

Editorial

Central Europe is with Mediterranean countries one of the priority regions of INSEE cooperation.

This fifth issue of the newsletter highlights two multilateral cooperation projects for 2008 : one with Bulgaria in form of the participation in a twinning funded by the European union, the other with Ukraine funded by the World Bank.

This issue also deals with 2 regional cooperation projects with countries of the Mediterranean basin : a project between the European Union and Algeria (AMECO) and the Euro Mediterranean partnership Medstat2.

Over the past year, INSEE has still been active in organising international seminars addressed to Central European, Maghreb and African countries.

Bulgaria and Ukraine : two cooperation projects for 2008

Within the framework of INSEE's 2008 cooperation programme two significant project have been run, one with Bulgaria in the form of a participation on a twinning project backed by EU funding, the other one with Ukraine with the financial backing (loan) of the World Bank.

A strong involvement in a twinning project with Bulgaria

The twinning project is run by a consortium headed up by the German Federal Office of Statistics, DESTATIS. INSEE plays an important role as a « junior partner ». The other participants are the following statistical institutes or bodies: INE (Spain), Statistics Austria, the Austrian Federal Data Centre, Statistics Finland, Statistics Denmark, GUS (Poland), KSH (Hungary) and ČSÚ (Czech Republic). The twinning project has a particular focus on the regional reorganisation of the Bulgarian NSI and on indicators relating to structural funds. In order to secure European structural funds, regional statistical indicators have to be put in place. The main objectives of the twinning project are as follows: reorganising the regional structure of the NSI, producing statistical data within the framework of the new regional structure of the NSI, adjusting the capacities of regional directorates and the NSI so that this data can be produced.

The project has four main strands:

- improving the new regional structure of the Bulgarian NSI
- training for the management team at the NSI and for regional directors
- setting up a reporting system
- reducing the burden on respondents by using administrative data and new technologies.

It was decided, in conjunction with the Bulgarian NSI and DESTATIS, that INSEE would play a major role in the activities of the first strand since our organisation better caters for those specific needs than the one which prevails in Germany and because of the competencies that we can tap into. As a result, several French regional offices and other management staff from the regional offices are involved in this project. INSEE worked together with the Office of Industrial Studies and Statistics (SESSI) on the aspects relating to the use of new technologies for collecting information. The meeting to launch the twinning project was held in Bulgaria from 31 March to April 2. The project will run until Autumn 2009. It will include a total of 73 activities (missions and seminars in Bulgaria and visits to EU member states). 14 experts from INSEE and the Office of Industrial Studies and Statistics (SESSI) will be involved in this project. These experts already carried out 17 actions this year.

Enhanced cooperation with Ukraine

Ukraine is one of the countries that are part of the European Neighbourhood Policy with whom there has been a call to strengthen ties. The Ukrainian statistical authorities are aiming to bring their standards into line with those in the EU. The cooperation project in which INSEE was involved in 2006 forms part of this objective.

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Actions undertaken before this twinning project

25 actions were undertaken in 2006 within the framework of the Tacis8 project in which INSEE played an important role. This programme covered around ten important areas of public statistics: organisation of the statistical system, national accounts, business register and structural business statistics, consumer price index, statistics by sector (environment, industry, trade and services ...), regional statistics.

The “World Bank” project

Ukraine has received a loan from the World Bank so it can «develop its public statistics system with a view to monitoring the transformation of its economy and society». One part of the programme covers statistics whilst another part deals with the supply of IT equipment. This project is an ambitious one – to the tune of 32 million US Dollars – with the reorganisation of the statistical system forming part of the project.

It is due to run for 16 months instead of 24, from the beginning of 2008 to June 2009.

The effort will be shared out, as over half of the actions will be run by experts from INSEE and the ministerial statistical services (SSM).

An international consortium

INSEE is involved in the project which is being run by a consortium headed up by ADETEF bringing together the statistical offices of Romania, Finland and Poland, as well as the consultancy firms ICON, BEA and Statinform consulting. This consortium was chosen at the end of 2005. INSEE agreed to join the consortium because it constituted the continuation of a cooperation programme – the TACIS 8 programme - run during 2006. The project starts with an analysis of the existing system and approval of the programme by the Ukrainian Statistical Committee. When this stage ends at the beginning of 2008, the experts' work have started in earnest.

Around 15 areas are covered

French experts from INSEE and the SSMs provide support in several areas covered by the project. These areas are as follows: statistical infrastructure, enterprise and industry, trade and services, national accounts, investment and construction, regional statistics, household surveys (SILC) and prices, demographics and metadata. Other areas covered are statistics in particular sectors (environment, agriculture, external trade). This project is due to be wound up at the end of June 2009. It is a real partnership between the Ukrainian and consortium teams.

A project between the EU and Algeria : AMECO

The AMECO programme aims to help Algerian administrations to adjust to an economy which is becoming diversified and liberalised at a rapid pace. The programme is run by a consortium of stakeholders headed up by ADETEF, with INSEE in charge of the aspects relating to statistics. The programme has been underway for two years, during which time it has been possible to take stock of the programme in great depth, as well as define the objectives and the content of the activities to be undertaken.

Cooperation between the European Union and Algeria

The AMECO project is a project designed to help Algeria manage its economy. One component of the project is to «consolidate the National Statistical Information System», which is managed by the Algerian National Office of Statistics. The project was launched in 2007 following a call for tenders. The operational phase only started in 2008 and will continue until the end of 2010.

A consortium bringing together several institutes: a diverse range of stakeholders

The contract to run the economic management support programme is financed by the European Union to the tune of 9.6 million euros. The contract was awarded to a consortium made up of both public and private partners and headed up by Adetef, comprising Sofreco (France), GTZ (Germany), Altair Asesoros (Spain), the Italian company, Formez, and a local partner, INSAG. On the Algerian side, the administrations involved in this programme are as follows: the Planning and

Forward Planning Office, the National Office of Statistics, the Algerian Ministries of Finance and Public Works.

INSEE’s contribution to the AMECO project

Its contribution is twofold: It is directly involved in managing the programme via two managers who have been detached to the Support Unit based in Algiers. It is the main source of technical assistance in the fields of statistics and management

Statistics: around 5 areas are covered.

French experts from INSEE and the SSMs (Ministerial Statistical Services) provide support in several areas:

Monitoring the construction, public works and informal sectors: monitoring the economic situation in the construction and public works sectors will make it possible to put a precise figure on the impact of housing construction and infrastructure policies, which are a priority for decision-makers in Algeria. The size of the informal sector within the Algerian economy will also be assessed.

National accounts: the aim is to construct accounts which are in line with SNA 93.

Social statistics: technical assistance is designed to improve the monitoring of wages and employment.

Business registers: the actions are focused on the quality of the business register and preparation for an economic census in 2009. The register should be used as a sampling frame for the business surveys.

Dissemination the creation of an internet portal is one of the actions designed to help improve data dissemination.

Management: devising a statistical development strategy

INSEE is also providing strategic consultancy for the Algerian National Office of Statistics (ONS). The aim is to draw up guidelines for the ONS for the period 2007-2015 by organising a strategy and an action plan for each area of activity and each concrete operation, such as the population census. The programme includes an analysis of the existing system, recommendations, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the strategic action plan. In addition, experts are involved in devising macroeconomic forecasting models for the *Commissariat Général au Plan et à la prospective*. Finally, two seminars on the economy were held in Algiers for managers from administrations in charge of economic affairs.

(1) *The MEDA programme forms the backbone of the financial framework for cooperation between the European Union and the Mediterranean countries under the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. The main aim of this programme is to help with the economic transition of Mediterranean countries and to set up a free-trade area by 2010.*

(2) *Adetef is the international technical cooperation agency of the ministries in charge of the economy and the budget.*

To find out more: consult [AMECO](#)'s website

MEDSTAT2 : a Euro-Mediterranean partnership

The area around the Mediterranean is one of the geographical priorities of INSEE cooperation. The Medstat2 project is designed to strengthen the statistical information systems of the partner countries of the Mediterranean area. INSEE provides its experience and technical assistance within the framework of this project.

Euro-Mediterranean cooperation

MEDSTAT is a regional project (1) which covers the 10 countries of the Mediterranean rim (Algeria, the Palestinian Authority, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey) within the framework of the MEDA programme launched following the Barcelona Declaration in 1996. The current phase, Medstat2, was launched in 2006 and will run until the end of 2009. Medstat2, which has a budget of 30 million euros funded under the European Union's MEDA (2) Regulation, finances training courses, workshops, technical assistance missions and purchases of IT equipment. Its objective is to harmonise statistical methodologies with European and international rules and standards and to thus improve the comparability of the statistical data of the countries of the Mediterranean area with each other and with the countries of the EU.

Nine statistical areas are covered

The Medstat2 project is run by Adetef (3), which heads a consortium comprising 7 statistical institutes and 2 private companies. Despite the different levels of development among the partner countries, this regional cooperation is an opportunity to develop data exchange, share best practice, harmonise concepts and methods and tailor statistical production to demand. The French experts are involved either on a permanent basis or undertake short-term missions in most of the nine areas: international trade in goods and services, transport, migration, tourism, the environment, national accounts, social statistics, energy and agriculture.

A successful start

The countries participating in the project have made efforts to harmonise their statistical systems with international standards. A common database has been set up and comparable indicators for several key sectors of the economy have been fed into it on a

regular basis. It provides the material needed to produce statistical publications for economic stakeholders. The programme has strengthened professional ties at regional level between Eurostat and the statistical institutes of the Euro-Mediterranean area.

A positive assessment

At their meeting on 14 and 15 February 2008 the Committee of Directors of EU and participating countries NSIs adopted a positive opinion of the approach followed by MEDSTAT. The training courses and study visits organised at regional level are complemented by technical assistance missions on specific topics. INSEE and the other partner NSIs emphasised the advantages of regional actions in terms of their rational use of resources.

Prospects beyond 2009

Participating and member countries of the consortium were unanimous in their wish to set up a « MEDSTAT-3 » once the current programme has expired in the autumn of 2009. The Statistical Programme Committee, which brings together EU NSIs, also voted in favour of further cooperation projects in the Euro-Mediterranean area and Eurostat has pledged to work towards this end. Since then the European Commission has freed up a budget for a tendering procedure to extend Medstat2. There could be a tender in 2010 with a view to launching the future Medstat3 programme in 2011.

To find out more: consult the Medstat website [Medstat](#)

(1) *The European Union's policy for the Mediterranean region is governed by the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, which was launched at the Barcelona Conference in November 1995. It brings together the 27 Member States of the EU and 10 states from the southern and eastern Mediterranean.*

(2) *The MEDA programme is the main financial instrument of the European Union designed to ensure implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. It foresees technical and financial assistance measures to help with the reform of the economic and social structures of the partner countries.*

(3) *ADETEF (the programme leader), INSEE, KSH (Hungary), ISTAT (Italy), GUS (Poland), INE (Spain), ONS (UK), Landsis (Luxembourg), Plan Bleu (France) AGMIN (Italy).*

Seminars and workshops

Central Europe and Balkan countries

Workshop on classifications in Bulgaria

A workshop session took place from 7th to 10th October 2008, with about 25 participants representing 15 Central European Nations among those recently admitted in the EU, the potential

candidates and Russia and Moldova. It was devoted to four principal topics: the setting-up of the new NACE activity classification, the treatment of subcontracting, the links between the activity and the products and the immaterial goods.

Maghreb and Africa

Seminar on "dissemination tools on Internet" for the countries of Africa French-speaking sub-Saharan.

From 7 to 11 July 2008, 17 French-speaking statisticians of African NSIs (AFRISTAT) met to reflect on the development of their Internet sites. The discussed topics were: assessment of the NSI sites of the Afristat states, communication strategy of statistical data; editorial developments of the Web and practices of the French institute (Insee) as regards communication on the web. Trainees already published articles on their own sites and a community site was created.

Seminar on "Seasonal adjustment"

It was held in Paris from October 27th to 30th 2008. It convened experts coming from INSEE, European institutions and members of the senior management for the N.S.I. of Tunisia and Morocco. The presentations were devoted to the tools and estimation methods and correction of the seasonal component series. Case studies illustrated the subject: tourism, transport, employment, effects of the national timetable of the Maghreb on the principal economic series were studied.

Bilateral cooperation

The share of cooperation actions undertaken within the framework of projects receiving multilateral financing is continuing to increase. However, in 2008, 2/3 of cooperation actions in terms of volume were of a bilateral nature. Bilateral cooperation is focused on the Maghreb, with a large proportion of resources being allocated to Morocco and Tunisia

The other priority is regional bodies. In French-speaking sub-Saharan Africa, Afristat acts as the cornerstone of our cooperation with French-speaking African countries. Assistance for Afristat includes providing short-term expertise and involvement in seminars and projects, such as the project

on final accounts. In Latin America we have been actively involved in the work of ECLAC – the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

A number of actions were undertaken in Serbia with whom we would like to make joint tenders or develop twinning projects. In 2008, national accounts were the main focus of our bilateral cooperation work. The other areas of action were: modelling, business statistics, statistical indices, the employment survey, short-term economic analysis, coordination and the teaching of statistics.



*ERETES 2008 *

During 2008 several events of importance for the Eretes software took place with the perspective of the revision of the 2008 SNA.

1) The ERETES group was set up. This group brings together users of the module. Its mission is to identify the strategic orientations of the ERETES module and to promote full appropriation of the tool by users.

2) The « Eurostat/UNSD Conference on International Outreach and Coordination in National Accounts for Sustainable Development and Growth », which took place on 6-8 May 2008, drew up the "Luxembourg Recommendations On Global Implementation and Outreach for the System of National Accounts" ([LR@SNA](#)). These recommendations highlight the importance of national accounts tools, such as ERETES, when it comes to setting up SNA 2008.

3) In line with these recommendations, the African National Accounts Group (GACN) is looking at the possibility of a common tool for processing national accounts data for Africa. The owners of ERETES and the chairman of the ERETES Group have offered to work with this group in order to draw on the experience of ERETES users in this area and to coordinate efforts to provide the international community with tools that make it possible to compile accounts that are in compliance with SNA 2008.

4) The « Flash accounts in Africa » project was launched in 2007 with the goal view to updating the national accounts of French-speaking countries of sub-Saharan Africa. The Bamako seminar held in September 2008 made a broadly positive assessment of this project.

In 2008, the implantation follow-up missions continued at a sustained pace.

Missions and study visits (January - December 2008)

The table below shows the targets of co-operation efforts carried out between January and December 2008. During last year, the number of missions of the French experts to foreign countries and study visits in France has been stable. Priority in the cooperation of the INSEE has been given to the European countries. INSEE was very active with the Ukraine and Bulgaria in 2008 under the projects financed by the European Union.

The area around the Mediterranean is another priority in INSEE cooperation. In particular, the pace of the activity accelerated with the regional project Medstat2 and AMECO starting from the end of 2007. INSEE has also decided to increase its contribution to technical assistance in sub-Saharan Africa. The Institute takes an active part in the common project led by AFRISTAT to improve and speed up national accounts in the African countries.

Central Europe and Balkans

Countries	Themes of actions	
	Missions	Study visits
Bulgaria	Twinning : Reorganization of the regional structure, regional and local indicators, dissemination of data, administrative sources	Twinning : Organisation of the statistical institute, Reduction of Burden
Croatia	Energy statistics	Business register
Romania	Active population forecast	External trade statistics, Household survey
Serbie	Assessment-programming, Classifications, Labor force survey, Short-term statistics	Management
Poland	Social statistics(poverty)	Social statistics(poverty)

CIS countries

Countries	Themes of actions	
	Missions	Study visits
Ukraine	World Bank project Business register, Classifications, Education statistics, Financial services, Household survey, Industrial services, Investment and construction, Metadata, Quaterly National accounts, Regional statistics, Trade statistics, Welfare social statistics	World Bank project Demography, Foreign trade statistics,, Household survey , Industrial statistics, Investment, Metadata, Regional statistics, Services statistics

Mediterranean basin

Countries	Themes of actions	
	Missions	Study visits
Algeria	AMECO project : Assessment of statistical system Macroeconomic modelling, National accounts	
Lebanon	National accounts	National accounts
Medstat2 project	Assessment ; National Accounts	
Morocco	National accounts including financial accounts	Financial accounts, Production prices, Short-term statistics Household survey
Tunisia	Administrative statistics, Agriculture statistics, Classifications, Labour force survey, National accounts Eretes, Short-term statistics, Software, Training	Business register Statistical coordination Short-term statistics National accounts (Eretes software)

Sub-Saharan Africa

Countries	Themes of actions	
	Missions	Study visits
Cooperation with AFRISTAT	National accounts (Eretes) ^o Short-term economic analysis Informal economy Social statistics(poverty) Short-term economic analysis	Demography Macroeconomic modelling National accounts Eretes Statistical coordination
Burkina Faso	National accounts(Eretes)	
Cameroon	Macroeconomics	Organization of the statistical system
Gabon	National accounts-Eretes	Short-term economic analysis
Mali		National accounts
Mauritania	National accounts (Eretes)	National accounts
Sénégal	Macroeconomic modelling National accounts-Eretes Quarterly national accounts	

Latin America

Countries	Themes of actions	
	Missions	Study visits
Andean Community	Demography Macroeconomic modelling National accounts	
CEPAL	Training in statistics	
Argentina, Brazil,	National accounts-ERETES	Rotating population census Statistical coordination

Asia

Countries	Themes of actions	
	Missions	Study visits
Vietnam	Macroeconomics Training of statisticians	Macroeconomic modelling

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