

STATISTICAL OFFICE

Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2024 - 2028

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INTRODUCTION

Development Strategy of Official Statistics is a five-year strategic document in area of official statistics of Montenegro, which is adopted pursuant to Article 20 of the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System (Official Gazette of Montenegro No 18/12 and 47/19). This secondary legislation represents a development framework of Montenegro statistical system which determines strategic aim, vision, mission, and long-term operative objectives for the development of Montenegro statistical system. The purpose of this Strategy is to improve the existing and development of new measures, mechanisms, and instruments of Montenegro statistical system.

Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2024-2028 (hereinafter referred to as the "Strategy") represents a continuation of activities implemented within the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023, aimed at ensuring continuous development and improvements of the official statistical system. The adoption of the Strategy will continue with the implementation of priority activities defined in the negotiation process of Chapter 18. Statistics, aimed at the efficient production of official statistical data. The Strategy defined the strategic aim of development of official statistical system, as well as related operative objectives for reaching this aim. Two-year action plan for the implementation of the Strategy (for 2024 - 2025) is its constituent part, and represents a set of all measures that contribute to the implementation of defined operative objectives, i.e. strategic aim. This plan comprises relevant, clear, and measurable performance indicators, and result indicators.

Methodology for producing the Strategy with the Action Plan 2024-2025 is in line with *Decree on Manner and Procedure of Drafting, Alignment, and Monitoring of Implementation of Strategic Document* (Official Gazette of Montenegro 54/18), *Methodology for Creating Policies, Producing and Monitoring Strategic Documents*, *Guidelines for Preparation of Strategic Documents*, and *Guide for Evaluation of Strategic Documents*, prepared by the General Secretariat of the Government of Montenegro

For the purpose of considering an issue of common interest, Statistical Office released two public calls (31 January 2023, and 3 March 2023) for proposing an NGO representative in the working group for producing strategy draft, together with two-year action plan for implementation of the Strategy (for 2024 - 2025). Regardless of two public calls, Statistical Office had not a representative of NGO sector. Activities on preparing and defining the Strategy were done through phases, as it follows:

1. Positioning in the strategic framework of Montenegro's development, and harmonization with international obligations;
2. Production of analysis on the state in area of official statistics of Montenegro;
3. Production of analysis of effects of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019 - 2023;

4. Identification and description of strategic and operative objectives;
5. Defining and description of performance indicators;
6. Defining activities and result indicators with the Action Plan;
7. Production of strategic document draft, and
8. Public discussion.

Adoption of the Strategy will be followed with the Action plan, which will define measures and activities required for the implementation of operative objectives and recommendations defined by the Strategy, pursuant to Article 20 of the *Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System*.

The Strategy defines strategic aim, vision, and mission of statistical system and five operative objectives which ensures further development of Montenegro's statistical system. For the purpose of implementation of operative objectives, there are defined 15 key activities.

Strategic aim of the Strategy *is to provide all users with the official statistical data produced in line with the principles of official statistics, determined by national and international methodology, with respecting ethical and professional standards.*

Vision of Montenegro statistical system *is to produce, with strengthening its professional and infrastructural capacities, official statistical data which are based on international standards and methodologies, and respecting the official statistical principles.*

Mission of Montenegro statistical system *is to provide reliable, quality, timely, and internationally comparable official statistical data for the needs of all users. The production of official statistical data is done based on statistical standards, by using modern technologies, with respecting statistical confidentiality.*

1. Purpose of adopted Strategy

Purpose of the Strategy is to define operative objectives for the development of Montenegro official statistical system in the next five years, by which the strategic aim of statistical system will be met.

Role of the Strategy is to direct the work of official statistical system toward the implementation of the most important operative objectives in the mentioned time period. In the same time, it also serves for presentation of the work of official statistical producers, users, and general public, so that development and improvement of official statistical system are monitored. The Strategy defines a direction of faster development for official statistics via the harmonization of methodology, standards and good statistical practice. Additionally, it represents a basis for receiving the official statistical data and ensures their comparability with the statistical data of European and other countries. In addition to the Strategy, there is prepared a two-year action plan of implementation of the Strategy (for 2024 - 2025), which is adopted by the Government of

Montenegro. Other secondary legislation, such as: **Programme of Official Statistics**, and **Annual Plan of Official Statistics** ensures the programme framework which in detail elaborates the Strategy.

The Strategy is based on the objectives defined in line with the assessments on fulfilment of the previous 2019-2023 Development Strategy's objectives. This Strategy recognizes key challenges, results, and recommendations that stem from the Montenegro accession process to the EU, and its international obligations within the negotiation process in Chapter 18. Statistics. Some of relevant documents that *served as a basis for preparing the strategy are: Montenegro progress reports of the European commission, closing benchmarks in Chapter 18. Statistics, Peer review report on compliance with the Code of Practice, and the coordination role of the national statistical institute.*

Operative objectives of the *Strategy* envisage further improvement of coordination inside the official statistical system, strengthening human resources and spatial capacities, improvement of digital communication with users, as well as efficient cooperation with institutions of the system. Having in mind not defined competences of state administration bodies in part of administrative register, a special attention will be devoted to considering law provisions in this domain.

2. Harmonization with existing Montenegro strategic framework

The existing strategic framework of Montenegro, i.e. its horizontal and vertical interconnection, positioning the *Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2024-2028*, as a composite development document which should ensure number and representative data and information on economic, demographic, and social phenomena, as well as on phenomena in area of agriculture, working environment, and environment of Montenegro.

Umbrella strategic documents

- Middle-term programme of the government with the government's programme of work for 2023 is a document which defines priorities and objectives of the Government of Montenegro which are focus of attention and resources in period from 2022-2024. This represents a framework for planning sector policies, government's annual programmes of work, as well as middle-term and annual ministries' programmes of work.

Together with other official statistical producers, Statistical Office has a double role in *Middle-term Government's Programme of the Work with Government's Programme of Work for 2023*. Operative objectives of the official statistics of Montenegro 2024 – 2028 were defined with obligations and priorities of Montenegro which are defined by the national policies. From this position, and having in mind the double role of the official statistics, producing legislation and strategic framework of the official statistical system is a part of Chapter 2 *Healthy finances and economic development*, which represent one of six key priorities of the Government of

Montenegro. All activities are in detail defined by the Programme of Work of the Government of Montenegro for 2023 and Annual Plan of Official Statistics for 2023.

The official statistical data will be used for monitoring the implementation of the Government of Montenegro's middle-term agenda, as well as other umbrella strategic documents, sector policies, and other policies.

- Montenegro's Accession Programme to the European Union is a key strategic document of the European integration process of Montenegro, which defined scope and dynamics of reforms required for the alignment of Montenegro with the EU *acquis*. As a planning document, the accession programme of Montenegro provides a strategic direction for the process of European integration of Montenegro toward the final phase, covering a large scope of obligations in all 33 chapters of the EU *acquis*.

The domain of official statistics is present in the negotiation process as a separate Chapter 18. Statistics, aimed at the harmonization with international standards and methodologies. In line with new methodology of accession to the EU, official statistics is places in the cluster gathering the most important, but also the most complex chapters in context of necessary reform and implementation of the EU *acquis*. This cluster also comprises chapters: 5 - Public procurement; 23 – Judiciary and fundamental rights; 24 – Justice, freedom and security; and 32 – Financial control which will be first to be opened, but the last to be closed, in line with the new methodology on the accession to the EU. The progress in all other clusters will depend on the progress of the fundamental cluster where is the statistics.

Since also larger assistance funds are announced depending on priorities, the role of official statistics, as one of fundamental chapters will contribute to larger assistance for further development in the process of European integration of Montenegro.

The Strategy is dealing with tasks and activities that will contribute to the fulfilment of closing benchmarks for Chapter 18. Statistics. The process of accession of Montenegro to the European Union is monitored via two reports: Progress report - Chapter 18. Statistics, and the Report on fulfilment of obligations from the Stabilization and Association Agreement. Herewith, this document defines 3. Operative objective "*Continued harmonization with the EU standards and recommendations of international institutions, and cooperation in area of official statistics*", under which there is formulated the key activity 3.1 "*Further implementation of international and national methodological (statistical) standards*"; 3.2 "*Intensifying activities aimed at the fulfilment of negotiating closing benchmarks of Chapter 18. Statistics*", and 3.3 "*Increased availability of Montenegro official statistical data in Eurostat and UN databases*", together with the respective performance indicators.

The annual Montenegro Progress Report 2022 shows that Montenegro is moderately prepared in the area of statistics, and limited progress was made on last year's recommendations.

- Programme of Economic Reforms 2023 - 2025 is the main document of Montenegro in the economic dialogue with member countries and institutions of EU on questions of macroeconomic, fiscal, and structural reforms. Additionally, there is considered the document of middle term planning of macroeconomic and fiscal policy of Montenegro, that is drafted aimed at improvements of conditions for stronger economic growth and development. Statistical Office has an active role in the production of the programme under their competences through statistical activities.

Herewith, this document defines the operative objective 3 with the key activity 3.3 *"Increased availability of Montenegro official statistical data in Eurostat and UN databases"*, along with respective performance indicators, as well as OPERATIVE OBJECTIVE 5. *"Production of relevant, timely, and high quality of official statistics with use of innovative data sources and technologies"* with related performance indicators.

- National Strategy of Sustainable Development in Montenegro up to 2030 represents a long-term development strategy of Montenegro by which solutions for sustainable management with four groups of national resources: human, social, natural, and economic, as a priority of total sustainable development of Montenegrin society. Observing the sustainability of national development, Montenegro is one of the first countries worldwide that fully accepted and integrated the UN requirements defined by the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development up to 2030.

Herewith, the Declaration on the role of NSOs in SDG monitoring defines the role of national statistical institutions in the production of indicators for measurement of objectives.

The objectives set by National Strategy of Sustainable Development in Montenegro up to 2030 under competence of Statistical Office (Chapter 7.1.1.1. *Distribution of UN list of indicators by official statistical producers in Montenegro*, p. 351) will be measured by the implementation of statistical surveys and increased availability of official statistical data.

A contribution of official statistical producers is visible at the official website *Sustainable Development Goals for Montenegro* in the section Montenegro data for Sustainable Development Goal indicators and EUROSTAT database.

This document defines the 3rd operative objective *"Continued harmonization with the EU standards and recommendations of international institutions and cooperation in area of official statistics"* within which key activity 3.3 *"Increased availability of Montenegro official statistical data in Eurostat and UN databases"* is formulated, together with the related performance indicators.

- National Strategy of Gender Equality 2021 - 2025 is a strategic document which established a better framework for reaching gender equality in Montenegro. National Strategy of gender equality has a vision: *"For a society where all women and men and persons of different sex and*

gender identity have equal possibilities to contribute to sustainable development of Montenegro and to equally enjoy its benefits”.

In cooperation with the holder of activity, Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, the role of Statistical Office is to ensure and improve the official gender statistical data, to provide planning of public policy based on the actual situation, as well as regular monitoring the progress and achievements of these public policies based on quantitative indicators.

Having in mind the above mentioned, in cooperation with the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights (based on the cooperation memorandum No 01-2887 of 14 September 2016), Statistical Office organized on 25 July 2023 a media conference on the occasion of releasing the *Gender Equality Index* data. Statistical Office for the second time releases the survey “Gender Equality Index in Montenegro”, in cooperation with the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), using both national and European data sources.

Within the strategy, there is defined the 3rd operative objective with key activity 3.3 “*Increased availability of Montenegro official statistical data in Eurostat and UN databases*” with the related performance indicators, to continue with the regular release of publication “Women and Men in Montenegro”, and the calculation of *Gender Equality Index*, which contributes to the international statistical comparability in area of gender equality. More details on gender equality is given in chapter “*Gender sensitive language of Strategy*” of this document.

Sector strategic documents

- Strategy of digital transformation 2022-2026 represents a development framework which will defined preconditions and initiatives required for a fast adaptation in all more complex digital environment, agile and proactive development of digital Montenegro. Statistical Office participates in the implementation of activities through the analysis of existing infrastructure of Statistical Office for the process of digitalization and digital transformation, with improvements of IT security which is planned by the Strategy. This document on this aspect defines the 4th operative objective ‘*Digital transformation of statistical production with improvements of IT security*’ where there are formulated key activities regarding analysis of digital readiness of the Statistical Office, as well as defining ‘*Roadmap of digital transformation of Statistical Office*’. Aimed at proactive acting, Statistical Office has done in the first phase of preparing the strategic document consultations with representatives of the Ministry of Public Administration as partners in implementation of the mentioned operative objective.
- Strategy for Reforms of Public Administration 2022-2026 is directed at efficient professional and service oriented public administration at the service of citizens, social and business entities, and at the building of legislative framework of public administration. Statistical Office is aligned with the existing strategic document via the improvements of IT system, for the purpose of data collection for statistical purposes.

This document defines the fourth operative objective *"Digital transformation of statistical production with improvements of IT security"* within which key activities are formulated and referred to the establishment of eDMS – exchange of documents within the Statistical Office's system for electronic management of documents with related performance indicators.

The mentioned operative objective is directly connected with the operative objective 1.2. *"Free of Paper Administration"* of the Strategy for Reform of Public Administration 2022-2026 which indicates mutual alignment of the Strategy with the existing strategic framework of Montenegro.

- Strategy for Minority Policies, in line with comparable legal and international standards, defines measures for the implementation of the Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms and improvement of living conditions of minorities, in total, which are state bodies obliged to gradually implement in period of implementation of document. The aim of the strategy is to contribute to the improvements in achieving minority rights and education of the public on values and importance of respecting and protection of the mentioned rights, mutual ethnical tolerance, and models of organizing coexistence, and models of organizing coexistence in multi-ethnic communities, as indispensable conditions for both full democratization, and full development of Montenegrin society on the way of European integration. Statistical Office has an active role in the production of the mentioned strategy within its competences through statistical activities.

Regarding it, this document defines the 5th operative objective *"Production of relevant, timely, and high quality of official statistics with use of innovative data sources and technologies"* within which there is formulated the key activity 5.2 *"Raising awareness on accessibility and importance of official statistical data"* with related performance indicators. Continued communication with the official statistical data users builds trust, informs public and helps statistical system to fulfil users' needs.

- Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians in Montenegro 2021 - 2025 is aimed at the improvements of existing state and position of Roma and Egyptian community in Montenegro, as well as achieving rights guaranteed by the Constitution and other legal acts, and fight against all types of discrimination and segregation. Statistical Office is recognized as a partner in the implementation of certain activities which contribute to the fulfilment of objectives defined by this strategy. In the operative objective 3 *"Continuous communication with the official statistical data users builds trust, informs public, and helps statistical system to fulfil users' needs"* in *Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians in Montenegro 2021 - 2025* there is expressed a need for cooperation with the Statistical Office.

In this regard, this document defines the fifth operative objective *"Production of relevant, timely, and high quality of official statistics with use of innovative data sources and technologies"*. Disaggregation of official statistical data, whenever is possible, is one of future activities of official statistical producers.

- National Strategy of Circular Transition up to 2030 with Action Plan 2023 - 2024 is aimed at creating mechanisms and implementation tools for long-term recovery and strength of Montenegro. Additionally, the aim is also a system change, i.e. to foster the transformation in thinking and acting in terms of using resources, as well causing self-obligatory commitment of decision maker to adapt policies they propose, and which are in line with the circular economy principles. Statistical Office is recognized, in cooperation with the activity holder, to take part in the implementation of objectives that refer to the *improvement of organic production and improvement of waste management by using the concept of circular economy*.
- Strategy of Development of Energy of Montenegro up to 2030 represents a strategic mechanism, i.e. a number of measures and instruments whose implementation represents a strategic mechanism, i.e. a number of measures and instruments whose implementation foresees the fulfilment of adopted objectives of government energy policy. Statistical Office in regular dynamics participates in creating the *Report on Action Plan for Implementation of the Strategy*.
- Strategy of Development of Tourism of Montenegro 2022-2025 is an umbrella strategic document which recognizes possibilities for further development of tourism, taking account of principles of sustainability, harmonization, potentials, development needs, and requirements of economy, domestic and international market. Statistical Office is included in the work of operative team for monitoring the implementation of the Strategy of Tourism Development of Montenegro 2022 - 2025. Activities in which the Statistical Office is a partner refer to digital transformation of businesses in tourism, through the development of integrated information system which will connect all relevant institutions and strengthen institutional capacities through organizing education and training of local tourist organizations' staff in part which refer to the collection of data on tourist traffic. Having in mind the above mentioned, this document defines the 4th operative objective "*Digital transformation of statistical production with improvements of IT security*" within which there is formulated key activity 4.1 "*Developing analysis of existing infrastructure of Statistical Office for digitalization and digital transformation process*" and 4.2 "*Creating technical plan for establishment of communication between Statistical Office and administrative sources via Government Service Bus (GSB) and its Technical Implementation*" with relating performance indicators.
- Strategy of Development of Agriculture and Rural Areas 2023 - 2028 represents a strategy for development of Montenegro which determines directions for development of agriculture and rural areas for management of agricultural resources at the long-term sustainable manner, ensuring stable supply of safe food, acceptable in terms of quality and prices, with respecting environment, improvement of living standards of population in rural areas and total rural development, and strengthening the competitiveness of food producers.

Statistical Office will provide relevant, timely and high quality official statistical data in domain of agricultural statistics. In addition to the implementation of regular annual statistical surveys in domain of agriculture, it has started with the implementation of preparation activities for the implementation of the second census of agriculture in Montenegro.

The census of agriculture in Montenegro is planned in period from 1 October to 1 December 2024, as defined by the Draft Law on Census of Agriculture 2024.

3. Alignment with international requirements

The Strategy is also based on the international requirements via UN and EU strategic framework defined for the area of official statistics.

Namely, the Strategy is prepared and adopted in accordance with the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System, which is fully aligned with the Regulation (EC) No 223/2009. In this direction, there is also considered UN Handbook on Management and Organization of National Statistical Systems, version 2022/A, which provides guidelines about how to develop the integration of innovative data sources and technologies in the production of official statistics. The Handbook supports the implementation of UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, as well as the Declaration on professional ethics, which refer to statisticians.

Additionally, there were analysed strategic Eurostat's document: Strategic plan 2020-2024, EU statistical programme 2021-2027, The Statistical Requirements Compendium, which represents a development vision of the European statistics, directed to meet the users' needs, modernization, and use of innovative data sources and technologies, as well as better promotion of official statistics. For the purpose of ensuring the quality of official statistical data, the Strategy envisages the strengthening of use of *official statistical principles*. They are aligned with the European Statistics Code of Practice principles, aimed at ensuring the relevant statistical production so that the statistics produced within the European Statistical System (ESS) are relevant, timely and accurate, as well as aligned with principles of professional independence, impartiality, and objectivity.

3.1 Compliance with the European policies

The Strategy of Development of Official Statistics 2024 - 2028 continues with the compliance in line with the EU requirements, as well as with the best European practice. Accordingly, the Programme of Montenegro's Accession to the European Union defines legislative, strategic, and administrative framework.

Negotiations under Chapter 18. Statistics include the alignment of Montenegrin legislation with the *acquis* in the field of official statistics. This area is considered particularly important because the positive changes from a successful negotiation process will result in better quality, availability,

and credibility of statistics as a basis for public policy making which will create better conditions for more dynamic social and economic development of Montenegro.

The area of official statistics is represented in the negotiation process as a separate negotiating chapter, but is also of great importance for other chapters, given its connection with many areas within the negotiation process. The database produced by official statistics will measure progress in all areas, and the Strategy will address tasks and activities that will contribute to meeting the criteria set by closing benchmarks of Chapter 18 Statistics. Immediately after the chapter was opened, the number of surveys, i.e. data availability significantly increased, which are necessary for managing different state policies and additionally monitoring the fulfilment of criteria in many negotiation chapters, and a large number of European standards and legislation was also adopted.

When EU *acquis* is considered, a high level of compliance with the main EU regulation that regulates the area of official statistics (Regulation (EC) No 223/2009) has been achieved, and European Statistical Programme 2021 - 2027 is also additionally analysed.

Pursuant to the latest Progress Report, limited progress and moderate preparedness for the membership were achieved in Chapter 18. Statistics. Further progress and closing of chapter will depend on meeting the requirements set by closing benchmarks.

In the European integration process, key risks in Chapter 18 Statistics are recognized, and without their permanent and adequate dealing, further progress is subject to the risk of not meeting the requirements in this Chapter, and thus progress and closing Chapter.

Recommendations for further progress in Chapter 18. Statistics, recognized by the *Progress Report* are:

- Considerably strengthen the human and financial resources of MONSTAT, so that it can fully fulfil its responsibilities and retain expert staff;
- Make significant progress in aligning with the European System of Accounts (ESA) 2010, including by starting to transmit to Eurostat government finance statistical data, as well as properly filled excessive deficit procedure tables;
- Carry out the national population and housing census in line with EU requirements and recommendations and allocate sufficient resources to it.

Statistical Office's assessment is that Chapter 18. Statistics can be potentially closed in 2028 by reaching high level of compliance, which is currently 65%, if main preconditions are met regarding human, financial, and spatial capacities.

A special accent in field of official statistics is put on the integration of Montenegro official statistical system in the European Statistical System – ESS, which enables the comparability of Montenegro official statistical with the EU member countries' data.

ANALYSIS OF STATE IN AREA OF MONTENEGRO OFFICIAL STATISTICS

The analysis of existing situation gives an overview of national legislative and institutional framework, key results of implementation of *Strategy of Development of Official Statistics 2019-2023*, as well as of analysis of stakeholders.

1. National legislative and institutional framework

The legal basis for the work of Montenegro official statistics system is defined by the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System. In accordance with this law, organization and affairs of official statistical system (collection, processing, and dissemination of official statistical data) is regulated, in addition to other issues important for official statistics. Production of official statistics is done in accordance with the principles of official statistics. Additionally, Montenegro statistical system complies with both professional, and ethical standards.

The Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System is compliant with the Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and Council on European statistics, which regulates the work of Montenegro official statistics, national statistical system, and role of Statistical Office, as well as producers of official statistics. In line with the international legislation in area of official statistics, the Government of Montenegro adopted the Commitment of Confidence, which expresses its commitment to strengthening of confidentiality in official statistics, based on European principles and standards on quality of official statistics.

Statistical Office Montenegro is the main coordinator of all activities in area of official statistics and international statistical cooperation. In addition to Statistical Office, producers defined by the law are: Central Bank of Montenegro and Ministry of Finance, and other official statistical producers are defined by the Programme of Official Statistics.

Strategy of Development of Official Statistics is a document that defines strategic and operative objectives of official statistics. The production of Strategy is defined by Article 20 of the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System, according to which the proposal to the Strategy is prepared by Statistical Office, in cooperation with other producers of official statistics. The Strategy is adopted for the five-year period, and followed by Action Plan which clearly defines activities whose implementation contributes to the implementation of strategic and operative objectives.

Programme of official statistics is a document which in details elaborates the activities of official statistics, in accordance with the strategy for five-year period. Drafting of the Programme of Official Statistics is defined by Articles 21 and 22 of the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System. The five-year programme contains an overview of development objectives and main results of the official statistics in every field.

Annual Plan of Official Statistics is a document which in detailed annual level elaborates: Programme of Official Statistics; contains the list of statistical surveys that are to be implemented; administrative sources to be used; development activities and budget. Drafting of the Plan of Official Statistics is defined by Article 23 and 24 of the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System.

The Council of Statistical System is advisory and professional body that takes care of official statistical users' needs, and comprising 17 members. Articles 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 19 Law of Official Statistics and Official Statistical System defines composition, functions, and organization of this advisory body. The Council provides expert opinions and proposals on strategic issues of official statistics and national statistical system.

In order to improve the communication with user of official statistical data, the Statistical Office implements the Survey on User Satisfaction in biannual period. Report on the implemented survey is released on the official website of the Statistical Office.

2. Analysis of stakeholders

Drafting the Strategy is preceded by an analysis which implies the recognition of stakeholders that should be included in preparation and implementation of strategic document.

Official statistical producers, defined by Article 7 of the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System, play the central role in the organization of official statistical system. Statistical office has a leading role in the implementation of the Strategy. Other important actors whose activities and practices are in function of implementing the Strategy are: Ministry of Finance, Central Bank of Montenegro, and other producers defined by the Programme of Official Statistics. In accordance with the quality principles, Statistical Office has defined the Criteria for defining "official statistics" and "other official statistical producers", with the aim to determine the competent body producing "official statistics" and fulfilling conditions to be defined as "other official statistical producers".

The cooperation with **non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and business community/entrepreneurs**, and their inclusion, as stakeholders via the Council of Statistical System and Working groups of Chapter 18. Statistics, aimed at better information on important steps of functioning of the official statistical system.

Other partners in the preparation process of Strategy will have an opportunity to take part through public discussion, and these are: public administrations and agencies, citizens, economic operators, international statistical organizations, and media.

Key **international partners** and stakeholders in context of integration process and implementation of the Strategy are: Eurostat, General Directorate of European Commission and its executive agency, UN system, the Council of Europe, European Bank for Reconstruction and

Development - EBRD, International Labour Organization – ILO, Energy Community, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development – OECD, etc.

The Council of Statistical System, was established as advisory and professional body (Article 12 of the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System) for the purpose of improvement statistical culture and knowledge, as well as taking care of official statistical users' needs.

By recognizing stakeholders, their relation to the strategic document is defined and their interest and impact (strength) for it is assessed, and presented in table below.

Table 1. Analysis of stakeholders

| Stakeholder | | Relation to the strategic document | Interest (rating 1-5) | Impact/strength (rating 1-5) |
|---|---|---|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Public sector | Government, state administration, and agencies | The Government, ministries, offices, and agencies are responsible for creation and implementation of public policies under their competences. They need official statistical data for preparation and monitoring their national development and sector plans. | 5 | 5 |
| | Local self-government units | Local self-governments are facing increasing needs for creation of public policies, and they need official statistical data which will support their creation. Interest of local self-government units for the data at the local self-government level represent a special challenge for Statistical Office. | 4 | 3 |
| Civil sector | Citizens | Official statistics provides general public with the basis for information on the official statistical data. | 4 | 4 |
| | NGO | Interest of NGOs for official statistical data is increasing. The reason for this is that Ngo sector contributes to more efficient participation in creating public policies based on the official statistical data. | 4 | 4 |
| Private sector | Economic operators | Enterprises are a data source for the production of official statistics, but they are in the same time official statistical users. Actors under the significant influence of strategic document, because their business plans are based on the official statistical data. | 4 | 3 |
| International organizations and researchers | International statistical organizations and researchers | International statistical organizations and researchers are recognized as users of data for the purpose of scientific and research papers and analyses. Additionally, international statistical organizations are initiating the implementation of statistical surveys with internationally recognized methodologies. | 5 | 5 |
| Media | National media | Official statistical producers pay a special attention to media needs having in mind the role of media in transmitting official statistics to public and important role that media can have in building image of Statistical Office. | 2 | 5 |

3. SWOT analysis of Montenegro official statistical system

After the overview of national and legislative framework of official statistical system, as well as analysis of stakeholders, an overview of limitations is presented below, but also possibilities for development of official statistical system via the SWOT analysis. SWOT analysis is done through external and internal environment of official statistics. There were analysed strengths - S and weaknesses - W, which represent internal factors of official statistical system, while external factors are analysed through possibilities opportunities – O, and threats - T. For the purpose of analysis, there were used *User Satisfaction Survey* and *Progress Reports*, which include a large number of stakeholders, such as non-governmental organizations, academic community, business associations, and other users of statistical services.

STRENGTHS

- Part of the European statistical system;
- Opened Chapter 18. Statistics;
- Financial and expert assistance of Eurostat via the IPA programme;
- Expert assistance of international partners (SIDA, ILO, UNICEF);
- Member of UNECE – High Level Group for Modernization of Official Statistics (HLG-MOS);
- Organized official statistical system;
- Existence of legal and institutional framework;
- Established international statistical cooperation;
- Good communication with official statistical producers;
- Established communication with regular users of statistical data;
- Expert, professional, and competent staff.

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of resources (spatial and technical);
- Lack of staff and staff turnover which can result in reduced efficiency at work, slow down improvement and development of official statistics;
- Obsolescence of a part of the equipment due to fast technological development;
- Lack of recognition and understanding of official statistics.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Access to the IPA programme;
- Strengthening of legal and institutional framework;

- Harmonization with request of international methodologies and standards in field of official statistics;
- Increasing need for statistical data and strengthening of importance of official statistics;
- Modernization of data collection through development of information technologies, and use of administrative data sources;
- Improvement of coordination with business associations, non-governmental organizations, and academia;
- Use of “open data” (e.g. use of “R” language), to optimize statistical production and reduce costs;
- Development of statisticians, as expert and professional staff in the production of official statistical data.

THREATS

- Lack of statisticians;
- Limited resources for investments in infrastructure and IT technology;
- Lack of administrative capacities;
- Lack of highly qualified human resources;
- Insufficiently developed administrative sources;
- Insufficiently linked existing registers.

Using already developed resources recognized as “strength”, in part of developed institutional and legislative environment, existing expert and provided opportunities, through the access to the IPA funds, objectives defined by the Strategy that will contribute to reduce recognized threats.

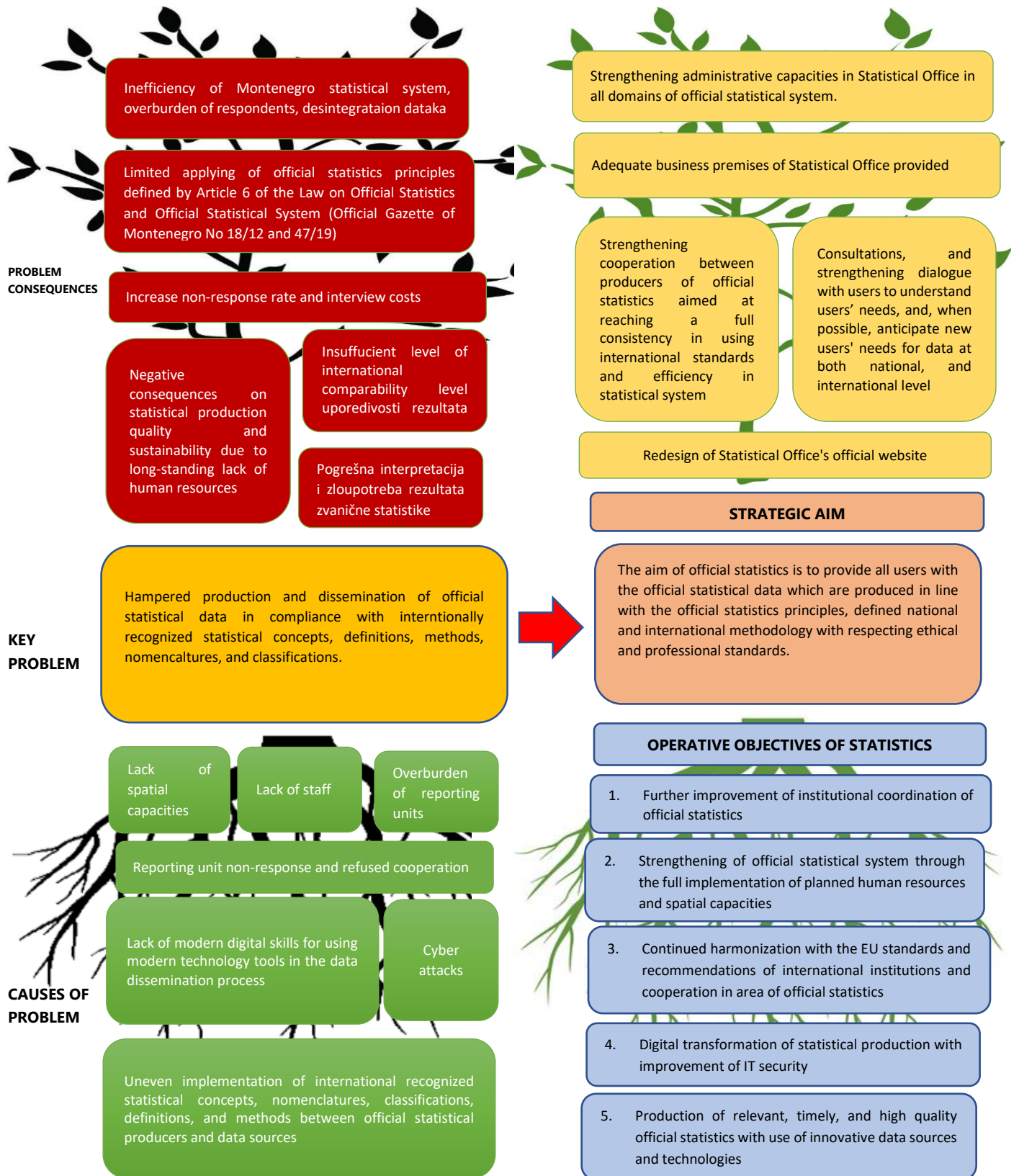
4. Analysis of problems necessary to be solved – Problem tree and solution tree

A part of the analysis of the situation is recognized problems in field of official statistical system, with clearly defined causes of their appearance, effects, i.e. consequences, as well as proposals for their solutions. With purpose of this, there is prepared a problem tree as a methodological instrument which provides clear visual indication of recognized problems, their cause and sub-causes, as well as consequences.

The visualization of problems, causes, and consequences through the tree problem, there is achieved a more visible and simpler analysis of causes and consequences, but also it is defined a solution proposal through solution tree. The solution tree represents a logical connection between strategic and operative objectives, related activities, indicators, and planned results.

PROBLEM TREE

SOLUTION TREE



5. Key results of implementation of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023

In cooperation with other official statistical producers, and in addition to the focus on the implementation of statistical surveys defined by the Annual Plan of Official Statistics, Statistical Office was also committed to the accomplishment of strategic and operative aims and operative aims defined by the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019 – 2023, and Programme of Official Statistics 2019 - 2023. Its implementation is monitored via action plans and reports on its implementation.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemics, there was created a significantly different environment for production and dissemination of official statistics, what has also the impact on the implementation of activities defined by the Strategy. Due to preventive measures against pandemics, there was not possible to access households and collect data by direct interview method 'face-to-face'. Additionally, the process of collecting data from businesses is greatly hindered, but in the same time a need for new data is increased aimed at creating measures and policies under crises conditions. Unexpected circumstances due to the pandemics resulted in the change of planned dynamics of implementing objectives defined by the Strategy.

Considering this, the vision of development of Montenegro statistical system planned by the previous Strategy that says *"production of coherent, relevant, and objective official statistical data based on international concepts, methodologies, and strict regime of data protection"*, is a basis for setting the vision of the Strategy defined for the next five-year period.

Based on the above mentioned, the strategic aim of official statistics defined for the period 2024-2028 is a continued aim established by the previous strategy *"to provide all users with quantitative and representative data on economic, demographic, social, and environmental situation in Montenegro, by internationally defined methodology and the highest professional standards"*.

Strategic aim for the period 2019 - 2023 is defined through operative objectives and activities that referred to: (1) Establishment of permanent dialogue with data users and partnership development; (2) Education of statisticians, as data scientists; (3) Further harmonization and innovation of official statistics with international standards/recommendations; (4) Creation of new data sources for production of official statistics; (5) Further implementation of the Code of Quality of Official Statistics; (6) Development of IT integrated system for collection, processing, release, and archiving official statistical data; (7) Development of data dissemination and communication in line with the needs of digital society.

Table 2. Overview of activities defined by the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019 - 2023

| Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019 - 2023 | Number |
|--|---------------|
| Strategic objectives | 1 |
| Operative objectives | 7 |
| Activities | 49 |
| Performance indicators | 22 |

Key risks identified by the Eurostat are also recognized in the progress report and which reflect the previously mentioned are:

- **Need for a serious increase of human and financial resources of Statistical Office** (with the existing capacities it is not possible to meet the requirements for official data of national and international users, such as: National Strategy of Sustainable Development, Montenegro's Programme of Accession to the European Union, etc.);
- **Defining institutional competences** in the government finance statistics production, aimed at further harmonization with the ESA 2010 standards;
- **Lack of business premises** (reduced productivity of staff due to inadequate working conditions, security risks of access to the building, technical deficiencies that limit the modernization of the official statistical process, etc.

1.1 Overview of achieved results of Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019 - 2023 by operative objectives

Specific activities for the implementation of Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023 are planned via the action plans for reference years. The analysis of planned and spent financial resources for an entire period of implementing the Strategy has been prepared through three action plans (2019-2020; 2021-2022, and 2023), and five reports on implementation of actions plans, containing activities by operative objectives.

Operative objective 1. *Establishment of permanent dialogue with data users and development of partnership*

Statistical Office signed 45 agreements in total, out of which 7 agreements were signed during the observed period 2019–2023. Aimed at the development of partnership and dialogue with statistical data users, thee were signed agreements with: University of Montenegro- Faculty of Economy; Ministry of Sport and Youth; Ministry of Science and Technological Development; Chamber of Commerce, Embassy of Turkey Trade Office in Podgorica, Roma Council and Institute for Social and Economic Analyses - ISEA.

During the observed period, bilateral cooperation with the EU member countries (Slovenia, Finland) was achieved in the process of further harmonization of official statistics with the EU standards. The cooperation continued with the international institutions (UNECE and UNICEF) toward the modernization of statistical system, ensuring necessary digital transformation, that will improve timeliness, availability, and quality of statistical data.

Operative objective 2. *Education of statisticians as data scientists*

One of key challenges for official statistics remains further development of knowledge and skills. Digitalization of society and “data revolution” open new opportunities for a development of statisticians as professional and expert staff, as data scientists that are expected to have knowledge on new theories and methods for processing “big data”. In cooperation with the University of Montenegro, students’ practice is done in that direction, but also in cooperation with Eurostat and University of Donja Gorica, the practice of EMOS students is done.

At the statistical system level, staff members participated in seminars, courses and meetings organized by Eurostat, UN, UNECE, FAO, GOPA, ICON, Energy Community, etc.

Operative objective 3. *Further harmonization and innovation of official statistics with international standards/recommendations*

Higher level of methodological harmonization of all surveys of Montenegro statistical system with the EU *acquis* in area of official statistics has been achieved. Eurostat monitors the harmonization of statistical domains in the enlargement countries with the EU *acquis* in statistics, using SMIS + (Statistical Management Information System). Additionally, the progress in area of official statistics is monitored via the progress reports at the annual level.

In the observed implementation period of Strategy, the percentage of implemented statistical surveys compared to the planned statistical surveys at the annual level is 98%. A detailed overview is given in table below.

Table 3. Number of implemented statistical surveys which are defined by Annual Plan of Official Statistics

| Official statistical producers | 2019 | | 2020 | | 2021 | | 2022 | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|-------------|---------|-------------|---------|-------------|---------|-------------|
| | Planned | Implemented | Planned | Implemented | Planned | Implemented | Planned | Implemented |
| Statistical Office | 177 | 177 | 168 | 167 | 163 | 158 | 159 | 155 |
| Other official statistical producers | 43 | 42 | 43 | 41 | 48 | 42 | 46 | 44 |

Progress report shows limited progress and moderate assessment achieved in Chapter 18. Statistics.

Bilateral cooperation with member countries continues in the process of further harmonization of official statistics with the EU standards. Additionally, the cooperation continues with international institutions toward the modernization of statistical system by ensuring necessary digital transformation that will improve timeliness, availability, and quality of statistical data.

Operative objective 4. *Creation of new data sources for the production of official statistics*

Use of new data sources requires the development of new methods in collection process, and analysing of data to guarantee the quality in line with the European Statistics Code of Practice. It implies the introduction of new techniques in data collection (CATI, CAWI, Web scraping, Web scanning, etc.) and investment in IT system. In addition to using new data sources, a special attention will be devoted to further use of data sources possessed by the state administration bodies in the production of official statistics, to provide cost effectiveness and overburden of reporting units.

Operative objective 5. *Further implementation of the Code of Quality of Official Statistics*

Quality commitment is one of European Statistics Code of Practice principles according to which: *"Statistical authorities are committed to quality. They systematically and regularly identify strengths and weaknesses to continuously improve process and output quality"*.

Accordingly, Statistical Office worked during the observed period on the implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice via the implementation of:

- User satisfaction survey;
- Statistical quality self-assessment;
- Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM);
- Quality report for users.

Operative objective 6. *Development of IT integrated system for collection, processing, publication and documenting official statistical data*

Development and improvement of process for data processing of statistical surveys are continuously done via:

- Improved IT integrated system for entering and processing of statistical data;
- Improved data exchange within reference metadata system with other producers that refer to:
 - Defining electronic questionnaire for collection of metadata from other official statistical producers, and
 - Implementation of electronic questionnaires.

Additionally, the development of IT integrated system continues through modernization and automatization of statistical releases.

Operative objective 7. Development of data dissemination and communication in line with needs of digital society

With purpose of promotion of official statistics, and respecting increased users' needs, in the observed period, Statistical Office released via the official website and social media (Twitter and LinkedIn) the official statistical data presented in table below:

Table 4. Number of disseminated official statistical data

| Dissemination of official statistical data | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | Planned for 2023 | Total |
|--|------|------|------|------|------------------|-------|
| Statistical releases (monthly, quarterly, and annual) | 233 | 223 | 179 | 179 | 170 | 984 |
| Publications | 5 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 28 |
| Infographics | | | | 16 | 40 | 56 |
| Answers to users' requests | 806 | 887 | 730 | 468 | 500 | 3 391 |

Having in mind possibilities of modern technologies when data dissemination and communication with users are considered, in the period of Strategy, communication is improved in such a manner that the official statistical data are available to different user groups. Adapting the official statistical data to different groups of users also required the development of different level of data availability. Accordingly, the broadest access to databases was conditional on the development of dynamic website of Statistical Office, which should have provided data use at the most detailed level. Additionally, new types of data publications were developed which included visualizations, animations, and in this way official statistical data were presented in understandable and simple manner.

Through the IPA 2019 assistance project supported by EU, the project 'Communication' was implemented defining the main activities for better cooperation with data users and preparation of new dissemination policy and strategy on communication.

6. Evaluation results of Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023

Analysis of achieved results of Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023 in the previous period used six standard criteria for the evaluation according to OECD's Development Assistance Committee - OECD DAC. They are: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, where Statistical Office implemented internal evaluation. A working group was established by the Decision No 01-041/23- 283/3 from 30 January 2023 whose members are staff members from the competent body unit that were not included in production and implementation of strategic document which is evaluated.

The evaluation of Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023 is done from March to June 2023 by members of the working group. The results of the evaluation will be a constituent part of the final report that will be prepared after the completed period of Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023 in accordance with Article 26 of the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System. In addition to the results of evaluated effects and level of achieved objectives for the implemented period, the final report will also comprise data on implemented activities, notes related to difficulties which appeared during the implementation, together with proposals to their overcome, and explanation for not implemented activities.

The preparation process of final report on the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023 will be coordinated by Statistical Office that will be responsible also to submit the final report to the Government of Montenegro via the General Secretariat of Montenegro. The final report on the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023 is released on the official website of Statistical Office.

Relevance

Objectives of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019 - 2023 were set well and established according to the national priorities of Montenegro in area of official statistics, including harmonization of Montenegro legislation with the EU *acquis* in area of official statistics. Analysing the relevance of Strategy's objectives, it can be concluded that a progress is achieved in the duration period of Strategy, but objectives remain still relevant, and some need to be additionally strengthened in the next period.

On the other hand, this strategy possessed characteristics of a relevant development document which was applicable, both for Statistical Office, and other official statistical producers. The Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023 represented a very important document focused on implementing the objectives of further harmonization with international standards and establishment of permanent dialogue with data users and development of partnership to create more quality environment for the development of dissemination in line with users' needs.

Relevance of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023 in area of gender equality is confirmed via broad number of users of data by which the Statistical Office informs users on the state in Montenegro regarding the gender equality. The conclusion is that the progress is achieved, but objectives remain still relevant. One of the most important instruments showing situation and position of women and men in Montenegro is gender statistics, which is in period of the duration of the strategy enhanced with the production of gender equality index. Although the progress is recorded in the area of gender statistics, the gender aspect is recognized as a priority strategic aim also in the upcoming period.

In the context of the relevance of strategic objectives, it can be pointed out that the achievement of objectives was made conditional on priority needs of users, among which the most important

one recognized in the Eurostat accession process, aimed at the harmonization with the EU official statistics compendium. Additional limitations for achieving objectives in the previous period also presented limited (human and spatial) capacities both of Statistical Office as an official producer, as well other official statistical producers.

Directions of official statistics development in the production of official statistics are also harmonized with the international directions of development within the production of Development Strategy of Official statistics 2019-2023, and later in its implementations. The implementation of the objectives was heavily dependent upon the use of pre-accession funds intended for the candidate countries, which were managed by the Statistical Office in accordance with the EU strategic orientations.

Coherence

When coherence of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019 – 2023 is considered, it can be drawn a conclusion that there is a synergy and links with other documents in area of official statistics at both national, and international level. In accordance with the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019 – 2023, the five-year Programme of Official Statistics for the period 2019-2023 was prepared, specifying defined objectives at the level of statistical domain. At the annual level, this is the Annual Plan of Official Statistics, while the Statistical Requirements Compendium is at the European level as a reference document of EU *acquis* in area of official statistics.

A significant progress has been achieved in Chapter 18. Statistics in key data transmission with the aim of reaching higher level of harmonization with the EU *acquis*.

Gender equality represents an elementary value of the European Union, and thus it permits all chapters of the negotiation process, also the Chapter 18. Statistics. Additionally, measures of this strategy address the need for more intensive inclusion of all actors in the society, in solving problems related to discrimination by gender and empowering women and persons of different gender orientations.

Synergies when the European integrations are considered are reflected in the production of Montenegro's Accession Programme to the European Union which represents a plan in terms of legislation and strategic frameworks, when obligations in negotiation chapters are considered.

Effectiveness

Effectiveness of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023 is defined as an assessment of how much the results were achieved through three action plans for the period 2019-2023 (two biannual and one annual). According to the results of the Report on Implementation of Action Plans of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023, the degree of realization of activities is directly impact the degree of realization of operative objectives.

The reasons why some activities were not timely implemented are a lack of human resources. Planned dynamics was under a high risk, having in mind that the most period of implementation of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023 was during the period of COVID pandemics.

In the mentioned period, Survey on Living Conditions and Women Safety was implemented to measure the violence against women.

Efficiency

The Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023 was implemented by using the most efficient resources available at the moment of implementing certain objectives. A great attention was given to the implementation in terms of cost-effectiveness.

When the implementation of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023 is considered, it is important to point out that it is substantially funded from the budget, but partly also through the EU donations (IPA assistance). The evaluation shows that the resources determined for the implementation of the Strategy and its action plans were sufficient. The coordination of implementing the activities of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023 was done by Statistical Office, which was done in an appropriate manner, and positively rated by the assistance programme beneficiaries. Statistical Office completed the majority of planned activities with a lack of staff. An average of implemented statistical surveys is at the level of 98%, and in this manner a mechanism for the implementation of strategy has been established. By analysing the results of the activities implemented, the conclusion is that the Strategy was efficient, and achieved significant reasons with limited human resources. Its efficiency reflects in the development of IT integrated system for collection, processing, and dissemination of official statistical data in period of COVID-19 pandemics, when the system was changed and a new segment of Montenegro's statistical system was created.

Impact

Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023 had a great impact on the satisfaction of statistical users, which is confirmed by positive assessments of carried out Statistical Office's user satisfaction surveys.

Over the duration period of Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023, two user satisfaction surveys were implemented (in 2020 and 2022), with the aim to measure the degree to which users' needs for the official statistics were met compared to the available official statistics, respecting their potential expectations. The results of the user satisfaction survey in 2022 show positive results in the improvement of total users' satisfaction. Namely, the survey shows that 73.6% of users are satisfied with the overall quality of official statistical data and statistical services provided by Statistical Office, which is an increase of 1.8% compared to the previous survey carried out in 2020. Having in mind that Statistical Office follows modern European trends and put effort

to adapt its work in compliance with the European standards, the survey's results will serve as a continued work on further improvements of overall quality of official statistics, and providing statistical services.

The implementation of Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023 is in the same time an indication of how much strategic objectives are achieved, especially in the European integration process, and starting and target values for all individual activities provide information on dynamics and level of progress in this process. Operative objectives are fully aligned with the expectations of Eurostat and they represent a result of different recommendations we have received from the European officials and which brought the progress. Users are in this manner provided with an insight in strategic orientations where fulfilling of criteria for the accession is a separate objective, and strongly pervaded through the achievement of all strategic objectives.

The position of women and men in society is described through the produced data released in the publication 'Women and Men in Montenegro', Gender Equality Index, and Survey on Living Conditions and Safety of Women.

Failure to fulfil strategic objectives or withdrawal from the activities from the analysed Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023 would lead to a stagnation in the European integration process, especially in Chapter 18. Statistics.

Sustainability

The analysis of sustainability aimed at the assessing to what degree positive results and effects achieved within the Strategy are sustainable in future. It is important to observe the sustainability risks to timely eliminate them, and ensure effectiveness of achieved results in the next period. The probability that the results will be sustainable is higher when they are harmonized with national and international standards (especially through the EU accession process), when they are defined by the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System, secondary legislation, when there is a commitment of official statistical producers, and when competences of staff in statistical units are developed, that the statistical production processes can be supported and maintained.

The results of operative objectives greatly increased possibilities for the sustainability of the system, before all due to investments and development of statistical knowledge of staff as expert and professional staff. During 2002, 184 staff from the official statistical system participated in online seminars, courses, and meetings (Eurostat and UN meetings). Organizers of these events are: Eurostat, GOPA, ICON institute, UNECE, Energy Community, FAO, etc. The continued traineeship programme, in cooperation with Eurostat and national statistical institutes - NSIs of the EU member countries, with the platform of developing new methods, new processes in collection, processing, and dissemination of data considerably impact the sustainability of official statistical system.

A conclusion can be drawn from the analysis of internal evaluation is that the relevance level of proposed activities is on a high level. Official statistical data users felt benefits of the implementation of defined activities, especially by introducing new statistical surveys from all official statistical producers. The efficiency measured by the percentage of planned statistical surveys implemented at the annual level of 98% indicates very beneficial results.

7. Strategy from perspective of gender

Respecting the Law on Gender Equality to apply Article of the mentioned Law in the planning stages, an analysis of Strategy impact on position of women and men is done.

The introduction of gender perspective in the official statistics planning process contributes to more transparent and efficient use of resources, strengthening responsibilities, promoting and improving measurability and efficiency of policies and improvement of gender equality.

To have public policies which are based on the actual situation and appropriate estimates of state and position of women and men in Montenegro, one of the most important instruments is gender statistics and gender-responsible budgeting. During the production of the Strategy, gender perspective was considered in relation to topics the official statistics deals with. When analysing the situation, the working group is especially discussed on gender dimensions of noticed problems, having in mind female and male perspective.

Statistical Office to a large extent uses the gender-sensitive language in its releases and by strategy envisages the improvement in its implementation.

Number of staff members in the competent body responsible for tasks in area of official statistics is insufficient to ensure efficient and full implementation of regulation in area of official statistics. Statistical Office is functioning under five sectors further divided in 20 sections, 3 departments and 1 service. Out of 169 working positions defined by the *Rulebook on Internal Organizations and Job Descriptions of Statistical Office*, current staff members are 96.

A lack of administrative capacities is necessary to solve through both increased number of staff members, and development of current capacities in terms of specific expert knowledge and experiences necessary for an efficient performance of tasks in area of official statistics. Herewith, this document defines the operative objective 2 "*Strengthening of official statistical system through a full implementation of planned human resources and spatial capacities*" in which there is formulated key activity 2.1 "*Strengthening expert and human capacities in all organizational units inside the official statistical system*" and 2.2 "*Improvement of digital knowledge and skills in the official statistical system via strengthening staff members in their education and further professional advancement in area of official statistics*" together with related performance indicators.

The analysis of data on women and men employed in the Statistical Office shows higher presence of women (70 or 73%) in comparison with men (26 or 27%). The analysis identifies inequality in the employment of men in Statistical Office, as well as a lack of men in certain departments and sections. This indicates higher interest of women for the tasks of official statistical production process, but also probably higher professional interest of men for other areas considered to be economic more important.

Table 5. Presence of women and men in Statistical Office

| Statistical Office | Total | In percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Women | 70 | 73% |
| Men | 26 | 27% |
| TOTAL | 96 | 100% |

In Statistical Office (Table 5), it is noticed a presence of more women (73%) in comparison with men (27%). It is necessary to take specific measures, especially during the human resources planning process, to reduce the unequal presence of women and men in Statistical Office to an appropriate level. The table 6 provides an insight in the presence of women and men in management posts in Statistical Office.

Table 6. Presence of women and men in management positions in Statistical Office

| Number of filled management posts in Statistical Office | Total | Women | Men |
|---|-------|-------|-----|
| Department for Implementation of International Statistical Projects | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Department for International Cooperation and European Integration | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Department for Dissemination, Management of Statistical Databases and Quality | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Service for General Affairs, Human Resources, and Finances | 8 | 6 | 2 |
| SECTOR OF STATISTICS, NATIONAL ACCOUNTS, AND PRICES | | | |
| Annual National Accounts Statistics Section | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| Quarterly National Accounts Statistics Section | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Government Sector National Accounts Statistics Section | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| Short-term Indicator Statistics Section | 5 | 3 | 2 |
| Price and Foreign Trade Statistics Section | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| AGRICULTURE, FISHERY, BUSINESS STATISTICS, ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTRY SECTOR | | | |
| Agriculture and Fishery Statistics Section | 5 | 4 | 1 |
| Economic Accounts in Agriculture, Forestry, and Environment Section | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Business Statistics, Foreign Affiliate Statistics, and Structural Business Statistics Section | 5 | 3 | 2 |
| Environment and Forestry Statistics Section | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| SECTOR OF SOCIAL STATISTICS AND DEMOGRAPHY | | | |
| Demography and Migration Statistics Department | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Education, Culture, and Justice Statistics Department | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| Labour Market Statistics Department | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Living Conditions Statistics and Social Services Department | 3 | 3 | 0 |

| | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Statistics of Innovation, Household Consumption, and ICT Survey Department | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| IT DATA PROCESSING SECTOR | | | |
| Information and Communication Technology Department | 7 | 6 | 1 |
| Statistical Sample Department | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| IT and Technical Support to Statistical Product Department | 6 | 1 | 5 |
| STATISTICAL DATA SOURCE COORDINATION SECTOR | | | |
| National Coordination of Statistical Data Sources Department | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Statistical Registers and Classifications Department | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Data Entry and Data Collection Department | 14 | 9 | 5 |
| TOTAL | 90 | 66 | 24 |

When the disaggregation among the decision makers in Statistical Office is considered, women are more present (4 or 67%) compared with men (2 or 33%). This indicates a gender disbalance and increased interest of women for affairs of official statistics.

Table 7. Gender disaggregation among decision makers in Statistical Office

| Decision makers in Statistical Office | Total | Women | Men |
|---|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Director | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Assistant Director of Macro-economic Statistics, National Accounts, and Prices Sector | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Assistant Director of Agriculture, Fishery, Environment, and Forestry Statistics | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Assistant director of Social Statistics and Demography Sector | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Assistant director of IT Data Processing Sector | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Assistant director of Statistical Data Sources Coordination Sector | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| TOTAL | 6 | 4 | 2 |

The Strategy comprises the gender dimension, specifically through the activities aimed at increased availability of gender statistics. Herewith, this document defines the operative objective 5 "Production of relevant, timely, and high quality of official statistics with use of innovative data sources and technologies", under which is the key activity 5.1 "Increased visibility of official statistics by introduction of modern technology tools in the data dissemination process".

Analysis of risks for gender equality was done in the preparation process of the Strategy with the aim to improve the database of official statistics that will meet the users' needs. With this purpose and in compliance with the Strategy, the Five-Year Programme of Official Statistics 2024-2028 will be prepared, which will be in details and at the annual level elaborated through the Annual Plan of Official Statistics, as well as it will comprise statistical surveys that will contribute to the improvement of gender statistics. It envisages the monitoring of phenomena by several characteristics, out of which one is gender.

Out of the total 210 planned statistical surveys defined by the Programme of Official Statistics 2024-2028, it is defined by the risk analysis that 38 or 18% of statistical surveys (from areas: population; labour market; education and lifelong learning; income and expenditure, and justice

and crime), provide the official statistical data, by which the progress can be measured in reaching the gender equality. At the annual level, the Plan of Official Statistics will define the disaggregation level of official statistical data and financial resources necessary for the implementation of statistical surveys.

In the next five-year period, the Statistical Office will continue with the improvements in the production of gender so that areas where exist the gender gap are pointed out and gender equality improved. Herewith, the Statistical Office has for the second time released the results of the survey "Gender Equality Index in Montenegro", in cooperation with the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, which measures gender equality in the EU member states through the six domains: work, money, knowledge, time, power, and health.

Gender equality index in Montenegro for 2023 is 59.3, which is an increase of 4.3 index points compared with the index from 2019. In EU-27, Gender Equality Index is 68.6. Compared to EU-27, Montenegro records lower index by 9.3 index points. Index of the main domains of gender equality indicates the highest gap in domain of money (lower value of index by 20.7 index points compared to the average of EU-27), while the lowest gap in Montenegro compared to the average EU-27 is present in domain of health (lower value of index by 0.8 index points compared to the average EU-27).

Domain **WORK** measures the position related to the equal access to employment and working conditions of women and men, and it is 70.7. Subdomain of share combines two indicators: share in employment rates with the full time equivalent (FTE), and period of work life. The value of this subdomain is 77.9. Segregation and quality of work are included in the second subdomain. Segregation is measures by a share of women and men in sectors of education, health, and social welfare, and it amounts 64.1.

Domain **MONEY** measures gender inequalities in the access of financial resources and economic situations of women and men, and it amounts 61.9. The first subdomain, financial resources, includes monthly earnings and earnings of women and men. The value of this subdomain amounts 48.2. The second subdomain, economic resources, covers the poverty risk and distribution of income among women and men, and its value amounts 79.6.

Domain **KNOWLEDGE** measures gender inequalities in educational achievements, share in lifelong education and training. The value of this domain on scale 1 to 100 is 53.4. The subdomain of educational achievements is measured with two indicators: percentage of female and male graduated students and share of women and men in formal and informal lifelong education and training. The value of this subdomain is 67.1. The second subdomain segregation has a value of 4.4, and it covers the segregation of sexes in tertiary education via the percentage of women and men among students in area of education, health, and social welfare, humanistic sciences and arts.

Domain **TIME** measures inequalities in the distribution of time spent in activities of care, household chores, and social activities. The value of this subdomain is 58.9. The first subdomain of it measures the differences in gender issues to what degree women and men are included in care and education of their children or grandchildren, elderly and dependent persons, as well as how much they participate in cooking and other household chores. The value of this subdomains is 61.7. The second subdomain of social activities explores how many women and men participate in social activities. In particular, it measures differences in gender inclusion in sport, culture or recreational activities out of home, combined with their engagement in voluntarily and charity activities. His value is 56.2.

Domain **POWER** measures the equality of genders in the positions of decision making in political, economic, and social areas, and its value amounts 44.1. The subdomain of political power examines the representativeness od women and men in national parliaments, Government, and local parliaments (53.2). Subdomain of economic power measures the gender equality in economic decision making through the share of women and men in governing boards of the largest national registered companies that are listed at stock exchange and national Central bank. The value of this subdomain on scale from 1 to 100 is 34.7. In subdomain social power, data on share of women and men in decision making in organizations that are funding researches, media, and sport, and it amounts 46.5.

Domain **HEALTH** measures the equality of genders in three aspects related to health: state of health, healthy behaviour, and access to health services. The value of this domain is 87.9. The subdomain state of health is 87.5, and it considers the differences in the life expectancy of women and men, together with years that perceive health and healthy life (which is also called healthy life expectancy). This is added with the set of factors of healthy behaviour, based on the recommendations of World Health Organizations. Herewith, the consumption of fruit and vegetables, physical activity, smoking and consuming alcohol. The value of subdomain health behaviour is 81.1. The access to health protection is measures by the percentage of persons that register unmet medical and/or dental services. The value of this subdomain is 95.9.

Additionally, since 2006 Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Statistical Office every second year release the publication "[Women and Men in Montenegro](#)". The publication "Women and Men in Montenegro" provides a short overview of state of women and men in our society. It appeared as an answer to increasing users' needs to monitor the state in society, among other things, also via statistical data presented by sex. It comprises tables and charts without additional statistical and sociological analyses, and it can serve as a data source to data users who are interested in the position of women and men, and equality of sexes in Montenegro. The data presented in this publication relate to the following areas: population, health, education, justice, employment and pensioners, policy, and family violence.

Population structure by sex indicates that there are more women (50.6%), than men (49.4%)¹ in Montenegro. According to the 2011 Census data, the youngest age population (0-5 years) has more boys (52,0%), while in the oldest population age group (65+), there is more women (56.7%). The analysis of population sex structure by age shows more men in all age groups up to 40 years of age, while more women are in older age groups.

In Montenegro, since statistics of births and deaths by sex are kept, less girls are born than boys. In 2022, there are 7 021 liveborn children, out of which there are 3 621 boys (51.6%), and 3 400 are girls (48.4%).

During 2022, at higher education institutions in Montenegro, graduated students on undergraduate studies are 2 430, which is by 11.9% less compared to the previous calendar year. Out of the total number of graduated students on undergraduate studies, female students are 60.7% (1 475), and male students 39.3% (955).

During 2022, at higher education institution in Montenegro, postgraduate studies and doctoral studies are completed by 1 294 students. Postgraduate studies are completed by 1 267 students as it follows: specialist studies 838 or 66.1%, master studies 429 or 33.9%. Out of the total number of students that completed master studies, public higher education institutions were participated by 281 or 65.5%, and private higher education institutions 148 students or 34.5%. Master studies were completed by 70.9% (304) female students, and 29.1% (125) male students. PhD diploma in 2022 was acquired by 27 persons. Out of the total number of persons with PhD, there are 63% (17) of women, and 37% (10) men.

During 2021, Statistical Office implemented the "Survey on living conditions and safety of women" which produced the data in compliance with the Eurostat's methodology on gender violence and provided with this the comparability of data on gender-based violence among the European Union member countries that had implemented the mentioned survey.

In Montenegro, one of every five women (20.2%) reported that has experienced partner violence during lifetime.

Total of 6.2% women reported that experienced non-partner violence in adulthood.

During adulthood, total of 7.5% women reported that experienced family violence, and 11.7% women experienced violence by any perpetrator.

Sexual harassment at work during lifetime, according to the statement, is experienced 17.5% women.

¹ Age structure of population by sex, 31 December 2022, in %

<https://www.monstat.org/uploads/files/demografija/procjene/2022/Procjene%20stanovnistva%20i%20osnovni%20demografski%20indikator%202022.pdf>

The survey was done in the field from October to December 2021, and the results are based on the respondents' statements. Target population of the EU-GBV survey is women aged 18 to 74 years. The sample included 2 232 households, while the filled in questionnaires were 1 609.

8. Strategic analysis of impact on environment in the phase of defining objectives

The Strategy includes the impact on environment, via strategic aim that include the production of relevant, timely and high quality of official statistics. The modernization of methods for data collection and introduction of new technologies in data collection greatly impacted the decreased run of printed forms in the observed period (2019-2023), and this contributed to the reduced negative impact on the environment.

Additionally, on the occasion of the Day of Ecological State (20 September), which was marked for the first time in 2022, as a state holiday with the working obligation, Statistical Office participated in the ecological action.

The European Commission's programme of work defines the **European Green Deal**, which will transform the EU in modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy, ensuring: (i) No net emission of greenhouses gases by 2050; (ii) Economic growth decoupled from resource use, and (iii) No person and no place left behind.

Activities under the Strategy's operative objectives will support further development of official statistics from area of environment in line with needs of European Green Deal. Further on, the European Green Deal indicates structural changes related to the needs for information, measures, and monitoring. Considering this, Statistical Office is planning to continually implement the activities aimed at the development of physical and monetary environmental accounts in the next five-year period.

First of all, it is necessary to establish the air emissions accounts based on available data sources. The plan is to implement the survey Investment in the Environment which will be a basis for the establishment of environmental accounts set. The development of economic accounts for forestry will contribute to further development of the accounts in forestry, and the accounts of biodiversity. The implementation of activities on harmonization of water statistics, and further harmonization of statistics of agriculture, forestry, transport, energy, and environment will greatly contribute to the strengthening the European Green Deal policy.

In this manner, the number of available data and indicators will increase and contribute to build broader picture on the state of environment and raising citizens' ecological awareness. Additionally, the increase of data availability is also important for policy creators in area of environment.

With purpose of producing strategic assessment of impact on environment, Statistical Office filled in *"Questionnaire for Strategic Assessment of Impact on Environment"* defined by *the Methodology of Development Policies, Drafting and Monitoring Implementation of Strategic Documents* by side of General Secretariat of the Government of Montenegro.

The results obtained by filling the questionnaire indicates that the Strategy, strategic document, harmonized with the elements of impact on the environment.

Through the general questions in the questionnaire, Statistical Office shows that it has impact on the environment with positive result.

Statistical Office has a positive impact on the results of general questions. This is measured by the fact that, by introducing new technologies in the data collection, Statistical Office greatly impacted on the reduction of print run of statistical forms in the observed period (2019-2023), and this directly contributed to the negative impact on the environment.

On other side, Statistical Office has an indirect impact on the results related to population, people's health, biodiversity, etc., by the production of official statistical data it shows the trend of phenomena that have impact on the environment. In this manner, Statistical Office is attracting the attention of public and stakeholders on questions about the impact on the environment.

The implementation of activities on the development of physical and monetary environmental accounts and harmonization of water statistics and further harmonization of statistics of agriculture, forestry, transport, energy, and environment will fully contribute to strengthening the European Green Deal. In this manner, the number of available official statistical data and indicators which will contribute to build broader picture on state in environment and raising citizens' awareness. Additionally, the increase of availability of official statistical data is also important for creators of environmental policies.

Considering questions on the harmonization with the National Strategy of Sustainable Development up to 2030, Statistical Office makes a huge contribution as an official statistical producer in reaching objectives related to ecological issues, as well as issues of environmental improvement.

STRATEGIC AND OPERATIVE OBJECTIVES WITH SUPPORTING PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES FOR MONITORING THE STRATEGY'S IMPLEMENTATION

The Strategy defines the following strategic, i.e. operative objectives which are to be achieved in the next five-year period, in addition to the measures which will be reached by the implementation.

STRATEGIC AIM

The purpose of official statistics is to provide official statistical data to all users, in accordance with the principles of official statistics, internationally and nationally defined methodology, respecting ethical and professional standards.

OPERATIVE OBJECTIVE 1.

Further improvement of institutional coordination of official statistics

KEY ACTIVITY 1.1.

❖ Strengthening the coordination inside the national statistical system

Description of activities: Coordination of national statistical system is based on the conceptual coordination as a group of processes and procedures for consolidation and improvement of official statistics inside institution and/or inside statistical system. It includes two fields, *conceptual harmonization and institutional coordination*.

Conceptual harmonization means sharing of the same definitions, national, and/or international classifications and methodologies among all institutions of the official statistical system.

Institutional coordination and management are aimed at efficient management process inside or between institutions, i.e. communication mechanisms, monitoring, and establishment of statistical processes and procedures at the system level.

The role of official statistical producer refers to the production of official statistical data from all statistical domains for the purpose of building a complete picture of economic and social life. Thus, the statistical system must represent an organized system, in which, based on law, long-term strategy, multi-annual programme and annual plan of official statistics, and other regulations by individual domains, role and concrete obligation of other official statistical producers are defined. Many countries lack a clear distinction of statistical system, and this is why Statistical Office defined criteria and mechanism for coordination of other official statistical producers in line

with the Eurostat's recommendations within the document *Guide for Defining Other Producers*. *The Law on Official statistics and Official Statistical System* explicitly defined the competence for the production of part of the official statistics, producers who are defined by the law while the five-year Programme of Official Statistics will define the competence of statistical production for other producers.

In the next five-year period, in accordance with acts and mechanisms for the coordination of other producers of official statistics Statistical Office will define institutional structure of statistical system with clearly defined competences of production of part of official statistics. The support through the active participation of other producers in the implementation of quality management will be a priority of Statistical Office in the next period, as well as (i) strengthening interinstitutional cooperation, (ii) higher visibility of official statistics data of other producers on the website of statistical system coordinator, (iii) ensuring instructions and support in form of technical assistance and training in implementation and monitoring quality in statistical processes and products of Statistical Office.

Continuous improvement of interinstitutional cooperation is of special significance for coherence and completeness of the system and implementation of standard classifications and definitions in the production of official statistical data. In this manner there will be ensured uniform and user-friendly access to official statistics.

Key holder: Statistical Office

Partners: Other official statistical producers

Performance indicator:

- ❖ Established expert team of Montenegro statistical system;
- ❖ Number of trainings hold in area of quality management for other official statistical producers aimed at strengthening cooperation through the promotion of quality management;
- ❖ Published links of other producers of official statistics aimed at the improvement of visibility of data of other producers of official statistics on the website of coordinator of statistical system, Statistical Office, in accordance with the Statistical Release Calendar.

KEY ACTIVITY 1.2.

- ❖ Strengthening of statistical system for the requirements of statistical registers and standards

Description of activities: Coordination through the implementation of standards is valid for the entire statistical system and it refers to the implementation of international and national methodological (statistical) standards in the statistical production process of Statistical Office. Standards oriented on the statistical production include classifications, terminology, and definitions, which will be used in all official statistical areas. The purpose is to ensure the same statistical terms are used for the statistical production. Activity of this measure is to establish **the**

Glossary of Statistical Terms, which will be used in the official statistical system. On this occasion, Eurostat released the ESS Quality Glossary in January 2023, which refer to the main activities of ESS in area of statistical quality. Additionally, it treats conceptual and methodological work inside the ESS, having also in consideration the current surveys and scientific publications on quality in the official statistics. The implementation of measures will also contribute to the standardization of statistical production through the implementation of GSBPM quality model, as well as standard of releasing the official statistical data. Ensuring the use of common statistical standards in the entire statistical system is an important aspect of coordination.

In addition to the implementation of new standards, it is necessary to improve the statistical registers as a framework for statistical unit selection, increased use of sample method, and increased use of administrative sources. The continuation of the initiative for determining institutional units by sectors will develop activities on the improvement of Statistical Business Registers. Defining institutional units will improve the coverage of Statistical Business Register within the meaning of the implementation of institutional sectors (variables which are obligatory according to the Regulation EU 177/2008 - 3.11. Institutional sector and sub-sector according to European System of Accounts). Development activities on the improvement of registers will also refer to the development of business demography, implementation of geospatial data (variables which are obligatory according to the Regulation EU 177/2008 - 2.11. Geographical location code), monitoring businesses of micro and small enterprises, as well as entrepreneurs, as a constituent part of the Statistical Business Register (Regulation (EC) No 295/2008 of the European parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2008 concerning structural business statistics).

Key holder: Statistical Office

Partners: Other official statistical producers; state administration bodies for affairs in area of agriculture;

Performance indicator:

- ❖ Glossary of Statistical Terms defined;
- ❖ Institutional units by sectors defined aimed at the improvement of Statistical Business Register;
- ❖ Number of new variables introduced in the Statistical Business Register, in compliance with the Regulation (EU) 2019/2152;
- ❖ Census of enterprises with georeferenced addresses-location of enterprises implemented in line with the development of address register;
- ❖ New version of Statistical classification of economic activity NACE Rev. 2.1 implemented;
- ❖ Further improvement of Statistical Register of Agricultural Holdings through the cooperation with the state administration bodies competent for the affairs in area of agriculture;
- ❖ Competence of register of units of classifications defined in line with the provisions of special laws governing this activity;
- ❖ Further improvement of register of spatial units with Cadastre and State Property Administration and with local self-government units.

KEY ACTIVITY 1.3.

❖ To improve the cooperation with data providers/reporting units

Description of activities: Strengthening coordination, communication, and dialogue through institutional and conceptual frameworks will be one of priorities for more quality access to data, by reporting units, and from administrative sources. The recommendations of international statistical organizations is an increased use of administrative data sources for statistical purposes, but also to note the use of reporting method when data are collected which should be improved by technological innovations in domain of official statistics. The improvement of methods for data collection for statistical purposes by use of reporting method considers the standardization of data collection activities by using new technologies and tools that make more efficient collection. Activities in this domain will be on the introduction of data collection by CATI method (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) and improvement of existing methods of data collection (CAPI and CAWI). IT improvements with reporting units through the modernization of data collection. The mentioned activities on the modernization of data collection will improve efficiency, increase quality, and reduce overburden of reporting units.

Statistical Office is a user of administrative data source, but for the use for statistical purposes there are necessary additional consultations with bodies and organizations that manage administrative data sources. It is important to note that administrative data are collected for administrative sources of public sector, but not necessary for the production of official statistics. Additionally, administrative data are an excellent source of data for the production of official statistics and should be used whenever possible. Statistical and methodological coordination in the exchange of administrative data and introduction of new variables for statistical purposes would reduce the costs of data collection, as well as overburden of reporting units. Mapping inside the institution by sectors will provide an overview of administrative data source connections inside the institution, and avoid by this the double job, statisticians and respondents' burden, and make simpler data integration from different sources.

Progress in the IT technology and increased computer capacities enable the official statistical producers to overcome many limitations previously related with big administrative data sets. The implementation of new progress methods for data connection makes possible better use of administrative data in the official statistics production. This, it is possible to replace the existing methods of data collection, update of statistical survey data, and creation of new statistical products. The implementation of this objective will reflect through the implementation of UN and Eurostat's recommendations for the use of administrative data for the production of official statistics, and it refers to the improvement of cooperation with bodies and organizations that manage administrative data sources as well as implementation of instructions for statistical and methodological coordination.

Key holder: Statistical Office

Partners: Other official statistical producers

Performance indicator:

- ❖ "Analyses of existing and potential administrative data sources for the production of official statistics" completed;
- ❖ Number of surveys which will use the CAPI and CAWI method of data collection.

OPERATIVE OBJECTIVE 2.

Strengthening the official statistical system through the full implementation of planned human resources and spatial capacities

KEY ACTIVITY 2.1.

- ❖ Strengthening expert and human resources in all organizational units inside the official statistical system

Description of activities: Monitoring and implementation of national and international legislation in area of official statistics requires increase and permanent development of human capacities. The current number of staff members is not sufficient for the fulfilment of all regular obligations, but also obligation resulting from the European integration process. Having in mind the fast-changing needs of users, as well as increasing need for data, lack of expert and staff capacities represent the risk of statistical production sustainability.

Having in mind increasing requirements, the question asked in every organization is how to respond to the changes and ensure an effective work of staff directed to the implementation of strategic and operative objectives. Respecting globalization and modernization of society and processes, as well as fast increasing challenges for the official statistics, the focus must stay on the level of knowledge and skills of statisticians, as expert and professional staff. Based on the official statistics results, the most important economic, but also everyday decisions on micro and macro level are made in all spheres of society. Thus, it is expected from the statisticians to have knowledge of methods and skills which are necessary for the production of quality statistics.

Amendments to the *Rulebook on International Organization and Job Description* will define the planning of staff members to compensate the lack of staff, especially inside organizational units for the quality management, monitoring national and international indicators, dissemination and public relations, strengthening human resources and artificial intelligence.

Key holder: Statistical Office

Partner: Ministry of Finance

Result: Amended Rulebook on Internal Organization and Job Description of Statistical Office with strengthening human capacities especially inside units in area of quality management, monitoring

national and international indicators, dissemination, and public relations, human resources and artificial intelligence.

KEY ACTIVITY 2.2.

❖ Improvement of digital knowledge and skills in the official statistical system through empowering of staff in their education and further career development in area of official statistics

Description of activities: Production of official statistics has a long tradition which is based on well-established statistical knowledges, practices, and methods. By respecting them, the official statistics create human resources in line with knowledge and skills which are necessary for the production of official statistics. But, today, with the modernization of process, in addition to the well-established practices and methods, there are new instruments and tools used in the official statistics, and require new knowledge and skills. For strengthening competences of human resources, Statistical Office will in the next period prepare ***Multiannual programme of trainings for acquiring statistical knowledge and skills***, which would be implemented with the support of scientific community and Eurostat.

Multiannual programme of trainings for acquiring statistical knowledge and skills will be in detail elaborated through annual plan for the implementation of trainings for: users, newly employed staff, interviewers, as well as acquiring key communication and public speaking skills of staff members. Trainings will be done so that IT staff becomes ready to use new digital transformation and gain knowledge from area of graphical design and acquiring communication and public speaking skills of staff members.

- ***Plan for organization of trainings for users***, comprising activities on informing the public on availability and importance of use of official statistics data;
- ***Plan and implementation of trainings for staff, with special focus on newly employed staff***, comprising activities for expert trainings, and trainings from domain statistics, as well as trainings about legislative and institutional framework, assistance and management of statistical processes tasks. Expected results will also refer to the improvement of knowledge and skills of production, processing, and dissemination of official statistics with use of new digital technologies, as well as communication and public appearance skills of staff members;
- ***Plan of trainings for interviewers' network***, comprising activities for improvement of knowledge and skills in the data collection process by using digital technology, and
- ***Plan of trainings for IT staff*** for the use of new digital transformation.

In this manner, the competences for system and target trainings of human resources will be developed inside and outside the statistical system. When preparing programme and plan, methods of learning which are important in the official statistical system: (i) *learning provided by*

foreign experts through the ESTP courses; (ii) use of 'in-house' trainings, (iii) webinars; (iv) team or group learning (domain trainings with the upgrade of horizontal knowledge and skills), as well as traineeship programme in cooperation with Eurostat and national statistical institutes of the EU in area of official statistics. Improvement of expert and specialist knowledge for certain statistical areas, especially in terms of become familiar with the standards of UN and EU international documents, implementation of initial and continuous trainings, strengthening analytical capacities, raising expert capabilities of staff in using new information and communication technologies, improvement of foreign language skills are priorities of official statistics in the next period. Additionally, aimed at further improvements and development of professional statisticians, special attention and assistance will be devoted to staff members which would be directed in their career development to the domain of official statistics and completed (*European Master of Official Statistics (EMOS)*), doctoral studies in domain of official statistics with the focus on the development of new methods, new sources and processes in collection, processing, and releasing official statistics data.

Key holder: Statistical Office

Partners: Other official statistical producers and scientific community

Performance indicator: Document '*Multiannual programme of trainings for acquiring statistical knowledge and skills*' produced (plan and implementation of trainings for: users, newly employed staff, interviewers, as well as acquiring key communication and public appearance skills of staff members, IT staff for use of new digital transformation, as well as for acquiring knowledge from the area of graphical design and acquiring key communication and public appearance skills of staff).

KEY ACTIVITY 2.3.

❖ Creating conditions for Statistical Office to receive an appropriate business premises

Description of activities: Functioning of statistical system requires space, equipment, as well as human and financial resources. Working premises, computer equipment, and spaces for communication between staff members, official statistics producers and user contribute both efficiencies, but also staff and user satisfaction.

Having in mind the quality principles of official statistics production defined by the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System, and the European Statistics Code of Practice, for NSIs and statistical institutions of the EU, principle 5 is especially pointed out: *confidentiality of statistical data*. This principle mentions that Statistical Office must provide that 'the necessary regulatory, administrative, and organizational measures are in place to protect security and integrity of statistical data'. To meet this principle, Statistical Office must meet criteria related to the creation of safe working environment, especially premises with limited access to the data, controlled access and movement throughout the institution, respecting special information and technological

criteria related to storage and archiving of statistical data, are just some of requests necessary to be fulfilled ensuring that official statistics are produced and disseminated respecting the principle of confidentiality and that the confidence in official statistics is ensured.

It can be said that one of key tasks of official statistics is to ensure qualitative and safe working environment. This activity will be done in the next period through two options: (i) considering appropriate business premises for accommodating requested number of Statistical Office's staff members and to meet all IT requirements related to the confidentiality principles or (ii) building of new business premises that will meet all long-term requirements of Statistical Office related to ensuring appropriate and safe business premises.

Ensuring appropriate resources and premises makes possible national and international obligations to be fulfilled.

Key holder: Statistical Office

Partner: Ministry of Finance

Performance indicator: Ensured appropriate business premises of Statistical Office.

OPERATIVE OBJECTIVE 3.

Continuation of harmonization with EU standards and recommendations of international institutions, and cooperation in area of official statistics.

KEY ACTIVITY 3.1.

❖ Further use of international and national methodological (statistical) standards

Description of activities: EU *acquis* in area of official statistics comprises legal acts directly applicable in the member countries, such as regulation of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe and decision and decree of the European Commission. The EU *acquis* in official statistics also comprises a number of methodological guides and instructions for different statistical areas, such as agriculture, economic and social statistics. International treaties and international standards, such as The European Statistics Code of Practice ensures further basis for statistical production. Further implementation of international and national methodological statistical standards is a measure to be followed by the official statistical producers also in the next five-year period. Respecting the dynamics of the EU integration process, the fulfilment of preconditions for closing benchmarks of Chapter 18. Statistics, and along with this, closing negotiations for area of official statistics, is planned for the next five-year period. By updating information on the level of fulfilment of EU *acquis* in the negotiating Chapter 18. Statistics toward the defined negotiation position, there will be created conditions for the preparation of the document which will provide an overview of the state by the Eurostat's Statistical Requirements

Compendium, through a detailed overview by all decisions and regulations of the European Commission in area of official statistics.

Further development of statistical registers, as a framework for the selection of statistical units, wider use of sample method and increased use of administrative data sources will make possible a cost-effective use of existing structure and implementation of statistical surveys, as well as reduced burden of reporting units and overall costs of statistical production. In this process, it is necessary to use a positive practice of the EU official statistics, development of cooperation with international organizations and official statistical producers from other countries, concluding contracts and treaties on international cooperation, together with the obligation of respecting and use of international standards.

Other improvements related to the modernization and use of IT solutions in collection and processing data.

Statistical Office regularly and actively takes part on behalf of Montenegro statistical system in the work of UN Statistical Commission and fulfils obligations related to the membership, as well as statistical initiatives of UNECE, IMF and EU, by which contributes to the international reputation of Montenegro and promotion of Montenegro statistical system. Results of the participation in national and international working bodies will reflect through the improvement of standardization of process and ensuring data comparability.

Key holder: Statistical Office

Partners: Other official statistical producers

Performance indicator:

- ❖ Updated information on the level of fulfilment of EU *acquis* within the negotiating Chapter 18. Statistics compared to the defined negotiating position;
- ❖ Updating national methodology for statistical surveys according to the best international practice;
- ❖ Intensifying participation in national and international working bodies directed to the development of official statistics.

KEY ACTIVITY 3.2.

- ❖ Intensifying activities aimed at the fulfilment of negotiation closing benchmarks of Chapter 18. Statistics

Description of activities: A priority of Statistical Office is the stability of legislative framework which is harmonized with the international standards. Today, Statistical Office has built stable legislative and institutional framework upgrading with dividing competences between official statistical producers. Statistical Office, Central Bank of Montenegro, and Ministry of Finance have a key role of official statistical producers.

By opening the Chapter 18. Statistics, there started activities on creating conditions for the implementation of ESA 2010 methodology in government finance statistics. In March 2015, the Government of Montenegro adopted the Strategy for Implementation of ESA 2010 Methodology in Government Finance Statistics, whose aim is to create a methodologically comparable statistical framework, increase credibility and transparency of government finance and more comprehensive overview of government finance results. In January 2022, the Government of Montenegro adopted the Information on Implementation of ESA 2010 Methodology in Government Finance Statistics of Montenegro proposing a number of measures by which legislative and other institutional preconditions will be met, and administrative capacities of Statistical Office will be improved.

Proposing measures and activities in area of implementation of ESA 2010 methodology are to be done by Statistical Office, Central Bank of Montenegro, and Ministry of Finance (every institution under its competence, respectively). In future period, pursuant to adopted legislative acts and secondary legislation, it is necessary to develop coordination and cooperation between institutions which under their competence collect and release macroeconomic statistics in the implementation of ESA 2010 methodology. After determining the state-of-art, in line with the updated information on the compliance level with the EU *acquis* in the negotiation Chapter 18. Statistics, compared to the defined negotiating position, it is necessary to make a roadmap for meeting those identified as uncompleted. The purpose of this document to create a plan of further fulfilment of obligation in Chapter 18. Statistics, with a special accent on closing benchmarks.

Key holder: Statistical Office, Central Bank of Montenegro, and Ministry of Finance

Partners: Other official statistical producers

Performance indicator: Defined roadmap for fulfilment of the remain obligations of negotiating process in Chapter 18. Statistics, with a special accent on closing benchmarks.

KEY ACTIVITY 3.3.

❖ Increased availability of Montenegro official statistical data in Eurostat and UN databases

Description of activities: Results of official statistics as the final product of statistical production, are a basis for the comparison with other countries. The focus of official statistical producers will be directed to the introduction of new statistical surveys of direct interest for data users, and of general interest at national or European level.

As a starting point for planning statistical surveys, the official statistics producers use documents used in the process of monitoring the compliance: (i) The Eurostat's annual report on the compliance of Montenegro statistical system with the EU *acquis* in area of official statistics; (ii) European Statistical Programme 2021 - 2027; and (iii) European Statistical Compendium.

European Statistical Compendium and SMIS + (statistical management information system) are two important 'tools' which are used in the monitoring process of compliance, based on which the reports on compliance of official statistics with the European statistics are produced. These

reports are important input for Chapter 18. Statistics, but also for progress report produced by the European commission each year.

National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Montenegro up to 2030 (NSSD) defines principles, strategic objectives and measures for reaching long-term sustainable development of Montenegro society, having in mind the existing state and accepted international obligations, with a priority of UN Sustainable Development Agenda up to 2030. NSSD is an umbrella, horizontal and long-term development strategy of Montenegro which refer not only to economy and environment, but also to unreplaced human resources as a precious social capital.

Statistical Office will implement statistical surveys that will contribute to the production of input for compiling indicators on sustainable development from UN and EU list under competence of Statistical Office, which will meet the needs for global reporting (at the UN level), as well as at the level of regional reporting EU and UNECE region.

For individual statistical areas/surveys, the cooperation will be also developed with other UN agencies: UNICEF, UNDP, UNODC, UNPFA, etc.

Key holder: Statistical Office

Partners: Other official statistical producers

Performance indicator:

- ❖ Planning statistical surveys based on needs of international and national users;
- ❖ Education of staff for compilation and dissemination of national and international indicators under competence of Statistical Office;
- ❖ Production of indicators for the needs of fulfilment of international obligations and reporting at EU and UN level under competence of Statistical Office;
- ❖ Number of new surveys in the official statistical system that meet the needs of international and national users.

OPERATIVE OBJECTIVE 4.

Digital transformation of statistical production with improvement of IT security

KEY ACTIVITY 4.1.

- ❖ Developing analysis of existing infrastructure of Statistical Office for digitalization and digital transformation process

Description of activities: A special place in the Montenegro statistical system are information and technological tools. The official statistics system is in the planning phase of new methods and approaches for data collection, processing, and dissemination which are based on modern technologies and tools. This represents a digital transformation which considers overall changes

in the entire official statistics system, which will result in a completely new manner of delivering statistical services.

This development requires an appropriate information and technological infrastructure. This activity requires significant financial resources, but is one of key objectives of official statistics, which refers to digital transformation of official statistics.

The statistical system cannot function without modern computer equipment, such as servers, network working stations, laptops and/or tablets, as well as printers. All equipment must be connected to the local network which requires an appropriate software. Statistical system needs not only hardware, but also different software tools, such as operative systems, software databases, including a new website of Statistical Office and many applications for different production processes.

Software also needs to contain the protection against virus, thus Statistical Office for the security reasons, must implement standard protocols for the data exchange. The main condition of official statistics is confidence and approval of the public. To keep the confidence and trust of reporting units, official statistics producers must keep strictly account of data confidentiality and protection for purposes of official statistics. Cooperation with reporting units and their trust are a condition for the access to data for statistical purposes. Better organization and control of statistical processes by introducing modern technology, especially by using IT tools in the production process is must have in the future period.

Users' needs pointed out the necessity of transformation and modernization of the Montenegro official statistical system, also indicated by [The 2022 Statistical Office's Report on User Satisfaction Survey](#). The recommendations note the need for using potentials of new technologies for statistical purposes. All computer equipment, i.e. hardware, as well as software, must be regularly updated. This is the reason why is necessary to define the '*Road Map of Digital Transformation of Statistical Office*', which will comprise the analysis of existing infrastructure at the statistical system level with the assessment of digital readiness of Statistical Office. The road map of digital transformation is a list of measures with shortly described projects, by priorities in terms of their implementation.

Key holder: Statistical Office

Partners: Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Public Administration

Performance indicator:

- ❖ Analysis of digital readiness of Statistical Office;
- ❖ Defining "*Roadmaps of digital transformation of Statistical Office*".

KEY ACTIVITY 4.2.

- ❖ Creating technical plan for establishment of communication between Statistical Office and administrative sources via Government Service Bus (GSB) and its Technical Implementation

Description of activities: Improvement of services provided by bodies starts with the improvement of internal communication between state bodies and Statistical Office, as an institution which is the coordinator of official statistical system. The establishment of formal cooperation and connecting administrative data holders/registers and Statistical Office provide an opportunity for the establishment of data 'flow', from the place of data origin to the Statistical Office that needs these data for the statistical purposes. In the previous period, the issue of establishment of Government Service Bus (GSB) – data exchange between state bodies and state administration bodies - was started with the aim of creating better conditions for the work of efficient public administration, and of eliminating barriers for further development of electronic government in Montenegro. Government Service Bus (GSB) for electronic data exchange has been developed under the Ministry of Public Administration with the aim to enable simpler and more automatized data exchange between institutions – i.e. data registers they manage – where the legal basis for this exchange exists².

A smooth data flow between relevant registers is the most important factor for increasing the efficiency of Statistical Office, reducing statistical production costs and reporting units' burden.

Drafting a technical plan for establishment of communication/interoperability between Statistical Office and administrative sources over GSB means an analysis of business processes and technical challenges linked with data exchange and information systems via GSB.

The technical plan will consider four dimensions of interoperability (i) legal; (ii) organizational (iii) semantic³, and (iv) technical, and will provide particular, timely limited interventions under the operative aim.

Key holder: Statistical Office

Partners: Bodies and organizations that manage administrative data sources

Performance indicator:

- ❖ Technical plan produced for establishment of communication between Statistical Office and bodies and organizations holding administrative data sources;
- ❖ Conditions for improvement of Statistical Office's digital readiness fulfilled.

KEY ACTIVITY 4.3.

- ❖ Establishment of eDMS – exchange of documents under the Statistical Office's system for electronic management of documents

Description of activities: improvement of business processes by gradual change from paper to electronic type of managing documents (eDMS) is a process that will be managed by the Statistical Office in the next period. The system provides faster exchange of information, reduction of paper

² Legal basis for the exchange of data between base registers via GSB is contained in Article 19 of the Law on Electronic Government (Official Gazette of Montenegro No 72/19), entered into force on 3 June 2020.

³ Semantics (Greek word 'semantikos', that gives signs, important, symptomatic, from sem - sign) refers to the aspect of meaning expressed in language, code or some other type of representation.

documents, and more safety in document archiving. Electronic manner of managing documents enables accurately defined document flow from the starting of entering in the system, their processing by users, possibility of electronic signature to their archiving, which means that the system follows the entire 'life cycle' of documents from their creation to their archiving. The main objective of the document management system is to reduce the costs of processing documents with its efficient work and that in every moment requested information can be found.

Procedure with electronic documents in office management of public administration bodies is regulated by Decree on Office Management of Public administration Bodies (Official Gazette of Montenegro No 47/19). The Decree is followed by the Instructions on Manner of Performing Office Management (Official Gazette of Montenegro No 59/19) that closely regulates the manner of performing office management in public administration bodies.

The system of electronic management of documents in Montenegro was established in 2011, when its implementation started. In cooperation with the Ministry of Public Administration, Statistical Office will work in the next period on establishment and smooth flow of eDMS which also covers the training for the Statistical Office's staff.

Technical analysis which will be prepared by Statistical Office in cooperation with the Ministry of Public Administration will show strengths and weaknesses of implementing the system for electronic management of documents (eDMS).

Key holder: Statistical Office

Partners: Ministry of Public Administration

Result: The eDMS system established in the Statistical Office.

KEY ACTIVITY 4.4.

❖ Developing policy of cybersecurity of the Statistical Office

Description of activities: Cybersecurity, as a group of technologies, processes and practices designed to protect networks, devices, programmes, and data against attacks, damages or unauthorized access, will be one of key activities of the Statistical Office in area of IT security.

The adoption of the document "*Cybersecurity Policy in the Statistical Office*" will include, in addition to the IT security, also activities related to the harmonization of legislative framework with the *General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)*, as well as establishment of the protection system of critic information infrastructure.

The production of official statistics is a complex process which requires safe statistical infrastructure. This infrastructure covers a physical space of the Statistical Office, IT infrastructure, expert statistical staff that manages computer systems, data, and software systems used for

storage and processing data. This is why the Statistical Office must take necessary measures to ensure that the production of official statistics is sustainable even in case of any critical situation.

Since Statistical Office possesses confidential and personal data, the security is considered very serious and professional, not only digital, but also through physical access to building and related infrastructure. In addition to the legislation provisions which define confidentiality and protection of data for the needs of official statistics, the Government of Montenegro adopted the *Rulebook on Storage of Statistical Data (Official Gazette of Montenegro No 47/12)*, by which manner, time, technical conditions, and organizations of storage of statistical data is regulated for the purpose of preventing their destroying, disposing or unauthorized use.

Accelerated development of IT technology, needs for work from home in the time of COVID pandemics led to not covering many weak points of **cybersecurity**. Cyber-attacks are more often and constantly created and new ways are used to discover 'weak points' of IT infrastructure. Private companies and public sector are under cyber-attacks.

IT data processing sector in the Statistical Office follows trends in area of IT security and takes measures aimed at the protection of information infrastructure and statistical data. In terms of existing real danger against cyber-attacks and aimed at the protection of information system against accidental, negligent or intentional loss of data, a need for drafting the policy of cybersecurity appeared.

This policy will be aligned with the Law on Designating and Protection of Critical Infrastructure (Official Gazette of Montenegro No 72/19) and the Strategy of Cybersecurity 2022-2026.

Key holder: Statistical Office

Partners: Ministry of Public Administration

Performance indicator: Policy of security in the Statistical Office created.

OPERATIVE OBJECTIVE 5.

Production of relevant, timely, and high quality of official statistics with use of innovative data sources and technologies

KEY ACTIVITY 5.1.

- ❖ Increasing visibility of official statistics by introduction of modern technology tools in the data dissemination process, as well as by introducing digital skills of staff for visualization of official statistical data.

Description of activities:

Under the impact of globalization and trends of modernization of society and processes, the official statistics is faced with the challenges of appeared phenomena with whom can be only

faced if it possesses expert and professional staff in which is constantly invested, with the aim of building modern and sustainable statistical community. Methodologists, IT experts, and highly trained statisticians, experts for statistical domains, and administrative staff make the basis of statistical system that follows modern digital development. Furthermore, needs of modern society result in profiling a statistical steward with knowledge and skills in all areas and processes of official statistics.

It is expected from modern official statistics to meet national and international requirements for production and dissemination of official statistics, in line with the newest data visualization.

For a number of years, Statistical Office provides the access to the official statistics results via the official website. The official statistics results are available in PDF and Excel format, as datasets that can be downloaded.

Statistical Office is lacking a dynamic website for the dissemination of official statistical data which requires the creation of new modern official website or redesign of existing website, improvement of digital skills of employees for the visualization of official statistical data and improvement of digital communication channels.

Redesign of official website of Statistical Office should include simplifying of its use, glossary, improved way of data presentation with more dynamic databases containing all historic data in one place with a possibility of presenting the data by categories. When redesigning the website, it should be considered positive experiences of the EU member countries.

Additional impact of society and processes modernization trends is an explosion of social media. The presence in social media enables two-way communication with users, fast answers, and preparation of reaction in case of crisis communication. A permanent online presence of public/users creates a new reality which is a serious challenge in the institutions of public sector. Communication via social media requires a constant presence, reacting almost in real time and readiness for a continuous two-way communication. This situation is a challenge for the Statistical Office because of:

- Lack of working position for a job of digital communication in the job description plan;
- Not defined digital communication in internal acts on operations;
- Not set procedures for digital communication and management;
- Present focus on one-way communication with users;
- Insufficiently developed capacities of staff members for crisis communication.

Disaggregation of official statistical data by sex, whenever it is possible, is one of future activities official statistical producers, because all social, as well as social and economic statistics should present men and women as a compulsory part. In this manner the current gender gap will be decreased in all sectors and fulfilled legal obligation defined by the Law on Gender Equality.

A high level of digital skills, together with constant empowerment of staff in the official statistical system and investment in their knowledge is the only way for the improvement of visualization of official statistical data.

Key holder: Statistical Office

Partners: Other official statistical producers

Performance indicator:

- ❖ New redesigned official website of Statistical Office;
- ❖ Active dissemination of official statistical data in three social media platforms (Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram);
- ❖ Calendar of important dates created and its celebration by publication of infographics and short contents;
- ❖ Number of released statistical videos;
- ❖ Updated the Statistical Office's mobile application;
- ❖ Redesign of the Statistical Office's logo;
- ❖ Number of available datasets on the "Open Data Portal".

KEY ACTIVITY 5.2.

- ❖ Raising awareness on availability and importance of official statistical data

Description of activities: Statistical literacy is an ability to understand, interpret and assess data, as well as an ability to find and correctly use of statistical data. The task of official statistics is to make official statistics results accessible for all users who will know how to interpret them in an accurate manner. The official statistical data are of serious importance for the entire society and represent a main input for decision makers when creating policies. In a modern society, the official statistical system should use more communication advantages as a key instrument for empowerment and improvement of user confidence, as well to transfer the importance of official statistics for the entire society.

Strategic aim of official statistics is the availability of quality, comparable, and timely official statistical results for all users under equal conditions. Production and dissemination of quality, comparable, and timely official statistical data ensure the availability on an impartial basis for all users. In cooperation with other producers, Statistical Office continuously implements the alignment with the EU requirements in terms of statistical data availability, shortened release deadlines and harmonization of methodologies with the EU *acquis* in area of official statistics.

The work in the Statistical Office requires specific statistical knowledge and skills that are acquired during longer time period. In modern society, the communication represents a key instrument for empowerment and improvement of users' confidence as well as transferring the importance of official statistics for the entire society.

Satisfaction of users and further work on the improvement of dissemination of official statistics are key areas for future development of official statistics. Regular implementation of the *Statistical Office's User Satisfaction Survey* measures the level of users' needs for the official statistical data are met in comparison with available official statistics. Since the users' needs are the most important for further development of statistical system, activities must be directed on meeting these needs which is succeeded by joint cooperation between users and producers of official statistics and building of quality relationship with users. A quality relationship is accomplished by increased scope and quality of services, together with organization of trainings that will be provided to them.

Improvement of official statistical data dissemination and relationship with users is manifested in the implementation of numerous development activities and projects aimed at the popularization of official statistics. The use of the newest methods for increasing an effective communication with journalists and public, as well as visualization of official statistical data and presenting messages to public will aim at increasing transparency and confidence in the Montenegro official statistical system.

Continuous communication with the official statistics data users builds confidence, inform public and assist the statistical system in meeting the users' needs. Aimed at the implementation of this aim and to get closer to the public, the Statistical Office will organize lectures, seminars and trainings for data users, scientific community, media representatives to promote the role of statistical system and develop awareness on the official statistical data as a reliable data source.

Efficient communication with the public, in addition that assists the Statistical Office to provide wider public better knowledge on the official statistical system, also assist in understanding the expectations of stakeholder, i.e. users.

Key holder: Statistical Office

Partners: Other official statistical producers

Performance indicator:

- ❖ Four-year '*Strategy of Dissemination and Communication of Statistical Office 2025-2028*';
- ❖ Continuous education of users (number of organized lectures and seminar for: data users, scientific community, media representatives, etc.).

KEY ACTIVITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF OPERATIVE OBJECTIVES

1. OPERATIVE OBJECTIVE – Further improvement of institutional coordination of official statistics

KEY ACTIVITY 1.1 Strengthening coordination inside national statistical system.

Performance indicator 1.1.1 Visibility of other official statistical producers.

Starting value: Increased visibility of other official statistical producers for 5%;

Transitional value: Increased visibility of other official statistical producers for 20%;

Target value: Increased visibility of other official statistical producers for 50%.

KEY ACTIVITY 1.2 Strengthening statistical system for the needs of improvement of statistical registers and standards

Performance indicator 1.2.1 Implementation of international standards in statistical registers.

Starting value: Implemented international standards in statistical registers 10%;

Transitional value: Implemented international standards in statistical registers 30%;

Target value: Implemented international standards in statistical registers 50%.

KEY ACTIVITY 1.3 Improve the cooperation with data providers/reporting units.

Performance indicator 1.3.1 Number of collected variables from administrative data sources.

Starting value: Increased number of collected variables from administrative data sources for 3% in surveys which use administrative data source;

Transitional value: Increased number of collected variables from administrative data sources for 5% in surveys which use administrative data source;

Target value: Increased number of collected variables from administrative data sources for 10% in surveys which use administrative data source.

2. OPERATIVE OBJECTIVE – Strengthening official statistical system through the full implementation of planned human resources and spatial capacities.

KEY ACTIVITY 2.1 Strengthening expert and staff capacities in all organizational units inside the official statistical system.

Performance indicator 2.1.1 Number of staff members in the Statistical Office.

Starting value: 96 staff members out of the total 169 defined by the Rulebook on Internal Organization and Job Descriptions of Statistical Office;

Transitional value: 107 staff members out of the total 169 defined by the Rulebook on Internal Organization and Job Descriptions of Statistical Office;

Target value: 117 staff members out of the total 169 defined by the Rulebook on Internal Organization and Job Descriptions of Statistical Office.

KEY ACTIVITY 2.2 Improvement of digital knowledge and skills in the official statistical system through the empowerment of staff members in their education and further carrier advancement in area of official statistics.

Performance indicator 2.2.1 Multi-annual training programme for acquiring statistical knowledge and skills.

Starting value: Not defined Multi-annual training programme for acquiring statistical knowledge and skills;

Transitional value: Created training programme for acquiring statistical knowledge and skills;

Target value: Implementation of the training programme for acquiring statistical knowledge and skills.

KEY ACTIVITY 2.3 Ensuring conditions for Statistical Office to receive an appropriate business premises.

Performance indicator 2.3.1 Appropriate business premises of Statistical Office.

Starting value: Not provided appropriate business premises of Statistical Office;

Transitional value: Provided appropriate business premises of Statistical Office;

Target value: Provided appropriate business premises of Statistical Office, and continuous creation of quality working environment.

3. OPERATIVE OBJECTIVE – Continued harmonization with the EU standards and recommendations of international institutions and cooperation in area of official statistics

KEY ACTIVITY 3.1 Further implementation of international and national methodological (statistical) standards.

Performance indicator 3.1.1 Harmonization of legislation with the EU *acquis*.

Starting value: Implemented activities that contribute to the harmonization of legislation with the EU *acquis* in area of official statistics at the level of 60%;

Transitional value: Implemented activities that contribute to the harmonization of legislation with the EU *acquis* in area of official statistics at the level of 80%;

Target value: Implemented activities that contribute the harmonization of legislation with the EU *acquis* in area of official statistics at the level of 86%.

KEY ACTIVITY 3.2 Intensifying activities aimed at the fulfilment of negotiation closing benchmarks in Chapter 18. Statistics.

Performance indicator 3.2.1 Fulfilment of negotiation closing benchmarks in Chapter 18. Statistics.

Starting value: Opened Chapter 18. Statistics;

Transitional value: fulfilment of negotiation closing benchmarks in Chapter 18. Statistics 80%;

Target value: fulfilment of negotiation closing benchmarks in Chapter 18. Statistics 98%.

KEY ACTIVITY 3.3 Increased availability of Montenegro official statistical data in Eurostat and UN databases.

Performance indicator 3.3.1 Increased availability of Montenegro official statistical data in Eurostat and UN databases.

Starting value: Available official statistical data at the level of 60%;

Transitional value: Available official statistical data at the level of 70%;

Target value: Available official statistical data at the level of 80%.

4. OPERATIVE OBJECTIVE- Digital transformation of statistical production with improvement of IT security

KEY ACTIVITY 4.1 Developing analysis of existing infrastructure of Statistical Office for digitalization and digital transformation process.

Performance indicator 4.1.1 Digitalization and digital transformation.

Starting value: Low level;

Transitional value: Satisfying level;

Target value: High level.

KEY ACTIVITY 4.2 Drafting technical plan, communication defined between Statistical Office and administrative sources through the Government Service Bus (GSB), and its technical implementation.

Performance indicator 4.2.1 Drafting and implementation of technical plan, communication defined between Statistical Office and administrative sources via Government Service Bus (GSB).

Starting value: A lack of technical plan;

Transitional value: Technical plan defined;

Target value: Technical implementation.

KEY ACTIVITY 4.3 Establishment of eDMS – exchange of documents under the Statistical Office's system for electronic management of data.

Performance indicator 4.3.1 Overview of establishment of eDMS - electronic management data system.

Starting value: eDMS system not established;

Transitional value: eDMS system established;

Target value: eDMS system is continuously managed.

KEY ACTIVITY 4.4. Production of the *Statistical Office's Cyber Security Policy*.

Performance indicator 4.4.1. the *Statistical Office's Cyber Security Policy*.

Starting value: A lack of the *Statistical Office's Cyber Security Policy*.

Transitional value: *Statistical Office's Cyber Security Policy* produced, and guidelines for cyber security in the Statistical Office defined;

Target value: Continuous development of cyber security in the Statistical Office.

5. OPERATIVE OBJECTIVE – Production of relevant, timely and high quality official statistics along with the use of innovative data sources and technologies

KEY ACTIVITY 5.1 Increased visibility of official statistics by introduction of modern technology tools in the data dissemination process, as well as by introduction of digital skills of staff working on the visualization of official statistical data.

Performance indicator 5.1.1. Overview of progress in using digital skills for the visualization of official statistical data.

Starting value: Moderate progress;

Transitional value: Achieved progress;

Target value: Significant progress.

KEY ACTIVITY 5.2 Increased awareness on availability and importance of official statistical data.

Performance indicator 5.2.1. Promotion of official statistical data.

Starting value: Defining the *Strategy of Dissemination and Communication of Statistical Office*;

Transitional value: 50% of implemented activities defined by the *Strategy of Dissemination and Communication of Statistical Office*”;

Target value: 100% of implemented activities defined by *of Dissemination and Communication of Statistical Office*.

MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION

A key phase for the successful implementation of the Strategy is the monitoring of the implementation, reporting on the implementation results, as well as evaluation of Strategy's implementation.

In accordance with the *methodology for creating policies, drafting and monitoring the implementation of strategic documents*, the Strategy defines the plan of monitoring, reporting, and evaluation. Accordingly, the table 8 presented a plan for the implementation of the Strategy.

Table 8. Implementation plan of Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2024–2028 by years

| Year | Activities | Monitoring of activities |
|----------|---|--|
| IVQ 2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoption of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2024-2028, with the Action Plan for 2024 and 2025. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> System of communication, monitoring, and evaluation established. |
| 2024 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring the implementation of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2019-2023. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication with stakeholders in the implementation of activities. |
| 2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of Implementation of Action Plan of Development Strategy of Official Statistics 20204-2028 (for 2024) Action plan for 2026 and 2027. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on Implementation of Action Plan of Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2024-2028 (for 2024). |
| 2026 | Monitoring of Implementation of Action Plan of Development Strategy of Official Statistics 20204-2028 (for 2025). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on Implementation of Action Plan of Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2024 – 2028 (for 2025). |
| 2027 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2024-2028 (for 2026), and starting the evaluation process; Action Plan for 2028. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on the Implementation of the Action Plan of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics for 2024-2028 (for 2026). |
| 2028 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoption of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2029-2033, with the Action Plan 2029 and 2030; Monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2024-2028 (for 2027), and final evaluation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on the Implementation of the Action Plan of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics for 2024-2028 (for 2027); Ex-post evaluation of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2024-2028. |
| IQ 2029 | Monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2024-2028 (for 2027), and final evaluation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final report on the implementation of the Development Strategy of Official Statistics 2024 - 2028. |

Source: Statistical Office

Monitoring will ensure regular collection and analysis of data on reaching objectives and results during the implementation of activities. More detailed, it will be focused on the action plan and implementation of annual activities envisaged by the plan. The report on monitoring the implementation of activities will be primarily engaged with result indicators with a view to the performance indicators.

Monitoring the implementation of the Strategy and dynamics of planned activities is under competence of Statistical Office. The Strategy defines institutions (Statistical Office, other official statistical producers, Ministry of Public Administration, and state government bodies for the affairs in area of agriculture) competent for the implementation of activities defined by the Action Plan.

Implementation of the Strategy will be done through three action plans, out of which the first one refers to 2024 and 2025; the second one to 2026 and 2027, and third one for 2028. Action plans will comprise an overview of activities required for the achievement of operative objectives, as well as holders of activities, and partners respectively, implementation deadlines, performance indicators, as well as amount of resources, and way of funding.

Other official statistical producers (key institutions), competent for the implementation of activities from the Strategy, must submit to the Statistical Office the data on the level of implemented activities in area of official statistical for the previous year during the Strategy's implementation within 45 days after the end of the year envisaged for the implementation of the Action Plan. They will report the Statistical Office with all necessary data requested by the Statistical Office in the next five-year period, as the coordinator of the statistical system for the process of developing the official statistics.

Pursuant to Article 26 of the *Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System* (Official Gazette of Montenegro No 18/12 i 47/19), and in cooperation with other official statistical producers, Statistical Office is preparing the report on implementation of the official statistics annual plan in the first quarter of the current year, which precedes the preparation of the report on implementation of action plan.

Statistical Office is responsible to compile data, prepare annual reports on the implementation of action plan, and send them to the Government of Montenegro for the adoption. The reports on the implementation of action plan will be prepared in compliance with the *Methodology for Development of Policies, Production, and Monitoring of Implementation of Strategic Documents*, and will serve for identification of possible obstacles in the implementation of activities, and giving recommendations to remove these obstacles. After the adoption at the session of the Government of Montenegro, if needed, Statistical Office will perform the update of the action

plan not later than the end of April of the current year. The reports will be also released at the official website of the Statistical Office.

After the expiry period of the strategic document, Statistical Office will submit the final report on the implementation of subject Strategy to the General Secretariat of the Government of Montenegro for the opinion, and will comprise the analysis of implementation, with a special focus on the achievement of indicators, recommendations, conclusions, as well as guidelines for setting the strategic framework for the next period.

Aimed at determining relevance and fulfilment of objectives, efficiency of development, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the Strategy, in line with the *Methodology for Development of Policies, Production, and Monitoring of Implementation of Strategic Documents*, an evaluation of the strategic document is planned. For the monitoring of implementation of the Strategy, there will be primarily analysed values of performance indicators, national statistical data, satisfaction of users with statistical services and data, as well as available data contained in the international reports. The structure of this report is specific because the final report comprises, in addition to the compulsory elements valid for the structure of annual report, also evaluation of implementation of strategic document.

Final evaluation will be done at the end of the implementation period to assess effects and impact of the Strategy with the starting analysis of the situation for the adoption of the next strategic document. It will be used an *internal type of evaluation, ex-post* (performed after the implementation of strategic document), done by civil servants of units inside the Statistical Office who were not included in production and implementation of the Strategy. Work of experts, civil servants will be defined by the establishment of Working Groups which will represent a key body for the evaluation of the Strategy. The evaluation will focus primarily on achievements of objectives and performance indicators, and the report will be submitted to the Government of Montenegro via the General Secretariat of the Government of Montenegro.

The principle of transparency has been respected by the implementation of public discussion, which considers that during the preparation of strategic document to implement the procedure of consultations with bodies, organizations and users of official statistical data in the starting phase of its preparation, as well as organization of public discussion on the text of the strategic document draft. A public discussion on the strategy draft was held in period from 11 August 2023 to 31 August 2023.

COMMUNICATION

For a successful implementation of strategic document, it is necessary an efficient system of communication with professional and general public with the aim to create necessary instruments for monitoring the implementation of operative objectives and assessment of achieved effects during all years of implementation of the Strategy.

Statistical Office will use available mechanisms defined by the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System and Dissemination Policy to ensure a complete understanding and acceptance of operative objective at all implementation levels.

With purpose of monitoring the implementation of the objectives defined by this strategy, data on the activities implemented and results achieved during the implementation will be continuously collected and analysed. Regular reporting will mainly refer to the implementation of specific activities, deadlines, fulfilment of indicators defined by the Action Plan, and indirectly to monitoring of the assessment of objectives (strategic and operative).

Regular reporting on monitoring the implementation of the Strategy will be done after the end of every calendar year under the period which refer to the Action Plan. The annual report will sum up achieved results and given proposals for possible improvements during the implementation of the Strategy. Having in mind that an initial Action plan envisages a two-year period of implementation, it is possible, if some activities are implemented late due to objective reasons, that they can be implemented (fully or with certain modifications) in the next period during the implementation of the Strategy, and in line with the revised Action Plan which will include proposals given in the annual report.

With this purpose, reports on the implementation of the actions plans, together with the final report on the implementation will be released on the website of Statistical Office, as previously, under Annual reports on work and the Development Strategy of Official Statistics, as well as on the website of the Government of Montenegro.

The process of communication between key actors inside the official statistical system, scientific community, and public in general of strategic importance, especially having in mind role and importance of official statistics for all users of statistical data. Statistical Office, through regular sessions of the Council of Statistical System (whose primary role of improvement of statistical culture, knowledge, and care of users' needs), examine proposals to the annual reports and other issues of importance for the functioning of the official statistical system.

In addition to the Council of Statistical System, the process of communication between key actors inside the official statistical system are done via regular sessions of the working group of Chapter 18. Statistics.

A necessary condition for quality and substantial communication aimed at the implementation of operative objectives is defining and regular implementation of planned communication activities. Herewith, Statistical Office is preparing a document "*Concept of Development of Dissemination and Communication*" which serves as a support in communicating main messages, informing public and creation of partnership defined in relevant strategic documents: Programme of Official Statistics and Development Strategy of Official Statistics. The purpose of this document is to make more available results and services of official statistics, improve statistical literacy of users, and importance of official statistics on one side, and on other side to improve understanding of users' needs, improve statistical data and services, using new technologies.

Production of document "*Concept of Development of Dissemination and Communication*" defines communication plan, clear communication process, communication adapted to specific target group, clear system which indicates who communicates, what is its role in the existing hierarchy of institution, established cooperation with media agencies, media and journalists, NGO, associations of citizens, business sector.

Regular communication is necessary for exchange of good practices in the implementation of operative objectives, agreement on future directions of work, assessment of successfulness of performed activities, and to estimate possibilities for the improvement in some area.

Having in mind best practices, the process of communication will be based on providing relevant and useful information through an active dissemination of official statistical results on the official website of Statistical Office, as well as via three social media platforms (Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn).

Statistical Office will regularly implement the two-year *user satisfaction* survey, with the aim to measure the level of users' satisfaction with the official statistical data compared with the available official statistics, meeting their potential expectations.

Aimed at the improved communication activities, there is defined the fifth operative objective "*Production of relevant, timely, and high quality of official statistics with use of innovative data sources and technologies*" under which key activity 5.1 "*Increased visibility of official statistics by introduction of modern tools of modern technologies in the data dissemination process, as well as by improvement of digital skills of employees for the visualization of official statistical data*" is

formulated, together with corresponding indicators which refer: redesign of official website of Statistical Office, update of the Statistical Office's mobile application, etc.

FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK

Funding of Statistical Office, and with this the implementation of the Strategy, is defined by Article 18 Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System (Official Gazette of Montenegro No 18/12 and 47/19).

Funding of strategic aim, operative objectives, and activities defined in the development of official statistics 2024-2028 depends on the Law on Budget of Montenegro and donations, which will be envisaged by the annual action plans.

Financial framework will be defined via action plans during the implementation of strategic document.

For implementation of action plan for 2024 and 2025, the proposed financial framework is:

Table 9. Financial framework for 2024 and 2025 in EUR

| Financial framework | | 2024 | | 2025 | |
|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|
| | | Amount | % | Amount | % |
| 1. | National budget | 11 071 534.56 | 95.74 | 3 356 919.92 | 87.87 |
| 2. | Donor programme | 493 229.29 | 4.26 | 463 422.63 | 12.13 |
| TOTAL | | 11 564 763.85 | 100.00 | 3 820 342.55 | 100.00 |

Observed by strategic aims, the most resources are allocated for the implementation of operative objective 3. *Continued harmonization with the EU standards and recommendations of international institutions and cooperation in area of official statistics*, total in 2024 is 11 300 795.27€. and in 2025 is 3 756 823.97€. We would like to point out that this operative objective comprises funds planned for the implementation of the Census of Population, Households, and Dwellings, and Census of Agriculture.

Table 10. Financial framework of operative objectives for 2024 and 2025 in EUR

| Financial framework | | 2024 | | 2025 | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|
| | | Amount | % | Amount | % |
| 1. | OPERATIVE OBJECTIVE 1 | 223 968.58 | 1.94 | 23 518.58 | 0.62 |
| 2. | OPERATIVE OBJECTIVE 2 | - | - | - | - |
| 3. | OPERATIVE OBJECTIVE 3 | 11 300 795.27 | 97.72 | 3 756 823.97 | 98.34 |
| 4. | OPERATIVE OBJECTIVE 4 | - | - | - | - |
| 5. | OPERATIVE OBJECTIVE 5 | 40 000.00 | 0.35 | 40 000.00 | 1.05 |
| TOTAL | | 11 564 763.85 | 100.00 | 3 820 342.55 | 100.00 |

ACTION PLAN WITH COSTS ESTIMATE FOR 2024 AND 2025

| STRATEGIC AIM | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|------------------|--|---|--|
| The purpose of official statistics is to provide all users with the official statistical data produced in line with the principles of official statistics, defined by national and international methodology, respecting ethical and professional standards. | | | | | | |
| <u>Operative objective 1.</u> | | | | | | |
| Further improvement of institutional coordination of official statistics | | | | | | |
| Performance indicator | Starting value 2024 | Target value at the middle of implemented strategic document 2026 | | Target value at the end of implemented strategic document 2028 | | |
| 1.1.1 Visibility of other official statistical producers | Increased visibility of other official statistical producers by 5% | Increased visibility of other official statistical producers by 20% | | Increased visibility of other official statistical producers by 50% | | |
| 1.1.2 Use of international standards in statistical registers | International standards implemented in statistical registers 10% | International standards implemented in statistical registers 30% | | International standards implemented in statistical registers 50% | | |
| 1.1.3 Number of variables collected from administrative data sources | Increased number of variables collected from administrative data sources by 3% in surveys using administrative data source | Increased number of variables collected from administrative data sources by 5% in surveys that use administrative data source | | Increased number of variables collected od administrative data sources by 10% in surveys that use administrative data source | | |
| Activities that impact the implementation of operative objective 1 | Performance indicator | Competent institution | Start date | Planned finalization date | Resources planned for implementation Activities | Source of funding |
| 1.1.1. Established “ <i>expert team of statistical system of Montenegro</i> ”. | Decision on established professional team | Statistical Office | III quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2024 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme “National statistics” |
| 1.1.2. Number of performed trainings in area of quality management for other official statistical producers aimed at strengthening cooperation through the promotion of quality management. | Number of performed trainings | Official statistical producers | I quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | 2024 23 518.58 € | Project ‘Quality Management’ under IPA 2019 and IPA 2022 |
| | | | | | 2025 23 518.58 € | |
| 1.1.3. Number of published releases aimed at improved visibility of results of other official statistical producers at the website of coordinator of statistical system, Statistical Office, pursuant to the Statistical Release Calendar. | Number of published releases | Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme “National statistics” |

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| 1.2.1. Defined "Glossary of statistical terms". | Document "Glossary of statistical terms" | Statistical Office | IV quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 1.2.2. Defined institutional units by sector aimed at the improvement of statistical business register. | Defined institutional units | Statistical Office | IV quarter 2024 | I quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 1.2.3. Implemented new version of "Statistical classification of economic activity of NACE Rev. 2.1". | Implemented new classification | Statistical Office | II quarter 2025 | III quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 1.2.4. Further improvement of the statistical register of agricultural holdings through the cooperation with public administration bodies for affairs in area of agriculture. | Number of reporting units used from administrative sources aimed at reducing overburden | Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 1.2.5. Further improvement of the statistical register of spatial units in cooperation with Cadastre and State Property Office and local self-government units. | Implemented amendments in settlements pursuant to Decisions of local self-government units; work on grid statistics | Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 1.2.6. Preparation activities for the implementation of the census of enterprises with georeferencing address/location of enterprise in line with the development of address register. | Implemented census of enterprises | Statistical Office | I quarter 2025 | IV quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 1.2.7. Number of introduced new variables in the "Statistical Business Register" in line with the Regulation (EU) No 2019/2152. | Number of new variables | Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | II quarter 2024 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 1.2.8. Defined competence of "Unit of Classification Register" pursuant to the legislative provisions. | Defined competence in line with legislative provisions | Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | II quarter 2024 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 1.3.1 produced and continuously updated "Analysis of existing and potential administrative data sources for production of official statistics". | Analysis in form of document | Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | I quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 1.3.2. Number of surveys that will use CAPI and CAWI method for data collection. | Number of surveys with CAPI and CAWI | Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2024 | 2024 200 450.00 € | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |

Operative objective 2.**Strengthening the official statistical system through the full implementation of planned human resources and spatial capacities**

| Performance indicator | Starting value 2024 | Target value at the middle of implemented strategic document 2026 | Target value at the end of implemented strategic document 2028 | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---------------------------|--|--|
| 2.1 Number of staff members in the Statistical Office | 96 staff members out of 169 defined by the Rulebook on International Organization and Job Descriptions of Statistical Office | 107 staff members out of 169 defined by the Rulebook on Internal Organization and Job Description of Statistical Office | 117 staff members out of 169 defined by the Rulebook on Internal Organization and Job Description of Statistical Office | | | |
| 2.2. Multi-year programme of trainings for acquiring statistical knowledge and skills | Not defined "Multi-Annual Training Programme for Gaining Statistical Knowledge and Skills" | Training programme created for gaining statistical knowledge and skills | Implementation of the training programme for gaining statistical knowledge and skills | | | |
| 2.3. Appropriate business premises of Statistical Office | Appropriate business premises for Statistical Office not provided | Appropriate business premises for Statistical Office provided | Appropriate business premises of Statistical Office provided and continuous creation of quality working environment | | | |
| Activities that impact the implementation of operative objective 2. | Performance indicator | Competent institution | Start date | Planned Finalization date | Resources planned for implementation of activities | Source of funding |
| 2.1.1. Amended Rulebook on Internal Organization and Job Description of Statistical Office with the strengthening of human resources inside units in area of quality management, monitoring national and international indicators, dissemination, and public relation, human resources and artificial intelligence. | The Rulebook on Internal Organization and Job Description adopted | Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 2.2.1. Document 'Multi-Annual Training Programme for Gaining Statistical Knowledge and Skills' (plan and implementation of trainings for: users, newly employed staff, interviewers, as well as gaining key skills of communication and public appearance of staff, IT staff for use of new digital transformation and graphic design). | Programme in form of document | Statistical Office | II quarter 2024 | I quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 2.3.1. Appropriate business premises for Statistical Office provided. | Appropriate business premises of Statistical Office provided | Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |

Operative objective 3.

| Continued harmonization with the EU standards and recommendations of international institutions and cooperation in area of official statistics | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|----------------------------------|---|--|
| Performance indicator | Starting value 2024 | | Target value at the middle of implemented strategic document 2026 | | Target value at the end of implemented strategic document 2028 | |
| 3.1. Harmonization of legislation with the EU <i>acquis</i> | Implemented activities which contribute to the harmonization of legislation with EU <i>acquis</i> in area of official statistics at the level of 60% | | Implemented activities that contribute to the harmonization of legislation with the EU <i>acquis</i> in area of official statistics at the level of 80% | | Implemented activities that contribute to the harmonization of legislation with the EU <i>acquis</i> in area of official statistics at the level of 98% | |
| 3.2. Fulfilment of benchmarks of negotiating Chapter 18. Statistics | Fulfilled activities that contribute to the implementation of closing benchmarks that contribute to the implementation of closing benchmarks in Chapter 18. Statistics 50% | | Implemented activities that contribute to the implementation of closing benchmarks of Chapter 18. Statistics 80% | | Fulfilled activities that contribute to the implementation of closing benchmarks of Chapter 18. Statistics 98% | |
| 3.3. Availability of official statistical data of Montenegro within Eurostat and UN databases | Available official statistical data at the level of 60% | | Available official statistical data at the level of 70% | | Available official statistical data at the level of 80% | |
| Activities that impact the implementation of operative objective 3. | Indicator | Competent institution | Start date | Planned Finalization date | Resources planned for implementation of activities | Source of funding |
| 3.1.1. Updated information on the level of compliance with the EU <i>acquis</i> in the negotiation Chapter 18. Statistics compared to the defined negotiation position. | Information in form of document | Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | I quarter 2024 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 3.1.2 Amendment to the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System | Adopting proposal to the Law on Official Statistics and Official Statistical System | Ministry of Finance, Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | II quarter 2024 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 3.1.3 Education of staff and strengthening human resources of Statistical Office for the government finance statistics | Number of trainings performed | Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | II quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics"; donor support, IPA, technical assistance of Eurostat |
| 3.1.4. Updating national methodologies for statistical surveys in line with the best international practice. | Number of updated national methodologies | Official statistical producers | II quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | 2024 182 104.30€ | Through IPA 2019 and IPA 2022 project under which the implementation of the project is envisaged: Statistics of international trade of |

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|---|--|--------------------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| | | | | | <p>2025 182 104.30€</p> | <p>services - ITSS; Harmonized index of consumer price - HICP/HPI; Statistics of prices - PPP; Short-term business statistics - STS; ESSPROS; Environmental accounts; Waste statistics; Metadata and the Census of Population.</p> |
| 3.1.5. Intensifying participation in national and international working bodies directed to the development of official statistics. | Number of trainings performed | Official statistical producers | I quarter 2024. | IV quarter 2025. | <p>2024. 278.539, 27€</p> | <p>Regular budget resources Programme "National Statistics" and through IPA 2019 and IPA 2022 project</p> |
| | | | | | <p>2025. 293.818, 33€</p> | |
| 3.2.1 Defined roadmap for fulfilment of the rest of obligations within the negotiation process in Chapter 18. Statistics, with a special accent on closing benchmarks | Roadmap in form of document | Official statistical producers | II quarter 2024 | III quarter 2024 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme „National statistics“ |
| 3.3.1. Planning of surveys based on international and national users' needs | Number of new statistical surveys | Official statistical producers | I quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | <p>2024 335 066.66€</p> | <p>Regular budget resources Co-funding of Multiple Cluster Survey - MICS 7; Donor support through IPA 2019 and IPA 2022; Donor support by side of UNICEF for the project "The Fourth National Communication and the First Biennial Transparency Report of Montenegro regarding the UN Convention of Climate Change - FNC/BTR"</p> |
| | | | | | <p>2025. 23 000.00€</p> | |
| 3.3.2. Education of staff for compilation and dissemination of national and international indicators under competence of Statistical Office. | Number of trainings performed | Statistical Office | III quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 3.3.3. Production of indicators for needs of fulfilling international obligations and reporting at the EU and UN level under competence of Statistical Office. | Number of produced indicators under competence of Statistical Office | Official statistical producers | I quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | <p>2024 10 463 835.04€</p> | <p>Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics". This item of the financial framework contains the resources for implementation of the Census of Population, Households, and Dwellings, as well as the Census of Agriculture.</p> |
| | | | | | <p>2025 3 216 651.34</p> | |
| 3.3.4 Number of new surveys in the official statistical system that meet needs of international and national users. | Number of new statistical surveys in the official statistical system | Official statistical producers | I quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | <p>2024 41 250.00€</p> | <p>Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics"</p> |
| | | | | | <p>2025 41 250.00€</p> | |

| Operative objective 4. | | | | | | |
|---|--|-----------------------|--|---------------------------|--|--|
| Digital transformation of statistical production with improvements of IT security | | | | | | |
| Performance indicator | Starting value 2024 | | Target value at the middle of implemented strategic document 2026 | | Target value at the end of implemented strategic document 2028 | |
| 4.1. Digitalization and digital transformations | Low level | | Satisfying level | | High level | |
| 4.2. Production and implementation of technical plan for establishment of communication between Statistical Office and administrative sources over Government Service Bus (GSB) | Lack of technical plan | | Technical plan defined | | Technical implementation | |
| 4.3. Overview of establishment of eDMS system for electronic management of document | Unestablished eDMS system | | Established eDMS system | | eDMS system is continuously kept | |
| 4.4. Policies of cyber security of Statistical Office | Lack of "Policy of cyber security in the Statistical Office" | | Policy of cyber security in the Statistical Office produced, and guidelines for cyber security in the Statistical Office defined | | Continuous development of cyber security In the Statistical Office | |
| Activities that impact the implementation of operative objective 4. | Indicator | Competent institution | Start date | Planned Finalization date | Resources planned for implementation Activities | Source of funding |
| 4.1.1. Analysis of digital readiness of Statistical Office. | Analysis in form of document | Statistical Office | III quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 4.1.2. Defining „Roadmaps of digital transformation of Statistical Office“. | Roadmap in form of document | Statistical Office | III quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 4.2.1. Technical plan produced on the establishment of communication between Statistical Office and bodies and organizations that manage administrative data sources. | Technical plan in form of document | Statistical Office | III quarter 2024 | III quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Program „National statistics“ |
| Operative objective 5. | | | | | | |
| Production of relevant, timely, and high quality of official statistics with use of innovative data sources and technologies | | | | | | |
| Performance indicator | Starting value 2024 | | Target value at the middle of implemented strategic document 2026 | | Target value at the end of implemented strategic document 2028 | |

| 5.1. Overview of progress in use of digital skills for the visualization of official statistical data | Limited progress | | Progress achieved | | Significant progress | |
|---|---|-----------------------|---|---------------------------|--|--|
| 5.2. Promotion of official statistical results | Defining <i>Strategy of Dissemination and Communication of Statistical Office</i> | | 50% implemented activities which are defined by the Strategy of Dissemination and Communication of Statistical Office | | 100% implemented activities which are defined by the Strategy of Dissemination and Communication of Statistical Office | |
| Activities that impact the implementation of operative objective 5 | Indicator | Competent institution | Start date | Planned Finalization date | Resources planned for implementation Activities | Source of funding |
| 5.1.1. New redesigned official website of Statistical Office | New website of Statistical Office | Statistical Office | I quarter 2025 | IV quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 5.1.2 Active dissemination of official statistical data on three social media platforms (Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram) | Number of released official statistical data on social media | Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | I quarter 2025 | 2024 25.000, 00€ | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| | | | | | 2025 25.000, 00€ | |
| 5.1.3. Established the Calendar of Important Dates and celebration of important dates by releasing infographics and short information | The Calendar in form of document | Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 5.1.4. Number of released statistical video contents | Number of video contents | Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 5.1.5. Updated mobile application of Statistical Office | User satisfaction rate with the mobile application | Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |

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| 5.1.6. Redesign of logotype of Statistical Office | New logotype of Statistical Office | Statistical Office | I quarter 2025 | IV quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 5.1.7. Number of available datasets on "Open data Portal" | Number of transmitted datasets | Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| 5.2.1. Four-year Strategy of Dissemination and Communication of Statistical Office 2025-2028 | Strategy in form of document | Statistical Office | I quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2024 | Current resources | Regular budget resources Programme „National statistics“ |
| 5.2.2. Continuous education of users (number of organized lectures and seminars for: data users, scientific community, media representatives, etc.) | Number of organized lectures | Official statistical producers | I quarter 2024 | IV quarter 2025 | 2024 15 000.00 € | Regular budget resources Programme "National statistics" |
| | | | | | 2025 15 000.00 € | |