

# STATISTICS LITHUANIA

## European Affairs and International Co-operation Newsletter No 3/2009

We are proud to present Newsletter No 3/2009, which covers plenty of untypical and challenging international events organised by Statistics Lithuania in 2008. We hope you will find it pleasant to read through in your precious moments of leisure.

### Strategic guidelines of international co-operation of Statistics Lithuania for 2008-2012

Implementing the International Co-operation Strategy for 2008-2012, Statistics Lithuania commits itself not only to take over, but also to transfer its best practice to other EU NSIs. It is foreseen to continue organizing annual Baltic Steering Committee meetings and bilateral events with the colleagues from other EU countries paying attention to the developing of the national statistical systems and implementing innovations and possibilities for further co-operation. It is planned to actively participate in technical assistance projects taking into consideration the priorities of development co-operation of the Republic of Lithuania, to provide expert assistance to Eastern Europe, South Caucasus countries and Turkey by presenting the best practice of Lithuanian statistics on issues of organisation of statistics as well as issues of development of statistical domains.

### International consulting and training

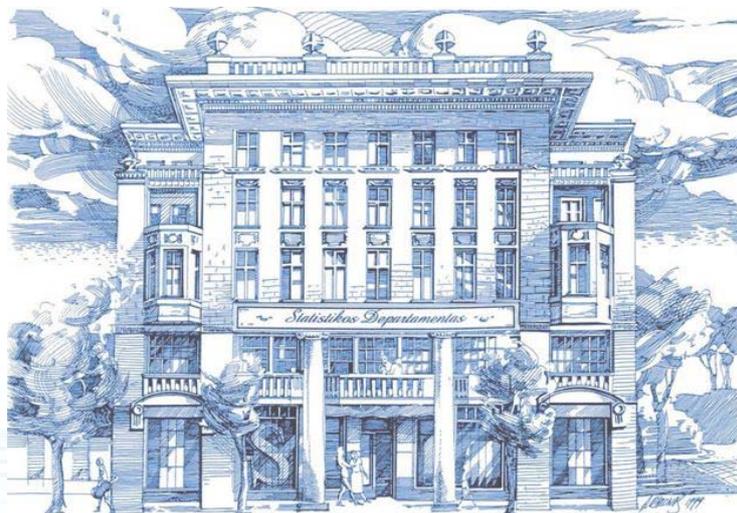
In 2008, technical assistance was provided to a number of specialists of Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Mediterranean statistical offices:

- In June, in Vilnius, three experts of Turkstat were acquainted with the issues of international co-operation, European affairs, management of grants and implementation of other projects at Statistics Lithuania.



- In the framework of the Twinning project with Destatis (Federal Statistical Office of Germany) for the statistical office of Macedonia, experts of Statistics Lithuania provided a consultation on the evaluation of IT capacity and development of a training plan for regional statistical offices.
- In the framework of the TACIS programme, technical assistance for Ukrainian statisticians covered investment and trade in service statistics, while Uzbek statisticians received a consultation on short-term statistics.

In 2008, Statistics Lithuania organised one training course. According to the MEDSTAT programme, in October, in Vilnius, training on HR management was conducted for human resources specialist from the NSIs of Mediterranean countries.



A training event organized by Statistics Norway together with the EFTA Secretariat for the representatives of regional Turkstat offices. An expert from Statistics Lithuania made a presentation on Lithuania's experience in compliance with EU requirements. Special attention was paid to the European Statistical System, legal basis of the EU, decision-making, EU member states co-operation with Eurostat, quality management principles and the European Statistics Code of Practice.

### Bilateral co-operation at Statistics Lithuania

#### High-level visit to Statistics Austria (15-16 April 2008)

Thanks to the Austrian colleagues, in April, a return high-level visit to Statistics Austria was arranged. Directors General exchanged experiences and ideas on essential, prevailing statistical topics such as population censuses and migration statistics, quality management and the reduction of the response burden in official statistics, presentation of official statistics to the general public, and discussed the present and future developments of the European Statistical System in general.

### Baltic Co-operation continues

The Baltic Steering Committee meeting is held annually in a statistical office of one of the three Baltic States on a rotational basis. At the end of May 2008, it was Estonia's turn to host the meeting.

Front row: Ms A. Žigūre, President, CSB Latvia, Ms D. Norkevičienė, Head European Affairs and International Co-operation Division, Statistics Lithuania, Ms T. Sillajõe, Deputy DG, Statistics Estonia, Ms A. Arge, Assistant Deputy DG, Statistics Estonia, Ms V. Lapēniene, First Deputy DG, SL;

Back row: Mr P. Potisepp, DG, Statistics Estonia, Mr K. Misans, Deputy President, CSB Latvia, Ms V. Jace, Head, International Co-operation Division, CSB Latvia, Mr A. Šemeta, DG, Statistics Lithuania, Mr M. Somelar, International Co-operation Chief, Statistics Estonia



The group presented the recent developments in statistics of the three Baltic States. Attention was devoted to the main statistical surveys completed in 2007 and problems faced, and information on the preparation for the forthcoming population, housing and agricultural censuses in all three countries was shared. Participants in the meeting reviewed a Baltic Co-operation plan and agreed on a number of trilateral actions to be held in 2008/2009. Special attention was paid to the events on price statistics, national accounts and data collection. The next Baltic Steering Committee meeting will be organised in May 2009 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

## Extraordinary international events at Statistics Lithuania

Statistics Lithuania encourages international co-operation and is open for different initiatives. In mid-May 2008, Statistics Lithuania was honoured with a visit of a Dutch delegation of Introstiek (an association of junior staff of the Central Statistical Bureau of the Netherlands). The European Affairs and International Co-operation Division took on a challenge to organize a seminar for 72 members of the delegation in the premises of Statistics Lithuania.



The visit was set up to exchange experience in various fields of

statistics, to gain new knowledge and to establish new contacts for further co-operation. In a two-day session, the development of a quality management system, the Integrated Statistical Information System, national



accounts, education and culture statistics and the use of the database of the State Social Insurance Fund Board (SODRA) was reviewed. Some guests, together with young specialists of the National Accounts Division of Statistics Lithuania, visited the Bank of Lithuania.

Apparently, the Dutch delegation was very happy with their visit to Lithuania. Hopefully, this event will contribute to a new initiative among the staff of Statistics Lithuania to establish a similar organisation.

### DGINS conference

The most remarkable and probably the biggest international event in the history of Statistics Lithuania was the Conference of Directors General of the National Statistical Institutes (DGINS). It took place in Vilnius in the Le Meridien Hotel and conference centre from 25 to 26 September.

The DGINS conference is organised annually and every time in another country.



Mr W. Radermacher, DG, Eurostat, Mr J. Almunia, European Commissioner, Mr G. Kirkilas, Prime Minister, Lithuania, Mr A. Šemeta, DG, Statistics Lithuania

The topic of the conference was the reduction of the administrative burden through official statistics, which has been the most relevant issue of last years in the world of statistics. The conference was honoured by Mr Joaquín Almunia, European Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs, and Mr Gediminas Kirkilas, Prime Minister of Lithuania. Attendance of the two high-level officials proves the importance of considerations concerning Statistical Burden Reduction in Europe and all over the world.



There are too many of us to fit in one photo

The two days were efficient due to the sharing of practices of National Statistical Institutes and the most effective ways to reach the optimal reduction of the burden on respondents. In the closing part, Mr R. Camilleri, Acting Director General of Statistics Malta, kindly invited participants to the next DGINS conference that is to be hosted in Malta.

The conference hosted social events for the participants and their accompanying persons. During the daytime, they had an opportunity to visit the most picturesque places of Lithuania and make an attractive guided walking tour around Vilnius. Evenings ended with jolly traditional Lithuanian get-togethers, where participants and guests learned some national dances, listened to popular folk songs and were given a possibility to explore Lithuanian cuisine.

### SPC and task forces (2 & 3)

The Statistical Programme Committee (SPC) meeting took place on 24 September 2008 in Vilnius. It has already become a tradition to organise the SPC meeting back-to-back with the DGINS conference in September in the country hosting the conference.

Prior to the SPC meeting, Statistics Lithuania hosted the meeting of the Partnership Group TF2 on Statistical Challenges and TF3 on ESS Resources Management and Planning.



TF2 meeting continued its work in the Le Meridien conference centre

### Changes in the top management of Statistics Lithuania

As it is officially known, Mr Algirdas Šemeta, who has been extremely active on the international arena and contributed to the development of the ESS, left the post of Director General of Statistics Lithuania and accepted a challenging post of Minister of Finance of Lithuania.

From 26 January, Ms Vilija Lapėnienė is Acting Director General of Statistics Lithuania.

*We sincerely hope to continue successful co-operation with the partners within and outside the ESS and greatly appreciate everyone's contribution.*



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