

Workshop on Human Resources Management & Training

5-7 September 2012, Budapest, Hungary

TRAINING SYSTEM IN STATISTICS LITHUANIA

Introduction

Statistics Lithuania is a government agency participating in the formation of State policy in the field of the management of statistics, assigned to the Minister of Finance, and implementing it, as well as coordinating the production of official statistics in the country. More than 60 per cent of the country's official statistics is prepared by Statistics Lithuania and presented to the society, State institutions, Eurostat, international organizations. About 86 per cent of the pieces of statistical work carried out by Statistics Lithuania is attributed to European statistics and conducted in pursuance of the EU legislation or on the basis of gentlemen's agreements with the EU member states.

There are around 560 people working in Statistics Lithuania. 41 percent of them works as a Civil servants and the rest of 59 percent works as an employees working under labour contracts. Statistics Lithuania staff has a pretty high and colourful range of qualification. The share with a higher university degree or equivalent is 90 percent (figure 2). 7 people from our staff have doctors of science degree.

Figure 1: Education of the staff in Statistics Lithuania

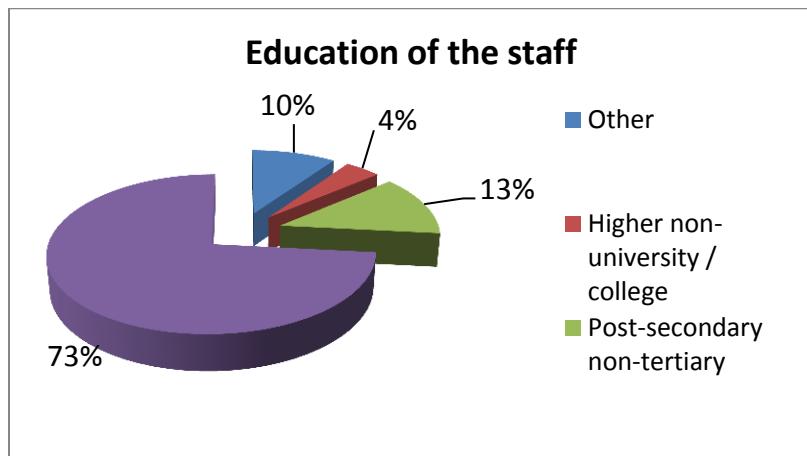
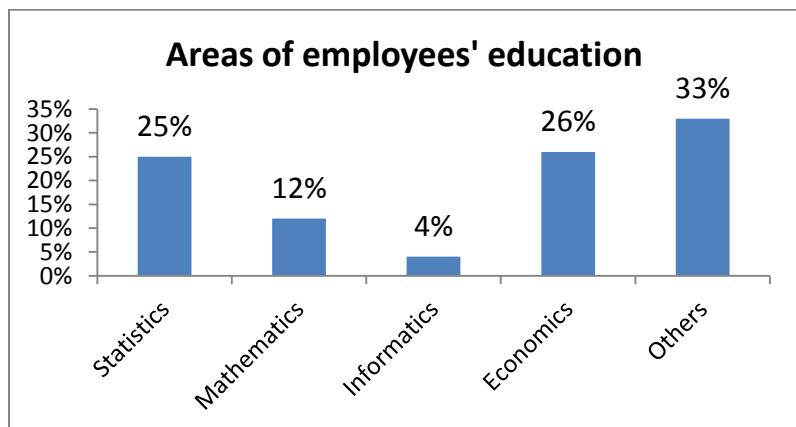


Figure 2: Areas of employees' education in Statistics Lithuania 2012



The issue of Human resources in the Statistics Lithuania as in any small or big company is a complex issues and every organization that has the goal to produce efficient statistics and productive operation should dedicate special attention to this field. Training is the one of very important fields of successful Human resources management. For that reason we were forced to create a special training system in our Department.

Training system in Statistics Lithuania

Training and professional growth of experts belong to the most important and yet challenging tasks of the training centres or training sections of the national statistical institutions. Human is not born with the knowledge of statistics. Human has to be educated. For that reason Statistics Lithuania's developed the Training system which we think can be a good practice. Maybe it's not the best practice ever but we hope it is possible to find many good ideas to use for any other office.

In the year of 2011 our staff was trained in many different fields, had 3500 human days and were trained 1028 times, consider that one person attended couple courses. Usually we have around 600 human days, but right now we have a project which is financed from the Structural Funds according to the Operational Programme for the Development of Human Resources 2007–2013. So our staff has many more opportunities right now to higher their qualification.

Types of trainings

- Outside training courses;
- Inside training courses;
- Training for the newly comes;
- Training in a workplace;
- Individual training (couching);
- Good practice training;
- Rotation;
- Personal development (self trainings, reading, internet).

Courses and trainings are without doubt important for our competence development. It is easy, however, to forget that the greatest part of our professional role is learnt by carrying out the daily work. For that reason we pay special attention to our inside trainings. We put a lot of emphasis on dissemination of knowledge conveyed by the specialists of Statistics Lithuania. We have many good staff members who are the experts in their fields and we kindly ask them to provide trainings every single year to our young staff. This helps employees to acquire specific knowledge expedient for their work, practical abilities and skills, develop general understanding of the statistical system and facilitate changeability of employees by ensuring continuity of activities, even distribution of workload and prevention of risks due to turnover of employees.

We also have a rotation opportunity for our employees – to develop measures encouraging employees to endeavour career not only in their, but also in other divisions. Rotation helps to develop a wider circle of employees who have an understanding of the statistical system.

We also organise a good practice seminars. To attend and organise such a seminar are able every member of our staff who things that has an important information from trainings, working groups etc. to share with.

Our new staff members also receives trainings in a workplace as well as the two day training course organized for all newly comes. There they get many important information about our procedures, rules, methods we use, and etc.

Training cycle

Training is about developing an organization's human resources so that individuals and the organization itself become more effective, now and in the future. In Statistics Lithuania we use such a training cycle as you see in figure 3.

Figure 3: Training cycle used in Statistics Lithuania



Identification of training needs

We collect training needs from many different sources:

- Competence surveys;
- Yearly performance appraisal procedure;
- Strategic period;
- Etc. (announced by working group, our Management, Human resources or other divisions).

The main and the most important training needs we get from the Competence surveys.

Competence surveys in Statistics Lithuania

The decision to carry out a competences survey in Statistics Lithuania was stipulated by the need to plan staff training and financing allocated for it more efficiently. Therefore, it was decided to identify the key competences in order to make a detailed analysis of competences held by the staff of Statistics Lithuania, as well as to identify gaps to be filled in. Taking into account the fact that activities of branch statistics divisions and functional divisions are completely different and mostly need different competences, while supervising staff needs specific management competences, it was decided to carry out a three-stage survey:

1. Competences appraisal in branch statistics divisions;
2. Competences appraisal in functional divisions;
3. Competences appraisal of division heads.

1. Competences survey in branch statistics divisions. Official title: Competences appraisal of civil servants and employees working under labour contracts, participating in the process of the preparation of statistical information.

Main tasks: The first stage of the survey is aimed at determining the compliance of the available competences necessary for the processes of the preparation of statistical information, as well as the gaps to be filled in.

Structure of the questionnaire and the process of the appraisal. The questionnaire reflects the main tasks of the survey: first, to identify what competences are necessary; second, to evaluate the level of the necessary competences. The questionnaire was designed to cover the entire process of the preparation of statistical information, i.e. six sub-processes: Decision to execute a survey, general plan; Survey methodology, compilation of a survey plan, possible sources of administrative data, their identification, sample plan; Implementation of the survey plan, data collection; Editing and coding, data validation, calculation of estimations, analysis of primary results, analysis of time-series, further analysis; Dissemination (of data and metadata), confidentiality and disclosure; Archiving and further management. A scale from 1 to 4 is used for the evaluation:

- 1 – not competent;
- 2 – slightly competent;
- 3 – partly competent;
- 4 – competent.

Survey results. All information collected from the respondents was aggregated by the Human resources division. General maps of the competences for Statistics Lithuania were worked out. Maps were also worked out for each division separately, as well as lists of the competences for development: a list of priority competences to be improved (lower evaluation) and a list of competences recommended for improvement (higher evaluation).

2. Competences survey in functional divisions. Official title: Competences appraisal of civil servants and employees working under labour contracts in functional divisions.

Main tasks. The second stage of the survey was aimed at determining the compliance of the available competences necessary to fulfil functions in different functional division (Economics and Finance, Personnel, Internal Audit, etc.), as well as to identify the gaps to be filled in.

Structure of the questionnaire and the process of the appraisal. The questionnaire was worked out by the Human resources division and consists of 8 parts: Computer literacy; Language skills; Administrative skills; Quality issues; Legal issues; Other competences necessary to execute allocated functions.

The same scale as for the survey in branch statistics division was chosen for the evaluation of

Competences. However, having in mind that activities of different functional divisions are quite specific, another scale for evaluation was added to determine priorities of the competences:

- 1st priority – competence is needed permanently;
- 2nd priority – competence is needed often;
- 3rd priority – competence is needed seldom;
- 4th priority – competence is not needed. (if the 4th priority of the competence is determined, the competence shall not be assessed in scores).

Survey results. The survey results were aggregated and information was presented in the same way as during the first stage of the survey: common maps of the competences necessary for the functional divisions of Statistics Lithuania were worked out. Maps were also worked out for each division separately, as well as lists of the competences for development.

3. Competences appraisal of divisions heads

Main tasks. The third stage is aimed at determining the level of the competences necessary for efficient management, as well as the gaps to be filled in.

The questionnaire consists of seven main management competences: Communication; Leadership; Adaptability; Relationships; Tasks performance; Productivity; Development of employees; Personal developments.

The number of skills necessary to fulfil the named competences are identified and evaluated by persons indicated above. Having in mind that this stage of the survey differs from the first and second stages and is more orientated towards provision of information to the appraised heads for personal development, a different evaluation scale was selected:

- competence is not needed (shall not be turned into scores);
- never demonstrates this competence;
- seldom demonstrates this competence;
- sometimes demonstrates this competence;
- usually demonstrates this competence;
- always demonstrates this competence.

Survey results. After survey data aggregation, the maps reflecting evaluation of the competences were provided to each appraised head and their supervisors. General maps including appraisals of all heads by different competences were produced.

Outcome and conclusions.

As an outcome of the surveys, a training plan comes out, including areas which were named as priority for development. Training plans compiled on the basis of the survey allow efficient planning of development of specialists' competences, as they cover topics which are key and which are identified as requiring improvement. Continuous performance of the survey is also contributed to the evaluation of training efficiency. The comparison shows whether certain training events are selected appropriately and is giving valuable information for further organisation of trainings.

Yearly performance appraisal procedure

Every year all our employees have an yearly performance appraisal interview with his Manager. Main tasks of this interview are: to evaluate activities of employee (changes) during certain period; to ensure feedback with employee; to enable employee to understand developments in organization/unit; to enable superior to understand position of employee to the delegated field of activities; to identify level of employees motivation and planes' regarding career; To set priorities for employees' training and development; to clarify personal tasks of the employee; to improve relations between employee and his superior, to clarify employees expectations for superior; to identify encumbrances influencing activities of employee (bad climate in division, complicated administrative procedure etc.). During this interview procedure the employee and his manager also agrees on the areas in which the employee still lack of

knowledge and where he or she needs to be trained. This information receives Human resources division and includes in the training plans.

Creation of training plan in Statistics Lithuania

- All employees of SL together with direct head fills in Competence appraisal questioner once in a two year period.
- Human resources division responsible for trainings analyses the questioners and makes lists of prioritized and recommended trainings
- All employees have an performance appraisal interview at the beginning of the next year with his supervisor and both of them agrees on the training needs to fulfil the weak areas of the employee.
- All other needs are finalized and put in a training list with the financial allocation
- The list training plan is discussed in the special working group.
- The final training plan comes out.
- The Director General approves final training plan.

Training plans should correlate with strategic goals of Statistics Lithuania.

Selection of participants for the courses

We select participants for the courses:

- From the competences appraisal surveys;
- Announced by direct heads and heads of divisions;
- Announced by the Human resources division;
- Announced by the Working groups or Commissions.

Training efficiency

The objective of training effectiveness evaluation – to assess whether the employees apply the knowledge and practical skills gained in the training courses organised by the Department of Statistics when fulfilling the functions assigned to them

Types of training efficiency questioners

In Statistics Lithuania we have two stage training evaluation questioners. Primary training effectiveness evaluation questioner must be carried out immediately after the end of the training course. Secondary training effectiveness evaluation questioner must be carried out after 3 months from the end of the training course.

The first questioner effectiveness evaluation questioner consists of four parts:

1. The first part shall provide general information on the training course and its participant.
2. The second part shall include closed questions that must be answered when evaluating the training course by points:
 - 5 – excellent,
 - 4 – good,
 - 3 – satisfactory,
 - 2 – bad,

- 1 – no opinion, and closed questions that must be answered “Yes” or “No”.

3. The third part shall include 3 open questions which the training course participant indicates what specific knowledge and skills gained in the training course he will be able to apply in fulfilling the functions assigned to him. There also may be provided recommendations on the improvement of the course. The fourth part shall indicate the reason for which the participant took part in the training course.

The Secondary training effectiveness evaluation questioner consists also of four parts:

1. The first part shall include general information on the training course and its participant.

2. In the second part the training course participant shall indicate whether the knowledge and skills gained during the training course he applied practically when fulfilling the functions assigned to him (the answer is “Yes” or “No”).

3. The third part shall be filled in case the training course participant has chosen the answer “Yes” in the second part. It shall be stated in brief what knowledge and skills have been applied when fulfilling the functions assigned.

4. The fourth part shall be filled in by the direct Superior of the trainee in case the trainee has chosen the answer “No” in the first part. It shall be indicated in brief why, in the opinion of the direct Superior, the trainee in fulfilling the functions assigned to him could not apply the knowledge and skills gained in the training course. In case the Head of the Division participated in the training course, the third part of the questionnaire shall be filled by himself.

Outcomes and results

From the primary questionnaire on training effectiveness evaluation the following information shall be provided:

- individually for every training course – average values (evaluation by 1 point shall not be included) of the questions in the second and third parts of the questionnaire and the results of the answers to other questions in percentage;
- commonly for all training courses – summarised information of the fourth part of the questionnaire.

From the secondary questionnaire on training effectiveness evaluation the following information shall be provided:

- individually for every training course – the results of the answers to the second part of the questionnaire in percentage – what part of training course participants answered the question by “Yes” and what part – “No”;
- From the questionnaire on evaluation of initial training effectiveness average values (evaluation by 1 point shall not be included) of the questions in the second part of the questionnaire and the results of the answers to other questions in percentage shall be provided. There shall be also provided summarised information on all initial training courses carried out within a year.

Other information provided in the questionnaires is used by the Human resources division and Working group for identification of training needs and development of annual training plans as an auxiliary material in the development of training plans, selection of potential training service providers, creation of training material and content of trainings.

An involvement of the employees

Our goal in Statistics Lithuania is to involve employees of all levels into the enhancement of performance of Statistics Lithuania – to provide conditions for employees to actively submit proposals regarding improvement of activities and apply motivation measures to the authors of feasible proposals. For that reason we have established the bank of ideas. The employees are provided with conditions to propose ideas on the issues of the improvement of organisation of statistics, and it is foreseen the procedures of the implementation of proposals, alongside the procedure of stimulation of employees for the ideas raised elaborated.

Measures highlighting progressive accomplishments of employees and their activeness developed and used for publicity of employees' achievements. We created the employ non-financial forms of encouragement. It will help to increase motivation and loyalty of employees.

Also we have staff opinion surveys, possibility to submit proposals on the improvement of performance, publicity of achievements assists employees to realise the importance of their input into activities of Statistics Lithuania, to participate more actively and show initiative.

We also started to analyse the reasons of staff turnover by the questioning resigning employees. Analysis of answers helps to identify causes of resignation and encourage preventive actions. So far the main cause of leaving the Statistics Lithuania is the low salary and better perspectives in other companies.