



EUROPEAN UNION

Delegation of the European Union

Skopje, 7 November 2012

**Launch of the EU-funded twinning project:
Support to State Statistical Office -
Improving Political Decision Making Through Statistics
(EU InfoCentre)**

**Speech by
H.E. Mr. Aivo Orav
Head of EU Delegation**

Dear State Secretary Mr. Andonovski,

Dear Ambassador Steinacker,

Dear Ms. Junker,

Dear Director Ms. Novkovska,

Dear Mr. Raupach,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you today at the official launch of another EU-funded twinning project that will support the State Statistical Office in its further capacity building and improving compliance of statistics with EU standards.

For the European Union, providing assistance to the **statistical offices is of high importance in the accession process**. Not only that **harmonization of statistics with European standards** is one of the conditions that candidate countries have to fulfil in order to qualify for membership, but it is also a key element for improving the **basis for decision making** by state administration, businesses and citizens.

The availability of accurate, reliable and timely statistical data is crucial for obtaining a clear picture of the economy, the socio-

demography of the country and for facilitating international comparisons. Statistical services capable of delivering such data are very important today, in times of rapidly changing economic conditions, when future growth and progress in all areas of the society depend on a combination of crucial well-timed decisions.

The twinning approach allows experts from the public administrations in candidate countries to work closely together with their counterparts from the EU member states. The experts from the EU member states will contribute with their experience and expertise in assisting the State Statistical Office to further develop its capacity and in improving compliance with the EU *acquis*.

This second EU-funded twinning project provided to the State Statistical office will be jointly implemented with the Federal Statistical Office of Germany, in consortium with Statistics Denmark.

The EU is committed to continue its support in the area of statistics in the upcoming period. At the end, I wish to all the participants in the project a successful and fruitful work!

Thank you very much for your attention.