate Countries (except Iceland, which was part of the round of peer reviews in the Member States and EFTA countries 2006-2008). LPRs are based on the structure and procedure of the European Statistical System (ESS) peer reviews, and contain recommendations aimed at helping the country to reach a higher level of compliance with the CoP (especially regarding principles 1-6 and 15), and evaluating the coordinating role of the NSI within the statistical system. The objectives of LPRs were as follows:

- to assess compliance of the reviewed NSI, in particular with Principles 1-6 and 15 of the CoP,
- to evaluate the coordination role of the NSI within the statistical system,
- to highlight good practices suitable for fostering compliance with the CoP,
- to recommend improvement actions needed to comply fully with the CoP.

The final reports from the LPRs are published on Eurostat's CIRCABC website<sup>2</sup>, which is dedicated to statistical cooperation with these countries.

One of the benefits for the assessed countries, was to help the NSIs to identify areas of improvement and to direct resources into those areas, eventually leading to higher quality, more comparable data. They can also be very useful for the production units of Eurostat when dealing with enlargement countries.

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<sup>2</sup> Available at <https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/014e9398-bbb7-40fd-baff-b8f413330389>

**Table 1: Timing of LPRs**

<b>Countries</b>	<b>Time</b>
Croatia	2010
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	2010
Serbia	2011
Turkey	2011
Montenegro	2012
Palestine	2012

### **Process for carrying out the LPRs**

The process for carrying out LPRs was similar to how peer reviews were conducted in EU Member States. The LPRs were carried out with the help of experienced experts that had been carefully selected from the European statistical scene, and who had knowledge of different statistical systems, the experience, as well as the necessary organisational and managerial skills required for the success of the review exercises. LPRs were demand-driven exercises, and the process was initiated in a country only in response to a formal request from the NSI. The latter undertook to facilitate the process as much as possible, taking an active role in providing necessary information, assisting with the logistics and proposing agendas in reaction to specific requests.

Eurostat then provided more detailed orientation as to the specific areas or concerns related to the country, and a specific framework was developed for each country with the help of the experts. These plans included the concrete structure and organisation of the LPR as well as the goals for the assessment, timeline for the assessment process, composition of the assessing team, preparatory documents required from the NSI (e.g. draft agendas for missions), translation and reporting arrangements. The assessed NSI was provided with a specific list of documents required for the LPR early in the assessment process, and translation needs were also taken into account where they were necessary. The requested documents included – inter alia – legal acts, description of the NSI organisational structure, information on human and financial resources, planning and programming documents, annual and multi-annual statistical programmes, publication plans, information on the use of administrative data in particular statistical domains, presentations by the NSI for other events or organisations, etc. Eurostat also provided the NSI with a self-assessment questionnaire to fill in, which served as one of the basic inputs for the preparation of the assessment visit.

As mentioned above, for each country, one or two internationally recognised experts in statistics were contracted to lead the exercise. One lead expert was responsible for the overall coordination, organisation and reporting in the LPR process. Assessing teams were composed so as to ensure comparability of the reports.

The teams included a responsible officer from Eurostat to support the lead experts. Additionally, at the first few missions, a maximum of two observers from the group of reviewed countries had the chance participate after the prior agreement of the reviewed country. This approach was unique to the LPRs and it gave the possibility for the countries to follow closely how a LPR was being conducted and to better prepare for their own review. The observers came from senior management of official statistics providers in the reviewed countries and they could participate in discussions and comment on the draft version of the review report.

The LPR process in a country would start after Eurostat received an official request from the NSI of that country to have a review made. Then the composition of the assessment team would be

decided, and a list of preparatory documents needed was submitted to the country, together with a first self-assessment questionnaire. At the first meeting between Eurostat and the experts, a detailed time schedule would then be set up, including the evaluation of the self-assessment questionnaire and the provided documents, the mission to the country to conduct meetings with the representatives of the NSI, and the final deadlines for the drafting of the report.

The usually 2-3 day mission would take place soon after that, where the meetings were chaired by the lead expert. Where appropriate, Eurostat would co-chair the meetings together with the lead expert. There was usually a full day meeting where the assessment team met the top management and senior staff of the NSI to discuss and review principles 1-6 and 15 of the CoP. The team met representatives of other producers of official statistics, such as the ministries or the central bank, as well as the representatives of the main users, such as the Statistical Council of the country, members of the government and ministries, business associations, trade unions, the scientific community or the media. Here, the choice of users was not always balanced, and sometimes a bit biased, as the users with a more favourable opinion towards the NSI were selected. Business associations were usually the most difficult to attract, perhaps because of their lack of interest in official statistics or because of the image of the NSI – this latter reason could indeed be measured by the number of participants from the group of users. In some cases, representatives of international organisations also participated in the meeting, which gave an added value as they usually had an outsider's view of the situation. The mission was usually closed with a briefing visit to the EC Delegation.

The result of the mission would be a draft report, which was discussed within the assessing team before the final draft was sent to the relevant NSI in order to agree on the final version of the document. Then the report would be submitted to Eurostat for final approval, and a decision was taken about disseminating the report to complete the exercise.

It is important to note that the LPRs were conducted in cooperation with the reviewed NSI as an equal partner.

## **Results and monitoring**

Most of the assessed countries actively use the reports and recommendations to communicate their state of play and progress to their government, but also to users, and often they have them translated into their language(s) to facilitate this process. This has huge benefit for the assessed countries, as they actively build upon the reviews and assessments to fuel their development goals, as can be seen from the examples below. The LPRs are generally considered by different experts to have high quality and usefulness.

There is a direct synergy between these reviews (both LPRs and AGAs) and the annual compliance monitoring exercise. Having an overall view of a national statistical system greatly helps to understand the reasons behind the level of compliance, and the availability of required data sets, that are visible in the compliance monitoring reports. Furthermore, the reports serve as very valuable inputs for the Cooperation Strategy with Enlargement countries for 2014-2020 that is under development by a task force led by Eurostat.

A very important aspect of the LPR reports is that they do not contain rankings. In some of the countries the idea of ranking was high on the agenda after their assessment, as they wanted to compare their standing with the other countries. However, Eurostat expressed a very strong opinion that ranking was not the purpose of these assessments, and that it was impossible to do properly. Instead, the reports focus on recommendations for improvement actions, covering all principles of the CoP, with a view to future assistance needs. Eurostat annually monitors the development of these recommendations.

In fact, Eurostat has already started the annual monitoring of the improvement actions with the EU enlargement countries in 2012, and will continue doing so following a very similar approach, as is done for the Member States. A follow-up of the implementation of improvement recommendations with the ENP East countries will be started in 2013, as only now all the assessments are finalised.

**Table 2: Completion of Light Peer Review Recommendations in EU enlargement countries by CoP Principle – 2012**

Principle	Number of LPRs Recommendations			
	Total	Completed	Completed Percentage	Remaining
1 Professional independence	11	5	45%	6
2 Mandate for data collection	16	6	38%	10
3 Adequacy of resources	11	2	18%	9
4 Quality commitment	24	6	25%	18
5 Statistical confidentiality	12	7	58%	5
6 Impartiality and objectivity	7	7	100%	0
7 Sound methodology	6	4	67%	2
8 Appropriate statistical procedures	14	3	21%	11
9 Non-excessive burden on respondents	5	0	0%	5
10 Cost effectiveness	8	3	38%	5
11 Relevance	6	1	17%	5
12 Accuracy and reliability	4	1	25%	3
13 Timeliness and punctuality	3	0	0%	3
14 Coherence and comparability	5	0	0%	5
15 Accessibility and clarity	36	10	28%	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>113</b>

### **III. Adapted Global Assessments (AGAs)**

#### **Management Seminar in Yalta and AGAs**

The Management Seminar on Global Assessments for EECCA countries, jointly organized by the EFTA Statistical Office, Eurostat and UNECE, took place on 22-25 September 2009 in Yalta, Ukraine. The event was designed for heads of NSIs of EECCA countries (ENP-East and Central Asia). Representatives from the following 11 targeted countries participated: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan and Ukraine. Experts from Iceland, Norway and the Director of the Statistical Office of Macedonia (FYROM) also attended and contributed to the success of the Management Seminar in sharing information and experiences in relation to previous GAs conducted in the Western Balkans and peer reviews carried out in the ESS.

Participants recognized that GAs were the most appropriate instruments to evaluate the level of conformity of national statistical systems with international and European standards, including the FPs and the CoP. It was acknowledged that conducting GAs, covering all producers of official statistics in a country, was an integral component of statistical capacity building programmes with the objective of:

- assessing the legal and institutional framework of the NSS and its technical and organisational capacity to produce and disseminate official statistics that meets users' needs in all relevant areas;
- assessing the level of compliance of the NSS with international standards and requirements and to identify the areas where the adoption of European statistical legislation (*acquis communautaire*) is a relevant objective;
- proposing recommendations for the enhancement of national statistical capacities;
- guiding international and bilateral partners in the design, implementation and monitoring of capacity building programmes and activities in the field of statistics.

It was also made clear that a GA should not only cover the national statistical institute, but the overall NSS, and that the outcome and recommendations provided in the final report would be addressed to all stakeholders, including to the Government and other national authorities.

An important point discussed in Yalta during the Management Seminar, was that previous GAs focused strongly on the legal and institutional framework of the national statistical systems, and that in the future more attention should also be paid to the compliance of statistical products and services with international and European standards. It was also agreed that GAs to be conducted in EECCA countries should also assess the quality dimension of the final output and related production processes in a more user oriented perspective. Therefore, it was decided that future assessments to be conducted in the region would be called Adapted Global Assessments (AGAs).

It was also made clear that AGAs were not a "beauty contest" with the purpose of ranking national statistical systems, but rather to propose recommendations for improvement, taking due account of national peculiarities and other specific framework conditions.

It was agreed in Yalta that:

- AGAs of EECCA countries would be jointly undertaken by the partner organisations (EFTA-Eurostat-UNECE) and that Eurostat would lead AGAs in ENP-East countries and UNECE in Central Asia countries and Mongolia;



- AGAs should be demand-driven exercises, and the process could be initiated in a country only in response to a formal request from the NSI. Requests from ENP-East countries should be addressed to Eurostat and from Central Asia countries and Mongolia to UNECE;
- the outcome and recommendations from AGAs should be broadly disseminated and explained, specifically among representatives of ministries and other national agencies (advocacy). Ideally the AGA's report should be uploaded on the Webpage of the NSI.

Since 2009, the partner organisations have conducted AGAs in all ENP-East countries, taking into account that the AGA of Armenia was conducted before the Management Seminar in Yalta.

For Central Asian countries, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan requested AGAs that were carried out respectively in 2011 and 2012. The GA of Kazakhstan was conducted in 2007, and an AGA might be organised in 2014 to assess the results of the outgoing Statistical Master Plan (SMP), and eventually to prepare for the next one.

Mongolia recently requested an AGA of its NSS, in the framework of the design of the next National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS). This AGA will be conducted in the second half of 2013, in order to have the report, along with its outcome and recommendations, ready for January 2014, at the latest. Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have so far not requested an AGA. For pre-accession countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Kosovo-UNSCR 1244), AGAs were conducted by Eurostat between 2010 and 2012, with the support of EFTA in some of these countries.

**Table 3: Timing of AGAs**

<b>WB countries (EU pre-accession countries)</b>	<b>Time</b>
Albania	2010
Montenegro <sup>3</sup>	2010
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2011
Kosovo-UNSCR 1244	2011
<b>EECCA countries</b>	
Kazakhstan	2008 (2014)
Armenia	2009
Azerbaijan	2010
Kyrgyzstan	2011
Ukraine	2011
Georgia	2012
Moldova	2012
Tajikistan	2012
Belarus	2013
Mongolia	(2013)

These assessments were based on extensive reviews, performed in each country by 4-6 experts during two assessment missions. AGA missions included sessions with experts from the NSI at national and regional level, as well as with experts from other producers of official statistics

<sup>3</sup> Montenegro: AGA in 2010 and LPR in 2012 (see chapter II above)

(National Bank, ministries and agencies). Users of statistical information, from outside the government (private business, academia, researchers, media ...), representatives from international organisations and other stakeholders were also consulted.

The assessors have used existing material from the NSI, along with information available from international and bilateral partners. A detailed guidance questionnaire, completed by producers of official statistics under the coordination of the NSI, and covering all relevant information needed for the preparation of the assessment, was made available before the first assessment mission for each country. After the first mission, the draft report was submitted for comments to the NSI who had also the opportunity to comment the final version prior its dissemination.

In Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, on the day of release of the final report, UNECE presented the major findings and recommendations of the AGA to an audience that included government agencies, ministries, international organizations, media and other stakeholders. For Tajikistan, a letter signed by the UNECE Executive Secretary was sent to the President of the Republic informing him about the main findings of the assessment.

It is important to stress that AGAs have paid more attention to the organisational and technical capacity of national statistical systems to produce and disseminate official statistics in an efficient and effective way; efficiency being considered in terms of a trade-off between outputs and resources used. AGA reports have duly considered the increasing stress placed on the producers of official statistics for timely, high quality and internationally comparable information under severe resources constraints. For Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, a specific chapter is dedicated to the assessment of the “statistical engineering” from the organisation of primary data collection to dissemination, and proposes recommendations for improving efficiency and effectiveness of the overall production process.

In that respect, much more than traditional GAs, the AGA is a tool for building a sustainable statistical system that meets user’s requirements in an effective and efficient way. It focuses not only on statistical products and services, but also on the means to achieve them (resource allocation and management), evaluates to what extent processes ensure that products and services are fit for their purpose (effectiveness), and assesses the coordination of the NSS and the organization of the production processes from data collection to dissemination (efficiency).

AGAs reports for EECCA countries in English and sometimes also in Russian are available on the UNECE website: <http://www.unece.org/stats/archive/act.07.e.html>

AGA and LPR reports for EU enlargement countries and ENP-East countries are available on the Eurostat CircaBC site: <https://circabc.europa.eu/faces/jsp/extension/wai/navigation/container.jsp>

## **Results, Monitoring and next Steps**

The objective of conducting AGAs of national statistical systems in the Western Balkans, East-ENP and Central Asia was to provide an in-depth and comprehensive analysis of the institutional, organizational and technical capacity of the countries to produce official statistics that comply with international and European standards and recommendations, including the FPs and the CoP. AGAs did not focus exclusively on the NSI but encompassed all major producers of statistics. Thus, AGAs were a unique opportunity for governments, national authorities, users and other national and international stakeholders to obtain a comprehensive picture of the overall state of development of statistical systems. AGAs offer recommendations for sustainable development of national statistical systems that, ideally, are incorporated into statistical capacity building programmes and strategies, and implemented according to annual statistical programmes of work by the beneficiary countries,

with the support of the international community. In particular Eurostat with enlargement and ENP-East countries and more recently the World Bank have started to work in a coordinated way to implement major recommendations for the development of statistical capacities identified in the AGAs.

Eurostat has set-up for EU enlargement countries (WBs and Turkey) a draft monitoring tool based on a self-assessment survey. Recently, it was decided that this self-assessment survey, with the support of the UNECE, may also be conducted annually in EECCA countries. The result of this survey will enable the partner organisations to assess the achievements, but also the impediments of the implementation of the recommendations from AGAs. The opinion of UNECE is that the outcome of this self-assessment should be made available to all international and bilateral partners involved in statistical capacity building activities in the above mentioned sub-regions, in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness of technical cooperation activities in a more coordinated way.

In the framework of the 9th tranche of the UN Development Account (UNDA), UNECE successfully submitted a project proposal “Strengthening national capacity in the most vulnerable UNECE countries for the sustainable development of statistics”.

In the framework of this project (to be started in 2014), UNECE will support beneficiary countries to formulate, prioritize and eventually incorporate recommendations into multi-year (strategic) and annual (operational) statistical work programmes. In countries where national statistical authorities, with the support of international and bilateral partners, are developing a Statistical Master Plan (3 to 5-year programme mainly for ENP-East and EU enlargement countries) or a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS), recommendations should be incorporated into these strategic programmes. The latter would serve as a framework for the coordination of technical assistance and mobilising financial resources from international and bilateral donors. The project will support producers of official statistics in eight beneficiary countries (Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan) in addressing these gaps, allowing for the monitoring of their economic, social and environmental reforms.

During the implementation phase, UNECE will provide advisory services and organise national and sub-regional workshops and training seminars in all relevant statistical domains, in coordination with international and bilateral partners. The project will draw on existing mechanisms and established partnerships with national and international statistical agencies, under the Conference of European Statisticians and the UN Special Programme for Economies of Central Asia (SPECA). Targeted countries will also benefit from experience and good practice in recent development occurring in the national statistical systems of other EECCA countries. In the framework of this project, the self-assessment survey on the implementation of recommendations will be an essential monitoring tool. Nevertheless, if requested, for the purpose of assessing the achievements of an outgoing strategic programme and preparing the next one, UNECE is ready to conduct new adapted global assessments of national statistical systems. The scope and modalities of these regular “rotating schemes” assessments still need to be discussed and agreed upon with target countries as well as with international and bilateral partners (e.g. EFTA, Eurostat and the WB) involved in capacity building programmes.