



Republic of North Macedonia
State Statistical Office



STRATEGIC PLAN

2024 - 2026

Skopje, January 2024

The Strategic Plan for development of the State Statistical Office for the period 2024-2026 represents a framework in which the Office defines its main priorities, goals and development programmes aimed at integration into the European statistical system, strengthening the institutional environment and statistical infrastructure, developing strategic partnerships and quality management. At the same time, the Strategic Plan contains measures and activities that serve to achieve the strategic goals and priorities of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia.



Achieving the established priorities and goals requires great commitment, expertise, engagement, and adequate financial and human resources. The development, production and dissemination of accurate, objective and quality statistical data should be the commitment of all stakeholders in the statistical system, in order for users to have information for timely and quality business planning and decision making.

With this Strategic Plan, the State Statistical Office confirms its commitment to be a worthy coordinator of the national statistical system and main producer of official statistics, supporting within its competences the objectives of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Apostol Simovski

Director

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The basic document regulating the strategic priorities of the State Statistical Office from 2024 to 2026 is the Strategic Plan of the State Statistical Office, 2024 - 2026. The implementation of the defined programmes and sub-programmes should ensure:

- Meeting the obligations of the State Statistical Office defined in the Programme of Statistical Surveys, 2023 - 2027 and
- Accomplishing the strategic priorities of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia related to the EU integration of the Republic of North Macedonia, i.e. meeting the obligations of the National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA).

The Strategic Plan has been prepared in full compliance with the Law on State Statistics and the Five-Year Programme of Statistical Surveys 2023-2027.

In addition, the Strategic Plan takes into consideration the relevant documents from the European Commission defining the strategic priorities of the European Statistical System and used for monitoring the progress of the State Statistical Office, as well as the recommendations of the European Commission's Peer Review on the implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice, and of the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat) from the regular annual missions to the State Statistical Office for assessing the progress in the field of statistics, and the recommendations from the European Commission's Annual Progress Report, Chapter 18 - Statistics regarding the compliance with EU Standards.

1.2. ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION IN THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE

1.2.1. STARTING BASIS

The State Statistical Office is an independent and professional organisation that, on the basis of scientific methods and knowledge, provides users with data on the economy, demography, social life, environmental protection and other areas. Official statistical data, presented in various forms of dissemination, are protected from any kind of influence, and all users have equal access.

The State Statistical Office is responsible for producing official statistics in the Republic of North Macedonia and, at the same time, is a coordinator of the statistical system in the Republic of North Macedonia.

The State Statistical Office is responsible for the coordination of international cooperation in statistics. International statistical cooperation refers to the application of international statistical norms and standards in the statistical system of the Republic of North Macedonia and the dissemination of statistical data on the country to European and international statistical and other organisations.

1.2.2. ANALYSIS OF THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The competences and scope of work of the State Statistical Office are regulated by the Law on Organisation and Operation of the State Administration Bodies ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 58/00, 44/02, 82/08, 167/10 and 51/11; "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 96/19 and 110/19) and the Law on State Statistics ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 54/97, 21/07, 51/11, 104/13, 42/14, 192/15, 27/16,

83/18 and 220/18; "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 31/20). The main bylaw which determines the statistical surveys conducted in a five-year period is the Programme of Statistical Surveys 2023-2027.

1.2.3. RESOURCE ANALYSIS

1.2.3.1. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The State Statistical Office is financed from the budget of the Republic of North Macedonia, Programme 10 - Administration and Programme 20 - Statistical Surveys. Substantial additional finances are provided through IPA funds and other donors (SIDA, etc.).

1.2.3.2. HUMAN RESOURCES

The State Statistical Office, as at 31.12.2023, employs a total of 228 administrative officers, of which 197 with tertiary education, 1 with higher vocational education and 30 with secondary education.

The table below shows the number of employees by educational attainment and sex.

Employed administrative officers in the SSO as at 31.12.2023											
Position	Tertiary education		Higher vocational education		Secondary education		Primary education		TOTAL		Total employees in the Office
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	
Managerial	8	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	23	31
Non-managerial	60	106	1	0	13	17	0	0	74	123	197
Total	68	129	1	0	13	17	0	0	82	146	228

1.2.4. PESTLE ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, TECHNOLOGICAL, LEGAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

From the aspect of the political factors that have an impact on the functioning of the State Statistical Office, the most important are:

- the strategic priorities and goals of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia and
- the conclusions of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia to be implemented by the State Statistical Office

Major economic factors are:

- the level of funds provided from the budget of the Republic of North Macedonia, which are necessary for carrying out the activities of the SSO and

- ensuring funds from foreign donors without which some of the activities the Office could not be carried out

The most significant social factors are:

- perception of data providers and users of statistical data about the State Statistical Office and
- informing the public about the results of the work of the Office and the authorised bodies

The most important technological factors are:

- the Office is completely dependent on the progress of IT and other technologies in the country and the world and their implementation in the activities of the Office (production of statistical data, etc.)

From the aspect of legal factors, the following are the most important:

- general laws and bylaws and
- implementation of EU legislation (regulations and directives) in the statistical legislation of the Republic of North Macedonia

The most important environmental factor is:

- the obligation of the Office for environmental protection

Political factors	Economic factors	Social factors	Technological factors	Legal factors	Environmental factors
Strategic priorities and goals of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia	Funds provided from the budget of the Republic of North Macedonia, which are necessary for carrying out the activities of the SSO	Perception of data providers and users of statistical data about the State Statistical Office	The Office is completely dependent on the progress of IT and other technologies in the country and the world and their implementation in the activities of the Office (production of statistical data, etc.)	General laws and bylaws	The obligation of the Office for environmental protection

Political factors	Economic factors	Social factors	Technological factors	Legal factors	Environmental factors
Conclusions of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia to be implemented by the State Statistical Office	Ensuring funds from foreign donors without which some of the activities the Office could not be carried out	Informing the public about the results of the work of the Office and the authorised bodies		Implementation of EU legislation (regulations and directives) in the statistical legislation of the Republic of North Macedonia	

1.2.5. SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) is an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities that reveals the impact of external and internal factors on the work of the State Statistical Office.

The strengths of the State Statistical Office are:

- commitment of the management of the Office for accomplishment of the strategic objectives of the Government for membership of the Republic of North Macedonia in the EU
- established organisational structure and operating model in accordance with EU best practices and
- staff awareness and dedication to the need for aligning the Macedonian statistical system with the EU and international obligations

The major weaknesses are:

- being unable to fill job vacancies in a timely manner
- insufficient balance of obligations and resources in the institution
- low flexibility, i.e. inability to quickly adapt to changes (organisational, IT modernisation, introduction of new tools and work methods, etc.)

The opportunities for improving the position of the Office are:

- inclusion of Chapter 18 - Statistics in the first cluster in the negotiation process
- greater need for statistical data as support in the negotiation process for all other chapters
- strengthening the corporate identity of the institution as a professional and independent institution

- efficient use of statistical data by the Government and government bodies in creating various policies

Threats:

- skilled employees leaving
- being unable to provide funds to continuously upgrade the hardware and software in the institution
- failure to achieve sustainability of expert and technical support from EU donors

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - commitment of the management of the Office for accomplishment of the strategic objectives of the Government for membership of the Republic of North Macedonia in the EU - established organisational structure and operating model in accordance with EU best practices - staff awareness and dedication to the need for aligning the Macedonian statistical system with the EU and international obligations 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being unable to fill job vacancies in a timely manner - insufficient balance of obligations and resources in the institution - low flexibility, i.e. inability to quickly adapt to changes (organisational, IT modernisation, introduction of new tools and work methods, etc.)
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - inclusion of Chapter 18 - Statistics in the first cluster in the negotiation process - greater need for statistical data as support in the negotiation process for all other chapters - strengthening the corporate identity of the institution as a professional and independent institution - efficient use of statistical data by the Government and government bodies in creating various policies 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - skilled employees leaving - being unable to provide funds to continuously upgrade the hardware and software in the institution - failure to achieve sustainability of expert and technical support from EU donors

1.3. MISSION

The State Statistical Office produces and disseminates official statistical data on the Macedonian economy and society as a basis for the process of decision making based on relevant information.

1.4. VISION

Our vision is to be recognised as a professional and efficient institution that provides high-quality and internationally comparable statistics in line with user needs.

1.5. VALUES

The values of the State Statistical Office are:

- Professional independence
- Competence and professionalism
- Impartiality and objectivity
- Commitment to quality
- User orientation
- Statistical confidentiality
- Continuous professional development of employees.

1.6. TASKS AND DUTIES OF THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE

The Office, within its competences, performs the following expert activities:

- coordinates the activities of state statistics within the national statistical system;
- prepares and prescribes instruments for statistical surveys (methodologies, guidelines, forms, code lists, etc.);
- gives opinion to authorised bodies regarding the methodological bases for surveys under their competence;
- gives suggestions and opinions when introducing new and supplementing the existing data sets that can be used as a source of data for official statistics;
- gives initiatives and suggestions for improving the contents of existing and new data sets that are used for statistical surveys in accordance with the law and the Programme of Statistical Surveys 2023-2027;
- cooperates with authorised bodies which, within their competences, conduct statistical surveys in the area of official statistics;
- establishes, keeps and maintains statistical data sets;
- prepares national statistical standards;
- determines the needs for statistical data;
- prescribes organisational and technical measures for protection of confidential data;

collects and processes statistical data;
performs analysis of statistical data;
stores and disseminates statistical data;
meets international obligations in the area of statistics;
coordinates the transmission of statistical data to international organisations;
performs services in the area of statistics for the needs of data users, on their request;
popularises statistics;
implements projects in the area of official statistics, independently and in cooperation with other authorised bodies;
supervises the implementation of the provisions of the Law on State Statistics;
performs other tasks prescribed by the Law on State Statistics and other laws.

1.7. SPECIFICITY OF THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE

The State Statistical Office is an independent professional organisation whose competences and scope of work are regulated by the Law on Organisation and Operation of the State Administration Bodies ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 58/00, 44/02, 82/08, 167/10 and 51/11; "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 96/19 and 110/19) and the Law on State Statistics ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 54/97, 21/07, 51/11, 104/13, 42/14, 192/15, 27/16, 83/18 and 220/18; "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 31/20).

In accordance with the Law on State Statistics, the State Statistical Office, on the basis of scientific methods and knowledge, provides users with data on the economy, demography, social life, environmental protection and other areas. Official statistical data, presented in various forms of dissemination, are protected from any kind of influence, and all users have equal access.

The State Statistical Office is responsible for producing official statistics in the Republic of North Macedonia and, at the same time, is a coordinator of the statistical system in the Republic of North Macedonia.

The State Statistical Office performs its role in cooperation with the authorised bodies in the statistical system, which are defined in the Five-Year Programme of Statistical Surveys.

In performing its functions, the State Statistical Office pays special attention to statistical data confidentiality. Data gathered with statistical surveys or from administrative and other sources are confidential and are used for statistical purposes only, completely excluding the possibility of disclosing individual data on natural persons and business entities.

The State Statistical Office is responsible for the coordination of international cooperation in statistics. International statistical cooperation refers to the application of international statistical norms and standards in the statistical system of the Republic of North Macedonia and the dissemination of statistical data on the country to European and international statistical and other organisations.

1.8. STRUCTURE OF THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE

The State Statistical Office is organised into 9 sectors with a total of 42 departments. Three departments are independent, outside the sectors. There are eight regional departments on the territory of the country, covering the statistical regions. The organisational structure was established in 2020. The organisational scheme can be found on the website of the Office (https://www.stat.gov.mk/ZaNas_en.aspx?id=4).

1.9. PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE

For the period 2024-2026, the State Statistical Office defined the following priorities:

- Integration of the Macedonian Statistical System in the European Statistical System
- Strengthening the institutional environment and statistical infrastructure
- Developing strategic partnerships
- Quality management

1.9.1. Integration in the European Statistical System

Objectives:

- Alignment of official statistics with the Statistical Requirements Compendium;
- Providing statistical data to support the process of negotiations of the Republic of North Macedonia for EU membership;
- Producing high-quality statistics in line with the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice.

Planned deadline for priority realisation: 2026

1.9.2. Strengthening the institutional environment and statistical infrastructure

Objectives:

- Strengthening professional independence;
- Strengthening the coordinating role of the Office in the statistical system;
- Improving teamwork, internal communications and knowledge transfer;
- Innovation and development.

Planned deadline for priority realisation: 2026

1.9.3. Developing strategic partnerships

Objectives:

- Maintaining established strategic partnerships
- Developing cooperation and partnerships at all levels and with different stakeholders.

Planned deadline for priority realisation: 2026

1.9.4. Quality management

Objectives:

- Implementation of a quality management system based on the European Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) and the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice.

Planned deadline for priority realisation: 2026

1.10. OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVED RESULTS OF THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE IN 2022

The Strategic Plan of the State Statistical Office for the period 2022-2024 determined the following programmes for achieving the strategic priorities of the State Statistical Office (SSO):

1. Sectoral statistics
2. Execution of the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in 2021
3. Institutional environment
4. Statistical infrastructure
5. Cooperation with providers of data and holders of administrative data sets
6. Cooperation and communication with users
7. Quality commitment

The implementation of these programmes is related to the strategic priority of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia for 2022 for successful accession negotiations with the European Union, contained in the Decision on determining the strategic priorities of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, i.e. priority goals: initiation and successful execution of the process of negotiations for accession of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union, implementation of macroeconomic policy aimed at maintaining macroeconomic stability, improving the competitiveness of the economy and increasing employment.

1. In the programme Sectoral statistics, the following sub-programmes were defined:

- 1.1. Improvement of the process of producing sectoral statistics
- 1.2. Measuring the quality of reporting

Within the defined sub-programmes, the following activities were carried out:

Social statistics

In population statistics, the following activities were carried out:

In accordance with the Programme and the planned schedule for publication and dissemination of data from the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings 2021, all planned activities have been carried out:

- With the execution of the Census 2021, and in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund - UNFPA, expert assistance was provided and the population data series for the period between the Census 2002 and the Census 2021 was revised. The revision of the population data series is a common practice worldwide after every census, and it will be followed by a major revision of the series of data by the SSO for the period 2003-2021 at the country level, and for the period 2017-

2021 at the regional level. Also, in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund - UNFPA, expert assistance was provided and Population Projections were prepared for the future movement of the population until 2070, at the national level, which is essential for the decision-making process in a society. A publication in Macedonian, English and Albanian language has been prepared, and the data will be uploaded to the MAKSTAT database of the SSO by the end of the year.

- The Department for Labour Market has fully implemented the Framework Regulation - for Integrated European Social Statistics (IESS) in the domain of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Adult Education Survey (AOS).
- The quarterly data from the Labour Force Survey have been published in the form of a news release and the data set has been prepared for transmission to Eurostat. Final checks of the data set are in progress.
- In collaboration with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), a migration module was implemented within the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The migration module was carried out in the first quarter of 2023.
- The processing of data from the Adult Education Survey 2022 has been completed, and the data have been published in a news release. A data set has also been prepared and sent to Eurostat. The preparation of more detailed data from this survey in the MAKSTAT database is in the final phase.
- In the Department for Living Standard, the Framework Regulation for Integrated European Social Statistics (IESS) has been implemented in the domain of the Household Budget Survey (HBS) and the Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC). Data from the Household Budget Survey for 2022 have been published in the MakStat database and are available to users. The implementation of this Regulation in these domains should improve the quality of data sets and social indicators that are key for decision making.
- The checks and processing of data from the Gender-Based Violence Survey conducted in 2022 have been completed. A set of microdata has been prepared and submitted to Eurostat for the first time.

Agricultural statistics

- In the field of agricultural statistics, the Pilot Census of Agriculture was conducted in 2022. The Census methodology was fully compliant with Regulation (EU) 2018/1091.
- The questionnaires for forestry statistics have been adjusted in order to provide data that will serve as input for the compilation of forest accounts.
- Defining the sources of data required for the preparation of the Environmental Goods and Services Sector Accounts (EGSS).

- In the domain of environmental statistics, the first energy accounts were produced using the PEFA Builder. Activities were initiated to study the sources for providing statistical data on e-waste. The Energy Balance for 2022 includes for the first time the electricity produced in industrial facilities from photovoltaic systems, which they have used for their own needs, energy that no one in the country has recorded. For this purpose, the Annual Report on produced and consumed energy in industrial facilities has been redesigned. New questions have been added about installed photovoltaic systems by industrial facilities (capacity, total produced, delivered to the grid and electricity consumed for own needs). The data have been analysed and processed in cooperation with the Energy and Water Services Regulatory Commission.

Business statistics

- Business statistics were in the process of being aligned with the provisions of the EBS (European Business Statistics - FRIBS) regulation on business statistics, i.e. Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2019 on European business statistics, repealing 10 legal acts in the field of business statistics.
- Regarding the Statistical Business Register, which is the basis for business statistics, the activities within the IPA 2017 project were finalised and a new logical design was made, which improved the functionalities of the Register in terms of providing all mandatory statistical units and their variables (in accordance with EBS - complex enterprises, where several legal units are connected in a single complex enterprise, and KAU – kind-of-activity units), and its use for the needs of statistical surveys (primarily for business demography and iFATS statistics). With regard to business demography, the volume of data submitted to Eurostat increased significantly during 2022. In 2022, the new logical design was implemented, and the application was put into operation and final data for 2021 were processed.
- STS and SBS, i.e. short-term statistics and structural business statistics, were also aligned with the provisions of the EBS Regulation, in order to increase the coverage of the variables required by the Regulation, as well as the data set submitted to Eurostat. In 2022, activities were initiated under IPA 2019 for improvement and further alignment of existing surveys and regular publication of STS variables and their submission to Eurostat.
- The second pilot survey on International Trade in Services Statistics (ITSS) was conducted and processed pilot data were submitted to Eurostat.

Macroeconomic statistics

In the sphere of macroeconomic statistics, continuous work was being done on improving the data in accordance with the System of National Accounts, SNA 2008, and the European System of Accounts, ESA 2010, and their transmission to Eurostat:

- Data on the key tables were continuously sent according to the ESA 2010 Transmission Programme of Eurostat for sending quarterly data (tables T0101 and T0102) in accordance with Regulation No. 549/2013.
- Tables T1001 and T1002 for GDP components by NKD Rev.2 activities at the national level for 2020 (final data) and 2021 (preliminary data) were prepared and sent to Eurostat.
- Table T1200 for GDP components by NKD Rev.2 activities at the regional level for 2020 (final data) was prepared and sent to Eurostat.
- In 2022, as part of the IPA 2019 MBP, the following tables were additionally prepared:
 - Table 0101 - Gross value added at current prices - seasonally adjusted - from Q1 2000 to the last published quarter was prepared and transmitted to Eurostat
 - Table 0101 - Gross value added at constant prices - seasonally and working-day adjusted - from Q1 2000 to the last published quarter was prepared and transmitted to Eurostat
 - Table 0102 – GDP by expenditure approach – current prices - seasonally adjusted - from Q1 2000 to the last published quarter was prepared and transmitted to Eurostat
 - Table 0102 – GDP by expenditure approach – current prices - seasonally and working-day adjusted - from Q1 2000 to the last published quarter was prepared and transmitted to Eurostat
 - Table 0102 – GDP by expenditure approach – constant prices - seasonally adjusted - from Q1 2000 to the last published quarter was prepared and transmitted to Eurostat
 - Table 0102 – GDP by expenditure approach – constant prices - seasonally and working-day adjusted - from Q1 2000 to the last published quarter was prepared and transmitted to Eurostat
 - Table 0117 – Final consumption of households by durability (annual, at current and constant prices, domestic concept) was updated
 - Table 0301 - Value added and its components at current and constant prices was prepared and transmitted to Eurostat
 - Table 0501 – Final consumption expenditure of households by purpose (annual, at current prices, domestic concept) was updated
 - Table 0502 – Final consumption expenditure of households (annual, at current prices) was updated
- In April and October 2022, the EDP notification tables for the period 2018 to 2021, Questionnaires (1-5) related to the EDP notification tables were prepared and sent to Eurostat. The data were prepared in accordance with ESA 2010.
- Supply and use tables for 2019, in accordance with ESA 2010 – final data, were prepared, published and sent to Eurostat.
- Data on gross domestic product and gross fixed capital formation by regions for 2019 (final data) and 2020 (preliminary data) were calculated and published.

- In accordance with the conclusions of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia from April 2020, the SSO in cooperation with the Health Insurance Fund published the National Health Accounts for 2019 and 2020 and provided data for compilation of the National Health Accounts for 2021 and 2022.
- Economic Accounts for Agriculture at current prices for 2020 have been published and transmitted to Eurostat.
- Economic Accounts for Agriculture at constant prices for 2020 have been published and transmitted to Eurostat.
- Regional Accounts for Agriculture for 2020 have been published.
- Data were regularly sent to the IMF in accordance with the SDDS Plus standard.

In the area of external trade, the following activities were carried out in 2022:

- Data on trade by enterprise characteristics (TEC) for 2020, with applied active confidentiality, were published.
- TEC data (trade by enterprise characteristics) for the reference period 2019 were prepared with applied active confidentiality and submitted in SDMX format to Eurostat.
- As regards statistics on international trade in goods by invoicing currency, the data for the reference period 2021 were processed and submitted to Eurostat in accordance with the latest European business statistics compilers' manual for international trade in goods statistics – trade by invoicing currency.
- The tables for the preparation of the quality report were delivered in a timely manner. During 2022, the SSO started completing quality reports for external trade statistics - detailed data and trade by enterprise characteristics, using the ESS Metadata Handler application.

Data were regularly sent to the IMF in accordance with the SDDS Plus standard.

2. In the programme Execution of the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in 2021, the following sub-programme was defined:

2.1. Processing and dissemination

Within this sub-programme, the following activities were carried out:

A Programme for publishing the data from the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings, 2021 was prepared.

The results of the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings, 2021 were released according to the Programme.

3. In the programme Institutional environment, the following sub-programmes were defined:

3.1. Adoption of the Programme of Statistical Surveys 2023-2027

3.2. Execution of the role of the Coordination Committee

3.3. Use of administrative data sources

Within the defined sub-programmes, the following activities were carried out:

- A workshop was held for planning and preparation of the Programme of Statistical Surveys 2023-2027
- Working groups were created for preparing the Programme of Statistical Surveys 2023-2027
- Seventeen documents related to the Programme were prepared, some of which were adopted at a session of the Management Board (Plan for Preparation of the Programme of Statistical Surveys, Structure of the Programme, Procedure for Amendments to the Programme, Form for Amendments to the Programme, Questionnaire for Authorised Producers of Statistics)
- The role and contribution of the authorised bodies in the statistical system was evaluated in order to reactivate the Coordination Committee
- A meeting was held within the IT Sector regarding the administration and management of administrative data. It was concluded that a detailed analysis of each source was needed before starting the reorganisation of the source structure.

4. In the programme Statistical infrastructure, the following sub-programmes were defined:

4.1. Classifications/nomenclatures

4.2. Employees – upgrading employee skills

4.3. IT infrastructure

Within the defined sub-programmes, the following activities were carried out:

- The Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose (KLPN 2021), based on COICOP 2018, was adopted and published on the SSO website.
- In the context of the IT structure, the SSO carried out activities within IPA 2017, which were delayed for various reasons (COVID-19 and the inability to hold physical-presence meetings and consultations, difficulties in securing IT experts and their departure during the project; engagement of IT personnel from the Office in census activities, etc.).
- The activity for logical modelling of the statistical information system and detailed description of the functionalities was completed in the specified period by the contractor with active cooperation of SSO employees.
- The planned activity: Design of a metadata-based IT system for data collection and processing was carried out with a major delay of one year.
- The design of three modules was completed:
Development of an application solution for the Annual Programme and the Five-Year Programme of Statistical Surveys

Module for classifications and code lists

User management module

- Testing was done, but only for the first 3 modules.
- Work was done on the module for preparation and data collection
- Several training courses were organised in 2022 for upgrading the skills of SSO employees. The training courses were in the field of statistics and other general areas. Due to the pandemic, most of the training events were conducted online.

5. In the programme Cooperation with providers of data and holders of administrative data sets, the following sub-programme was defined:

5.1. Preparing new or updating existing memoranda and agreements of cooperation

In 2022, emphasis was put on the implementation of the already signed agreements and memoranda for the needs of the Census.

Memoranda of cooperation were signed with the Food and Veterinary Agency and the e-Commerce Association, and agreements for cooperation and data exchange with the National Bank of the Republic of North Macedonia and the Public Revenue Office of the Republic of North Macedonia are being prepared.

6. In the programme Cooperation and communication with users, the following sub-programmes were defined:

6.1. Improvement of dissemination services and introduction of new products

6.2. Social media presence

6.3. Development of tools for increasing statistical literacy

Within the defined sub-programmes, the following activities were carried out:

- The State Statistical Office prepared and adopted the new Communication Strategy of the institution, which was developed as part the project with Statistics Sweden (funded by SIDA). The new Communication Strategy lays the foundations for the development of new forms of dissemination and communication of statistical products, and will contribute to improving the public image of the institution.
- To increase the availability of statistical data, the SSO reinstated the Infographics edition, which in a visually appealing and simple way attracts existing and potential users to visit the SSO website and use the data. This edition is of great public interest, and infographics are regularly used by the media.
- For the purposes of the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings, 2021, a dedicated Census website was launched, through which users could get acquainted with all aspects of the Census and get information about all Census-related developments.

- Regarding social media, the Office has an active Facebook page, and with the start of the Census (mid-year), it also created a profile on Instagram to regularly share statistics-related content.

7. In the programme Quality commitment, the following sub-programmes were defined:

7.1. Revision of the quality-related documents

7.2. ISO certification

7.3. Peer review

Within the defined sub-programmes, the following activities were carried out:

- The relevance of the existing strategic documents on quality was evaluated and it was concluded that it is necessary to revise them due to the revisions made in the European Statistics Code of Practice, the establishment of the new Quality Assessment Framework in the European Statistical System and changes in the strategic planning of the institution. Based on that analysis, several new documents were revised and created: a Quality Declaration (new document) was adopted, a Quality Policy (revised document) was adopted, and a website section dedicated to quality is being developed.
- Regarding the ISO certification, since this process requires large financial resources that were not provided in the budget of the State Statistical Office, this process will begin after they are provided.
- Eurostat started the peer review in 4 statistical institutions that tested the process in modified and limited conditions caused by the pandemic. The decision for inclusion of the State Statistical Office in this round of peer reviews has not been made yet, and, for the time being, the process is being observed and the relevant documents prepared by Eurostat are being studied.

1.11. OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVED RESULTS OF THE STATE STATISTICAL OFFICE IN 2023

The Strategic Plan of the State Statistical Office for the period 2023-2025 determined the following programmes for achieving the strategic priorities of the State Statistical Office (SSO):

1. Sectoral statistics
2. Conducting the Census of Agriculture, 2023
3. Statistical infrastructure
4. Cooperation and communication with users
5. Quality commitment

The implementation of these programmes is related to the strategic priority of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia for 2023 for successful accession negotiations with the European Union, contained in the Decision on determining the strategic priorities of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, i.e. priority goals: initiation and successful

execution of the process of negotiations for accession of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union, implementation of macroeconomic policy aimed at maintaining macroeconomic stability, improving the competitiveness of the economy and increasing employment.

1. In the programme Sectoral statistics, the following sub-programmes were defined:

1.1. Improvement of the process of producing sectoral statistics

1.2. Measuring the quality of reporting

Within the defined sub-programmes, the following activities were carried out:

Social statistics

In population statistics, the following activities were carried out:

- In accordance with the Programme and the planned schedule for publication and dissemination of data from the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings 2021, all planned activities have been carried out:
- With the execution of the Census 2021, and in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund - UNFPA, expert assistance was provided and the population data series for the period between the Census 2002 and the Census 2021 was revised. The revision of the population data series is a common practice worldwide after every census, and it will be followed by a major revision of the series of data by the SSO for the period 2003-2021 at the country level, and for the period 2017-2021 at the regional level.
- Also, in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund - UNFPA, expert assistance was provided and Population Projections were prepared for the future movement of the population until 2070, at the national level, which is essential for the decision-making process in a society. A publication in Macedonian, English and Albanian language has been prepared, and the data will be uploaded to the MAKSTAT database of the SSO by the end of the year.
- Data from LFS 2022 were published in the MakStat database and other multi-domain publications.
- The LFS time series for 2021 and 2022 were revised.
- At the request of the Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies, a new series of unpublished data by various topics and cross-sectional data of the Labour Force Survey for 2022 was prepared.
- For the first time, data from the Labour Force Survey for the first 3 quarters of 2023 have been published following the new framework regulation for social statistics. The

news release has been prepared on a new template. A set of data is published in the MakStat database simultaneously with the news release.

- In collaboration with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), a migration module was implemented within the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The migration module was carried out in the first quarter of 2023.
- The data from the Adult Education Survey conducted in 2022 have been published in a news release, and the preparation of the publication tables for the MakStat database is in the final phase.
- A set of microdata from the Adult Education Survey has been prepared and submitted to Eurostat.
- The main indicators from the Gender-Based Violence Survey have been calculated.
- A set of microdata has been prepared and submitted to Eurostat for the first time.
- The Household Budget Survey (HBS) was conducted in the field on a sample of 5040 households. The quarterly and annual calculations of household income and expenditure data from the Household Budget Survey were continuously checked and analysed. Data from HBS 2022 were published in the MakStat database and other multi-domain publications.
- The Time Use Survey (TUS) is continuously conducted during 2023.
- Changes in the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) methodology were tracked as part of IPA 2019, and monthly news releases and tabulated data were published in the MakStat database and in other multi-domain monthly and annual publications. HICP data are transmitted monthly to Eurostat.
- The Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) 2023 was conducted in the field, on a sample of around 6250 households, fully in line with EU recommendations and regulations. All the activities of this survey were carried out, and SILC 2021 data were checked and analysed.
- The Survey on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) was conducted for the first time.
- The Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS) was carried out as well.

Agricultural statistics

- An analysis was made of the instruments used in the Pilot Census of Agriculture 2022.
- As part of the preparations for the Census of Agriculture, the following activities were carried out: design of the census instruments, preparation of a draft text of the Law on Census of Agriculture and preparation of a draft budget for the Census of Agriculture.
- In accordance with the Programme of Statistical Surveys 2023-2027, a large number of statistical surveys in energy statistics and forestry statistics have been redefined in order to improve the quality and relevance of these data.
- A national table for crop humidity percentage has been prepared and it will be used in crop production statistics.

- As part of the monthly statistical survey on tourism in July-August 2023, an ad hoc statistical survey was conducted on energy consumption and production in tourist accommodation establishments. The results of this survey were used to improve the coverage of energy balances.

Business statistics

- Business statistics are in the process of being aligned with the provisions of the EBS (European Business Statistics - FRIBS) regulation on business statistics, i.e. Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2019 on European business statistics, repealing 10 legal acts in the field of business statistics.
- Regarding the Statistical Business Register, which is the basis for business statistics, additional activities were carried out after the completion of the IPA 2017 project, and data for 2021 were prepared in accordance with the requirements of the EBS Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/1197, which improved the functionalities of the Register in terms of providing all mandatory statistical units and their variables, entry of administrative data, data from statistical surveys, and its use for the needs of statistical surveys (primarily for business demography and FATS statistics).
- For the first time, data on complex enterprises (multiple legal units connected through ownership relations in a single complex enterprise) and KAU – kind-of-activity units, for the year 2021, were produced and submitted to Eurostat.
- This variable was determined according to the defined method of the number of employees in the local units.
- STS and SBS, i.e. short-term statistics and structural business statistics, were also aligned with the provisions of the EBS Regulation, in order to increase the coverage of the variables required by the Regulation, as well as the data set submitted to Eurostat. All activities in the field of Short-Term Statistics (STS) in 2022 were aimed at carrying out the existing surveys and their regular publication and transmission of data to Eurostat.
- As part of the introduction of the International Trade in Services Statistics (ITSS) production system, a third pilot survey was conducted and processed pilot data were submitted to Eurostat.
- In the surveys in the field of Information and Communication Technologies, Research and Development, work is being done to implement the requirements of the new regulation on European business statistics, and the survey on innovative business entities for the period 2020/2022 was carried out.

Macroeconomic statistics

In the sphere of macroeconomic statistics, continuous work was being done on improving the data in accordance with the System of National Accounts, SNA 2008, and the European System of Accounts, ESA 2010, and their transmission to Eurostat:

- Data on the key tables are continuously sent according to the ESA 2010 Transmission Programme of Eurostat for sending quarterly data (tables T0101 and T0102) in accordance with Regulation No. 549/2013
- Tables T1001 and T1002 for GDP components by NKD Rev.2 activities at the national level for 2020 (final data) and 2021 (preliminary data) were prepared and sent to Eurostat
- Table T1200 for GDP components by NKD Rev.2 activities at the regional level for 2020 (final data) was prepared and sent to Eurostat

In 2023, as part of the IPA 2019 MBP, the following tables were prepared:

- Table T0101 – Gross value added at current and constant prices - seasonally adjusted - from Q1 2000 to the last published quarter was prepared and transmitted to Eurostat (continues as regular transmission)
- Table 0102 – GDP by expenditure approach at current and constant prices - seasonally and working-day adjusted - from Q1 2000 to the last published quarter was prepared with additional data and transmitted to Eurostat (continues as regular transmission)
- Table 0800 – Annual sector accounts for the period 2012-2021 was prepared and transmitted to Eurostat
- The following were prepared and transmitted to Eurostat: Table 0200 – Main aggregates of general government, Table 0900 – Detailed tax and social contribution receipts by type of tax and social contribution and receiving subsector, and the National Tax List for the period 2011-2021
- Table 0117 - Final consumption of households by durability, at the annual level, domestic concept - at current prices and constant prices, was prepared and transmitted to Eurostat (continues as regular transmission)
- Table 0117 - Final consumption of households by durability, at the quarterly level, domestic concept - at current prices and constant prices, was prepared and transmitted to Eurostat to the last published quarter (continues as regular transmission)
- Table 0501 – Final consumption expenditure of households by purpose (annual, at current prices, domestic concept) was updated (continues as regular transmission)
- Table T0502 – Final consumption expenditure of households (annual, at current prices and constant prices) was updated (continues as regular transmission)

Other activities in the field of macroeconomic statistics carried out in 2023:

- In April and October 2023, the EDP notification tables for the period 2019 to 2022, Questionnaires (1-5) related to the EDP notification tables were prepared and sent to Eurostat. The data were prepared in accordance with ESA 2010.
- Supply and use tables for 2020, in accordance with ESA 2010 – final data, were prepared, published and sent to Eurostat.

- Symmetric input-output tables for 2020, in accordance with ESA 2010 – final data, were prepared, published and sent to Eurostat.
- Data on gross domestic product and gross fixed capital formation by regions for 2021 (final data) and 2022 (preliminary data) were calculated and published.
- Economic Accounts for Agriculture at current prices for 2021 have been published and transmitted to Eurostat.
- Economic Accounts for Agriculture at constant prices for 2021 have been published and transmitted to Eurostat.
- Regional Accounts for Agriculture for 2021 have been published.

In the area of external trade, the following activities were carried out in 2023:

- Data on trade by enterprise characteristics (TEC) for 2021, with applied active confidentiality, were published.
- TEC data (trade by enterprise characteristics) for the reference years 2020 and 2021 were prepared with applied active confidentiality and submitted in SDMX format to Eurostat. TEC data for 2021 were prepared by implementing all the remarks made by Eurostat in the quality control of the data for the reference period 2020.
- As regards statistics on international trade in goods by invoicing currency, the data for the reference period 2022 were processed and submitted to Eurostat in accordance with the latest European business statistics compilers' manual for international trade in goods statistics – trade by invoicing currency.
- The tables for the preparation of the quality report were delivered in a timely manner. During 2023, the SSO continued completing quality reports for external trade statistics - detailed data and trade by enterprise characteristics, using the ESS Metadata Handler application, and these reports have been published on the SSO website.

Data were regularly sent to the IMF in accordance with the SDDS Plus standard.

2. In the programme Execution of the Census of Agriculture in the Republic of North Macedonia 2023, the following sub-programme was defined:

2.1. Preparation and execution of the Census of Agriculture in the Republic of North Macedonia 2023

Within this sub-programme, the following activities were carried out:

- A draft Law on Census of Agriculture in the Republic of North Macedonia 2023 was prepared
- By-laws – census methodology and census questionnaires were prepared

- Consultations were held with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy and other state authorities.

3. In the programme Statistical infrastructure, the following sub-programmes were defined:

3.1. Classifications/nomenclatures

Within this sub-programme, the following activities were carried out, i.e. adopted:

The National Classification of Activities (NKD Rev 2.1, based on NACE Rev.2.1.) was prepared and sent to the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia for review and adoption.

3.2. Employees – upgrading employee skills

Several training courses were organised in 2023 for upgrading the skills of SSO employees. The training courses were in the field of statistics and other general areas.

In 2023, the State Statistical Office continued to improve the skills of employees by active participation in international events. A total of 323 participants took part in 94 training events (external training – expert missions, study visits, workshops, seminars, training courses, etc.), organised by external experts, and 174 participants from the SSO took part in 111 meetings.

3.3. IT infrastructure

Regarding the IT infrastructure, the activities that started in 2022 continued in 2023.

4. In the programme Cooperation and communication with users, the following sub-programmes were defined:

4.1. Improvement of dissemination services and introduction of new products

4.2. Social media presence

4.3. Development of tools for increasing statistical literacy

Within the defined sub-programmes, the following activities were carried out:

- During 2023, the State Statistical Office continued publishing regular statistical products according to the Work Programme of the Office. The regular multi-domain publications were released: "Statistical Yearbook", "Regions of North Macedonia", "North Macedonia in Figures", "Makstat selection", "Environmental statistics".
- As part of the IPA 2019 project Sector accounts on an experimental basis, the publication Annual non-financial sector accounts by institutional sectors, 2018-2020 was prepared and published.
- During 2023, intensive work was done on the project of UN Women, Gender Equality Facility, and a campaign was carried out in March for the promotion of data by gender and their use. Billboards, banners and panels were prepared and placed in busy locations throughout the city for the promotion of the gender equality situation, shown through statistical data.

- Also, under this project, a new redesigned and improved edition of the publication Women and Men in North Macedonia was released in March, and video materials were prepared for the respective areas based on the data from the publication.
- Representatives of the Office participated in the training events organised by UN Women as lecturers on the production, presentation and use of gender-disaggregated statistics, available on the SSO website. In September 2023, a web platform for gender statistics, which was also developed with the support of UN Women, was launched on the SSO website.
- All the products made within this project are available on our website.
- Within the project with Statistics Sweden (funded by SIDA), the State Statistical Office continued with the development of the new SSO website. It is expected that the testing of certain parts of the new website will begin in early 2024 and that the site will be fully operational by mid-2024. Social media presence continues to be an important objective of the Office, given the importance and role of social media today. During 2023, with the support of Swedish experts within the project "Increasing the availability and use of official statistics" funded by SIDA, a social media strategy was developed which became an integral part of the Communication Strategy of the Office. An Action Plan was also made, according to which posts are prepared for Facebook and for SSO's LinkedIn profile, which was opened in mid-2023.
- In 2023, the Office continued working on raising awareness of statistical literacy and the use of statistical data. Throughout the year, the SSO organised lectures for students from secondary schools and various universities in the country, focusing mostly on the availability and usefulness of statistical data.

5. In the programme Quality commitment, the following sub-programmes were defined:

5.1. Preparations for the peer review

5.2. Internal quality audit

5.3. Training and preparation of SIMS reports for the participants in the statistical system

Within the defined sub-programmes, the following activities were carried out:

- Eurostat carries out the process of peer review of the national statistical systems of the EU Member States. The State Statistical Office submitted a request to Eurostat to be included in the peer review in 2025. In order to ensure the timely implementation of the preparatory activities in this area, the State Statistical Office provided information to a large number of employees about this process.
- The internal quality audit started with the establishment of a Working Group, which adopted an Annual Plan and produced the first internal quality audit reports.
- Informing the public about quality has improved by the redesign of a special section dedicated to Quality on the official website of the Office.
- Training was organised for representatives of the participants in the statistical system for the production of quality reports for statistical surveys, and the first reports have been produced and are available on the website of the State Statistical Office.

1.12. PROGRAMMES

For achieving the planned priorities and objectives of the Strategic Plan 2024-2026, the following programmes have been defined:

1. Sectoral statistics
2. Conducting the Census of Agriculture, 2025
3. Statistical infrastructure
4. Cooperation and communication with users
5. Quality commitment.

The implementation of all programmes requires the engagement of appropriate human and financial resources, and the timeframe for their implementation is defined in the Plan for Implementation of the Statistical Programme, which is part of this document.