Statistics Norway
Department of Social Statistics

and

The Albanian Ministry of Local
Government and Decentralisation

Selected Documents on the Modernisation of the Civil Registration System in Albania

Preface

In connection with preparations for the Albanian population census in 2001 a Statistics Norway member of an international expert group realised the strong need to modernise the country's civil registration system. After a discussion of scope and use of a modernised system, involving also the Norwegian Embassy to Tirana, the Norwegian Government offered to provide funding for a pilot modernisation project with technical assistance from Statistics Norway.

Statistics Norway's project proposal was well received by Albanian authorities. The Albanian Government highlights the need for improved civil registration service to the public and a more correct and less contested source for voters' lists. Albania has decided to adopt the solution proposed by Statistics Norway, i.e. a solution based on a Nordic model - including introduction of a personal identification (ID) number and a central population register - adapted to Albanian conditions.

The Statistics Norway contribution comprises conceptual and legal development as well as other technical assistance. The Norwegian funding through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also covers hardware and necessary software for the pilot period, 1 December 2002 - 31 December 2004, for a number of local register offices as well as a central register, together with training and study visits.

A Norwegian long-term consultant, Halvard Skiri, was established with an office in Tirana together with a local assistant (project coordinator), Mirela Talka, from October/November 2001. The following people from Statistics Norway have contributed to the project, including the documents included here: Helge Brunborg, Stein Opdahl, Johan-Kristian Tønder, Torgeir Vik and Bjørn K. Wold.[1] Halvard Skiri left Tirana in June 2003, to be succeeded by another long-term consultant in early 2004.

This report contains planning documents for the Norwegian-funded pilot project, the majority covering the first half of the pilot phase, 1 December 2002 – 31 March 2003. These documents have been prepared mainly by Statistics Norway, which has also contributed to the application to the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) for funding the second half of the pilot phase.

Statistics Norway's counterpart in Albania in this project is the Ministry of Government and Decentralisation (MLGD), the General Directory of Civil Status, with Elvira Dervishi as Head of Department.

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[1] The detailed budget has not been included here.

List of Acronyms

CEC	Central Electoral Committee
CPR	Central (National) Population Register
CS	Civil Status (Civil Registration)
CSO	Civil status (registration) office (local population registry)
CS system	Civil registration system (population registration system)
EU	European Union
GDCS	General Directory of Civil Status (the central CS office)
ID	(Personal) Identification number
ID card	Personal identification card
IFES	International Foundation for Election Systems
INSTAT	The Albanian Institute of Statistics
ISSH	The Albanian Social Insurance Institute
MFA	The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affaires
MLG	The Albanian Ministry of Local Government
MLGD	The Albanian Ministry of Local Government and Decentralisation
NOK	Norwegian Kroner
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
ODIHR	The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PIN	Personal Identification Number
SIN	Social Insurance Number
SN	Statistics Norway
SOROS	Soros Foundations
USD	United States Dollar

Executive summary

A brief history of the project up to January 2003 is given in chapter 4.9 of the application to NORAD.

Since January 2003 the project has progressed locally as well as centrally. Starting in April 2003 four local civil registration offices close to or within Tirana have been equipped with hardware and software and the employees have been given basic computer training. Equipment for all eight local offices belonging to the first part of the pilot phase - funded by grants from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs – will have been installed at the beginning of 2004. There have been several practical problems, such as power supply, even if power supply equipment (inverter and batteries) has been provided.

In February 2003 an Albanian delegation of four persons (of which two from MLGD) made a study tour to Norway - visiting Statistics Norway, the Central Population Registry (within the Directorate of Taxes), the Norwegian Mapping Authority, etc. From May 2003 the staffing of the Albanian central office - the General Directorate of Civil Status - has continued. Permanent office space has not yet been acquired, however.

The Municipality of Padua, Italy, which had offered to assist in the modernisation of three local civil status offices within Tirana, has not been able to provide external funding for this. MLGD's application to NORAD, asking for 5.3 million NOK for funding of the second part of the pilot phase (including the three local offices mentioned above) was submitted to NORAD in June 2003. As per February 2004 the formal decision still is pending. A total grant of 9.3 million NOK is expected to be necessary to fund the whole pilot project, including initiating costs, establishment of a central office and modernisation of 16 local offices.

After the Norwegian long-term consultant left in June 2003, Statistics Norway's project office in Tirana has been operated by the local project coordinator, assisted by people from Statistics Norway in Oslo through e-mail. The grants for the first part of the pilot phase (up to 31 March 2003) have turned out to be sufficient until the end of 2003.

The document "Nation-wide modernisation of the Civil Registration System in Albania – A brief plan with cost estimates" has served as a basis for the decision of the EU Commission to support the full-scale modernisation project. The funding through the CARDS program is 1 million Euro for data entry for 2003 and probably another 2 million for 2004.

The Ministry of Local Government and Decentralisation decided in early 2003 to invite an international tender for a feasibility study (“blueprint”) for the country-wide modernisation of the civil registration system in Albania. The French company Valtech Axelboss was selected, and presented a proposal in January 2004.

Statistisk sentralbyrå
Statistics Norway

Memo

8 November 2000

Modernisation of the Civil Registration System in Albania

Introduction

Albania has for many years kept local population registers, called Civil Registers, in communes and municipalities. Each register consists of books with a separate page for each family, where the civil events are entered, i.e. births, deaths, marriages, divorces, and migrations. The old paper-based registers are cumbersome to use and should be computerised to improve the quality and efficiency. In addition, the political changes and mass movements within and out of the country during the last decade have caused the registers to be outdated. Many people do not any longer live where they are registered and many events, such as deaths, are not being recorded.

The collection of data by the Institute for Social Security (ISSh) and the consequent field work and analysis of the data in connection with the 2000 local elections show that the quality of the civil register data is far from satisfactory.

Local population registers may be used for a number of administrative purposes, such as electoral lists, social security benefits, health care, education and ID cards. Thus, modern civil registers are important for the development of democracy and good governance. They are also an important source for the production of updated population statistics at local and national level.

Project proposal

Several initiatives have recently been taken by Albanian and other institutions to improve the civil registers. Statistics Norway is proposing a modernisation project as part of these efforts. We are suggesting that this be done gradually, by first computerising the registers in some municipalities and communes as well as regional registers at Quark level. The remaining registers in the country may be computerised later, when sufficient experience has been gained and the infrastructure is adequate. Furthermore, we are proposing the development of a legal and technological basis for standardisation and the systematic exchange of data between the local registers as well as for the statistical and administrative use of the data in the registers. This would involve the establishment of a *central register unit* for co-ordination of the local civil registers. It would also be highly advantageous to establish a *central population register,* for checking the data and for transferring data between communes/municipalities when people move. This central register could also be used for administrative and statistical purposes.

The upcoming population census, planned for 1st April 2001, will play an essential role for the proposed project. The newly adopted census law allows "… *the authorities empowered by law to set up electoral lists and update the civil registers.*" (Article 1, par. 3) Ways to legalise the use of the census data for the civil registers need to be considered.

The role of Statistics Norway would be to provide technical assistance to the central register unit, on issues such as legislation; rules and standards for civil registration; computer soft and hard ware; forms for registering events such as births, deaths and moves; and methods for statistical and other use of the registers. Statistics Norway would assist in modernising the first local civil registration offices. Statistics Norway may also take care of the co-ordination of the funding and technical assistance of various international donors in the modernising of the Albanian civil registration, especially needed in the third phase of the project.

From the Albanian authorities it is expected that Statistics Norway be given full admission to the legislative and administrative processes relevant to the project. Albanian authorities will be responsible for deciding where to locate a central administrative unit and a central population register and for the recruitment and payment of local staff, office space, etc. The co-ordination role of Statistics Norway should be fully accepted, meaning that Statistics Norway should be informed about all relevant projects.

A three-phase project

1. The first phase would include a three-month planning and initiation period involving all authorities, to ensure that the central administrative unit, the central register and the necessary legislation are formally established.
2. The second phase, lasting for approximately by nine months, would be used to establish and develop the central administrative unit, the central population register and the computerisation of the first 2 - 4 local civil registration offices.
3. In the third phase the civil registration offices in the rest of Albania would be modernised, based on the experience gained in the first two phases. As this would be very resource demanding, other donors and agencies would be invited to participate.

The project would need some crucial decisions to move forward, as follows:

- The Albanian Government to send a letter to the Norwegian Government endorsing the project proposal and formally inviting Statistics Norway to take part in the process.
- Statistics Norway to advice on the planning of the central office, the system and the relevant legislation, particularly the new civil registration law.
- Statistics Norway to assist in establishing the system in the central unit and 2-4 local offices.

Statistisk sentralbyrå
Statistics Norway

22 November 2002

Modernisation of the Civil Registration System in Albania: The pilot phase

1. Background

There is a strong need to modernise the civil status (CS) registration system in Albania, as the registers are full of errors, do not correctly reflect the population, and are difficult to use due to old-fashioned methods of entering (using a pen) and storing (in books) the data.

Statistics Norway presented a proposal for modernising the CS system to the Government of Albania on 21 March 2001 based on a memo dated 8 November 2000. In this project proposal three phases were outlined: The first is a planning phase, the second a pilot phase, and the third phase the full modernisation of all civil status registers of Albania. The last phase was, however, considered to be too extensive for Norway to fund alone and it was suggested that funding of this phase could be sought among international donors after the pilot phase had been implemented, reviewed and evaluated.

The main ideas of the proposal of 8 November 2000 are still valid, although the proposal has later been revised on 22 May 2002. However, due to developments since then the pilot phase may include more components than originally envisaged, in particular more pilot offices. Moreover, due to administrative requirements in Norway we have had to divide the pilot phase into two parts, 1.12.2002 - 31.3.2003 and 1.4.2003 - 31.12.2004. The reasons for this are explained below.

2. Why two parts of the pilot phase?

Based on the project proposal of 8 November 2000 and a revised budget the project was approved by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in June 2001. The two initial phases, the planning phase and the pilot phase, were initially planned to be finished in 2001. The total budget for these phases was originally estimated at 7.6 million NOK[1], of which the Ministry granted 4.0 million NOK to Statistics Norway to cover activities in 2001, according to the revised time table which assumed completion of the pilot phase in 2002. According to Norwegian budgeting rules ministries can only grant money for one calendar year at the time. An exception to this is the development agency NORAD, which may give grants covering several years.

On the basis of this grant Statistics Norway recruited a long-term resident consultant, who was established with an office and a project assistant in Tirana in October/November 2001. In 2002

[1] With the current exchange rate of 1 USD = 7.5 NOK, 7.6 mill. NOK is about 1 mill. USD.

Statistics Norway spent considerable effort on preparatory work, advice on the revision of the civil status and other relevant laws, and to establish Albanian ownership of the project.

Due to the delay in starting the project only a minor part of the grant was spent in 2001 and the remaining funds were transferred for use in 2002. The planned activities were further delayed in 2002, resulting in an unused amount of about 1.6 million NOK as of 1 December 2002. The MFA of Norway has agreed that the remaining part of this amount may be transferred to 2003.

The present document describes the planned activities for this amount for the period 1 December 2002 - 31 March 2003. An agreement about this is expected to be signed by the Ministry of Local Government and Decentralisation and Statistics Norway. For the period after 1 April 2003 a new project proposal and budget need to be worked out, as explained below.

Since the two first phases required more time and efforts for implementation than originally planned, a revised project proposal (dated 22 May 2002) with a total budget of NOK 9.5 million was presented to the MFA of Norway in June 2002, including the 4 million NOK already granted to Statistics Norway for the project for the year 2001. However, the Ministry did not review the revised project proposal, since it in August 2002 transferred responsibility for implementing financial support to the project to the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD).

According to established NORAD routines a detailed project proposal, including a detailed budget, will be required in order to be able to sign agreements with Albanian partners for the remaining amount of 5.5 million NOK. Thus, a detailed project proposal needs to be prepared by the Ministry of Local Government and Decentralisation (MLGD), with the assistance of Statistics Norway if required, and presented by the Albanian authorities to NORAD through the Norwegian Embassy in Tirana.

After the expected approval, NORAD will draft a contract between the Kingdom of Norway and the Government of Albania on the modernisation of the civil status registration system. Normally, it will take at least four months from NORAD receives a project proposal until the contract is approved and signed by both parties.

3. Overview of the pilot phase

There have been several interesting developments since we started to work on this project in 2000, and also earlier, but which we were not aware of:

- Software to computerise local civil register offices has been developed, implemented and used.
- A number of civil status offices have been partly computerised (13 offices, to be exact), yielding valuable experience, which reduces the need for an extended pilot phase.
- The need for reliable voters' lists is becoming increasingly urgent. This need has been strengthened by the problems in creating reliable voters' lists from civil registry sources, door-to-door enumeration and population census data.
- The budget can cover more activities than originally planned since the Government of Albania will pay for most of the labour costs, since it originally was estimated a considerable amount of recurrent costs for register offices, and also since the exchange rate of the Norwegian *krone* has strengthened significantly.

We are consequently proposing to do much more in the pilot phase than originally proposed, in particular completing the modernisation of all of Tirana, together with efforts by other donors, in addition to providing technical assistance and equipment for the central office, the General Directory of Civil Status. See table 1 for the plan for modernising local offices.

To sum up, the total budget for the two parts of the pilot phase is 7.1 million NOK (1.6 and 5.5 million, respectively). The amount of 1.6 million NOK is available from the original MFA allocation for 2001. The activities to be covered in the pilot phase have been worked out in collaboration with representatives of MLGD.

Table 1. Plan for modernisation of local civil status offices in the pilot phase[1]

Office	Prefecture (Qark)	District	Population[2]	Total costs, USD	Data entry, USD	Start, quarter/ year
To be started during 1.12.2002-31.3.2003						
Tirana 3	Tirana	Tirana	32 000	11 400	1 400	1/2003
Tirana 7	Tirana	Tirana	46 000	12 200	2 200	1/2003
Tirana 10[3]	Tirana	Tirana	24 000	4 700	500	1/2003
Tirana 11[3]	Tirana	Tirana	54 000	-	-	1/2003
Preza commune	Tirana	Tirana	5 900	6 000	-	1/2003
Kavaja municipality[3]	Tirana	Kavaja	*24 800*	3 000	-	1/2003
Klos municipality	Diber	Mat	13 000	8 100	600	1/2003
To be started after 1.4.2003						
Tirana 1	Tirana	Tirana	70 000	13 100	3 100	2/2003
Tirana 2	Tirana	Tirana	85 000	13 800	3 800	2/2003
Tirana 4	Tirana	Tirana	56 000	12 600	2 600	2/2003
Tirana 5	Tirana	Tirana	54 000	12 600	2 600	2/2003
Golem commune	Tirana	Kavaja	9 400	10 000	-	2/2003
Kavaja District Centre	Tirana	Kavaja	.	7 000	-	2/2003
Koder Thumane com.	Durres	Kruja	*13 100*	10 700	700	1/2004
Total			ca 500 000	125 200	17 500	
The Municipality of Padua has proposed to fund and advice on the modernisation of the following offices, probably starting after 1.4.2003						
Tirana 6	Tirana	Tirana	46 000			2003
Tirana 8	Tirana	Tirana	35 000			2003
Tirana 9	Tirana	Tirana	41 000			2003

1 These costs are based on preliminary estimates. More detailed specifications of the needs may yield revised figures.
2 Population figures in *italics* refer to the 2001 Population Census.
3 The data entry in these offices has already started as part of separate projects funded or organised by other international agencies, such as ODIHR, IFES and SOROS.

4. The first part of the pilot phase, 1.12.2002 – 31.3.2003

In the first part of the pilot phase we are planning to contribute to the modernisation of the Tirana administrative units number 3, 7, 10 and 11 and Kavaja municipality, as well as the rural commune of Preza and the mainly rural municipality of Klos in the Mat district.

During this period we will provide technical and some financial assistance to the establishment of the General Directory of Civil Status. The financial assistance during this period will be rather limited, however, since the Directory is expected to move into new offices in February 2003 (or later) and since the planning and ordering of computer hardware and software will take some time.

An important part of the Statistics Norway assistance to the Directory during this period will be assistance in beginning to write a plan for modernising all CS offices in Albania as well as designing the specifications for a tender for the software and hardware required for this. This will include software for the local offices and the Directory as well as for the exchange of information between the local offices and the central database.

Another important activity during this period will be a study tour to Norway for senior people involved in the modernisation project. The tour, which is planned to last for about one week, will include visits to Statistics Norway, the Central Population Register, local population registers, and some users of the data.

The principles behind the choice of the local offices to be modernised in the first part of the pilot phase are:

- Some offices (Tirana 10 and 11 and Kavaja municipality) have already started or have completed computerisation of the "fundamental registers" (that include data on all persons registered in commune or municipality, organised in families). This will save money on computers and data entry and will enable an earlier start of modernising the daily running of a civil status office, such as using computer printouts for certificates (to be signed, sealed and stamped).
- For some offices there is an urgent need for computerisation due to a large discrepancy between the registered and the actual population (Tirana 3 and 7).
- NORAD has expressed a strong interest in modernising one commune in the Burrel region, since NORAD is already involved in funding a water project in that area.
- There is a need to obtain experience form the computerisation of some rural communes. We are proposing Preza, northwest of Tirana, and the municipality of Klos near Burrel, which is an administrative unit comprising a small city and 13 villages.

5. The second part of the pilot phase, 1.4.2003 – 31.12.2004

During the second part of the pilot period, especially in 2003, Statistics Norway is willing to provide substantial technical assistance to the General Directory of Civil Status as well as administration of tenders, and will procure the hardware and software that is required by the Directory.

We will also help in setting up a computerised system for the exchange of data between local offices and the central database and start implementing the procedures for doing this as the pilot offices complete the modernisation process.[2]

In the second part of the pilot phase we are planning to contribute to the modernisation of the Tirana administrative units number 1, 2, 4 and 5, the rural communes of Koder Thumane and Golem, and Kavaja District Centre. This would, in fact, complete the computerisation of Tirana, since the Municipality of Padua in Italy has proposed to modernise Tirana administrative units number 6, 8 and 9 with funds from the European Commission, if granted, and possibly also their own funds.

For the choices for the second part of the pilot phase the principles are:

- Completing the Municipality of Tirana (Tirana 1, 2, 4 and 5), which has the most severe civil status register problems, since the Municipality of Padua have expressed an interest in modernising three offices in Tirana (6, 8 and 9). An application for funding has been sent by Associazione di Cooperazione allo Sviluppo on behalf of a partnership, but no answer has been received yet.
- Modernising the commune of Koder Thumane, which has an urgent need for a new civil register since the existing register was burned in1997. There was door-to-door enumeration in 1998 to collect new data but this will probably have to be repeated. Statistics Norway is, however, not planning to contribute to the data collection in Koder Thumane, only to the modernisation process.
- Gaining experience from the transfer of data form a rural commune (Golem) to a district centre (Kavaja) and from the district centre to the national database.

The real modernisation of a civil status office begins only *after* the data in the fundamental registers ("family books") have been computerised. This is when all new births, deaths, marriages, divorces, name changes, transfers from another office, etc., need to be entered into the computer on a regular basis, preferably daily, to keep the register continuously updated. Moreover, the existing CS data need to be checked for errors, including duplicates, and technical and legal procedures for corrections need to be worked out. Statistics Norway feels that this is the stage where our technical assistance, based on almost forty years of experience with the Norwegian Central Population Register, will be of the greatest value to Albania.

Finally, we would like to emphasise that in the proposed modernised system the civil status offices will continue to be the only institution that has the legal competence to make changes in the civil status register. The central register or database will only serve as a clearing house for transferring records between local offices when people are moving, and for detecting errors and producing statistics. If an error is found, the General Directory of Civil Status should request the relevant local office(s) to look into the problem and seek to make the necessary changes according to the law. Thus, if it is discovered, for example by comparison with other sources, that a certain family is not registered where they are living, the local office should inform the family and/or the office in the municipality/commune where they are registered to request a transfer.

[2] There will be a period when some local offices have been modernised whereas others have not yet started this process. This interim period will present special challenges, for example, for cases of transfer of civil status documents (family moves) from a traditional to a modernised CS office or vice versa.

Modernisation of the Civil Registration System in Albania

Pilot Project

Second part: 1 July 2003 - 31 December 2004

PROJECT DOCUMENT

Prepared by Statistics Norway based upon discussions with and approved by
Civil Status Directory, Ministry of Local Government and Decentralisation

Tirana and Oslo, June 2003

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1. Executive summary

During missions to Albania before the 2001 Census and 2001 Parliamentary elections by some Norwegian experts, the strong need to modernise the existing manual system for civil registration became evident to them. Thus a bilateral project for modernisation of the system, funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and built around Statistics Norway's (SN) competence and experience within this area was proposed. The proposal, put forward the autumn 2000, was well received by Albanian authorities and the MFA granted 4 million NOK to cover activities in 2001.

The proposal outlines a modernisation project in three phases: The first is a planning phase, the second a pilot phase, and the third phase a nationwide modernisation of all civil status registers of Albania. The last case is considered to be too extensive for Norway to fund alone and funding should be sought among international donors.

The final objective of the initiative is an improved administrative and computerised civil registration system for all of Albania.

The specific objectives of the pilot project is to develop a system tested out on computerised data from a limited number of local registries in order to gain experience before starting the nationwide modernisation.

This pilot phase will comprise completion of computerisation of 16 local civil register offices, including routines for data entry, data checking, issuance of birth certificates etc.

The initial timetable has turned out to be too optimistic, and the activities initially planned for 2001 is still not finished. In the meantime, MFA transferred the responsibility for the second part of the pilot project to NORAD in August 2002. A protocol between MLGD in Albania and SN concerning the first part of the pilot being funded by the remaining grant from 2001 was signed in January 2003. A revised plan and budget for the second part of the pilot has been prepared and is hereby presented in this document.

The second part of the pilot is planned to be finalised by the end of 2004. A cost estimate for the outlined activities, investment and technical support amounts to NOK 5.3 million, or 741 000 USD according to the current exchange rate (April 2003).

2. Introduction

2.1 The Project Document

In 2001-2002 Statistics Norway has entered into a dialogue with the Albanian Ministry of Local Government and Decentralisation (MLGD) about possible assistance to the modernisation of the civil registration system in Albania. A three-phase project was designed, and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed willingness to fund the first two phases, leaving the final phase for the international donor community due to the magnitude of the task.

This Project Document describes the Project, particularly the achievements to this stage of the pilot phase, existing needs for assistance, priorities attached to the Project at local and national level, and different aspects of project implementation. Besides being an application for funding from NORAD, the aim of the Project Document is to prepare a common understanding of the background for the second part of the pilot phase of the Project and the mode of its implementation.

2.2 Rationale for Norwegian Assistance - the Request

The Project is considered by the Albanian authorities to be of high priority at national as well as at local level. The present situation of the Albanian Civil Status Service, as the civil registration service is called, is very unsatisfactory. It ranges among the poorest public services and falls below any acceptable standard for adequate public service. A good civil registration service can be used for a variety of purposes. Because the civil registration has multiple uses, exclusion from the Civil Status register means not only that a person is deprived of voting, but also that he or she is effectively excluded from many aspects of social life. Civil registration is expected to particularly benefit from modernisation and computerisation, given the multiple uses and the ongoing maintenance of the records.

2.3 National Priorities

The undocumented demographic movements in the last decade represent many problems for the Albanian society and are of great concern for the Albanian Government. The modernisation of the Civil Status Service is thus one of the Government's main priorities. The reform is now proceeding along several lines, where the most important are: completion of the legal frame, improvement of the existing "fundamental registers" (family books), service restructuring, computerisation and staff training.

On the other side the Civil Status modernisation is considered as part of the Schengen package that is a very important step towards opening of negotiations of the association-stabilisation agreement between Albania and EU.

3. Background

3.1 The country

Albania is located in the western part of the Balkan Peninsula. It borders Serbia-Montenegro and Kosovo in the north and the east, FYR of Macedonia in the east, and Greece in the south. It has access to the Adriatic and Ionian Seas in the west. Because of the mountainous landscape in major parts and a less satisfactory infrastructure, communication is not as easy as the small geographical area may indicate.

Basic facts:

Area: 28 750 sq. km
Capital: Tirana
Population (as of 1 April 2001)**:** 3 069 000[1]
Urban population: 42.2%

[1] Source: INSTAT/ «The Population of Albania in 2001. Main results of the Population and Housing Census».

Age structure:
0-14 years: 29.3%, 15-64 years: 63.2%, 65 years and over: 7.5%

Birth rate per 1,000 population (2000)**:** 16.5
Death rate per 1,000 population (2000)**:** 5.4
Life expectancy at birth (2000): 74.6 years
Infant mortality rate per 1 000 live births (2000): 22.8

Administrative divisions:
65 municipalities (mostly urban) and 309 communes (rural)
36 districts (see map)
12 prefectures (=qarks in Albanian**.** See division into prefectures and districts, table 4, chapter 9.1.1.)
Tirana Municipality is divided into 11 administrative units.

The administrative divisions may be changed. Fewer units on lower level will be proposed to the Parliament during spring 2003. However, this is not expected to affect the number of local civil registration offices, because short distance to the local office is considered important. At all these three levels the administrative units show great variety in size, both regarding area and population: According to census data, the population of the prefectures (qarks) varies from 111 000 (Kukës) to 598 000 (Tirana), of districts from 11 000 (Delvina) to 520 000 (Tirana) and of communes/municipalities from less than 800 (several) to 341 000 (Tirana). ("Tirana" is an administrative unit at all three levels.)

In recent years Albania has made significant progress in many fields. Public order and security have been strengthened and institutional reform has made strides ahead. Macroeconomic stability has been achieved while maintaining relatively high growth rates. Structural reforms have been further deepened and tangible improvements have been made in infrastructure. Albania has taken these steps with the support of international partners.

Despite these achievements, Albania continues to have a relatively weak economy, characterised by fragile internal and external macroeconomic balances. Income per capita continues to be among the lowest in Europe. Poverty is most prevalent in the rural areas, especially the remote regions of the country. Almost 30% of all jobs disappeared between 1989 and 2001[1] after rapid dismantling of the centrally planned economy. In addition to the emigration of large portions of the labour force, the unemployment rate more than doubled and many Albanian women withdraw from the labour market. At the same time the fertility decline accelerated in the urban part of the country.

3.2 Demographic trends

During the last 12 years there have been a number of demographic changes in Albania. The introduction of free movement of the citizens has brought large changes in the structure and number of the population and the households in the different geographical areas.

In the period 1979-1989 the population increased by 592 000 (22.8%), while in the period 1989-2001 there was a decrease of 113 000 persons[2] (3.6%). Taking into consideration the

[2] Source: INSTAT/ «The Population of Albania in 2001. Main results of the Population and Housing Census».

fact that Albania has the highest fertility and natural increase in Europe, this decrease can be attributed only to the intensive process of emigration from the country.

The 2001 Census documents these changes and the consequences for the Albanian demography, economy and society. A first major consequence was the outflow of emigrants that followed the opening up of the borders. Hundreds of thousands of Albanians left the country to find jobs and better living conditions in the neighbouring countries and other European and overseas destinations[2].

3.3 Migration

For the last ten years the redistribution of the population inside Albania has been one of the most dramatic features of the Albanian transition. The northern districts lost high proportions of their inhabitants (sometimes 40 to 50 %[2]) mainly through internal migration, the southern districts mainly through emigration. On the other hand the central parts of the country, and especially Tirana, saw a rapid increase in population (43% in Tirana Municipality), leading to a largely uncontrolled process of urbanisation and suburbanisation which put enormous strains on the housing market as well as on infrastructure (water, electricity, roads etc.) and waste management.

The redistribution occurred rapidly and has not followed the normal trends of urbanisation that we see in other countries. The Tirana-Durrës region is the most rapid-growing one and could become a metropolis. More than one fourth (27% in 2001) of the country's population is concentrated in this area and the trend suggests that the region will grow even faster in the future.

As a result the urban/rural structure of the population is also changing. In 1979 only 33.5% of the population was urban while in 2001 this share reached 42.1%. Besides the natural processes of urbanisation, these changes are also due to the active migration flows inside the country with considerable masses of population moving from north to south and from east to west. Most of them are moving from the villages and small towns to the bigger cities. Lapraka (administrative unit no. 11 in Tirana Municipality) is one of the areas with the highest population of newcomers, with a predominance of young people or segments of society that traditionally have a high birth rate. The most popular communes in Tirana District for newcomers are Kamez and Paskuqan north-east of Tirana Municipality, followed by the low-land districts Zall-Herr, Preza, Vaqarr and Vora.

The migration to Tirana and the central areas of Albania can be interpreted as a step towards better living conditions and educational opportunities. The educational level of the Albanian population is relatively high as well as gender equality in the educational system[2]. But the Albanian labour market does not fully reward educational efforts. There is imbalance between available jobs and the qualifications and aspirations of the young generation.

3.4 Sector background

Albania has for many years kept local population registers, called Civil Status registers, in municipalities and communes. In each registry there are four handwritten books, a separate book for each of births, deaths and marriages, and in addition one family book for (current) family composition – with a separate page for each family. Such paper-based registers are

cumbersome to use. In addition they are inadequately updated. These shortcomings hamper the ability of the Government of Albania to provide voter and other civil status data, as well as ID cards and other identification documents.

This system needs to be computerised to improve the quality and efficiency. In addition, the political changes and mass movements within and out of the country during the last decade have caused the registers to be outdated. Many people do not any longer live where they are registered and many events, such as deaths, are frequently not recorded.

The collection of data by the Institute for Social Insurance (ISSH) and the consequent fieldwork and analysis in connection with the 2000 local elections show that the quality of the Civil Status register data is far from satisfactory. According to the Population Census on 1 April 2001 the resident population of Albania was 3 069 000, while the civil status offices reported fully 4 028 000 – or 31% more people - as of 31 December 2000. Of the discrepancy of about 960 000 persons, some 350 000 were found to be duplicates during the preparation of voters' lists for the 2001 elections, while most of the rest of the discrepancy probably were living abroad. For Tirana Municipality the relative discrepancy was even larger, 43.8%, the population figures being 341 000 and 491 000, respectively. In addition several thousands of people are said to live in the most popular in-migration areas in Tirana without being registered there.

For most administrative units in Tirana Municipality CS figures on registered population differ very much from the 2001 Population Census figures, see table 1. With a few exceptions the CS figures are at least 30% higher, up to 80%. However, even census figures may be less reliable. Anyway, the need for clarification is large.

3.5 The present situation of the Civil Status Service

The Civil Status Service is actually facing big difficulties. The huge democratic and demographic changes that have happened in Albania during the last decade, have neither been correctly nor satisfactory reflected by this service, because of the lack of a contemporary legislation and the lack of a new structure able to face the new needs.

Some shortcomings noticed in the Civil Status Service:

1. The present Civil Status Service allows neither state authorities nor others to make quick use of its information, and on the other hand it creates possibilities for abuse.
2. The Civil Status Service was based on the law from 1979 until the end of 2002. The lack of an adequate legislation over a long period, made it impossible to adapt to demographic changes.
3. The citizens' civil status documents are often not transferred after change of place of residence. This happens because the citizens do not report changes or because the civil status offices and/or the post service do not function properly. Taking into consideration the dimension of the demographic movements during the last decade, this lack of reporting causes large inaccuracies regarding the real situation. This is a problem for the assessment of internal migration as well as for emigration abroad.
4. The non-issuing of the ID documents ("leternjoftimi") from 1992 on creates difficulties for the citizens, overload of work for the services and leads to bad practices and even abuse.

5. The methods for documenting and registration of civil status information are very old-fashioned in form, content and physical storage as it is basically unchanged since the period 1950-1974. The storage of information consists of four civil status registers (books): The fundamental register ("family book"), the birth register, the marriage register and the death register.
6. The lack of address system in many areas and towns makes it impossible to enter correct (precise) address data into registers.
7. The service level is very low. The work is to a large extent based on of handwritten registration only. Until now very little has been done to modernise the Civil Status Service. Some projects funded by foreign donors have aimed at computerisation of the civil status offices in some communes and municipalities, but they have not been efficient because computerisation of a national system was not included in any of the projects.
8. In the last 10 years the methodological management and the administrative control of the civil status offices have been almost inexistent. This is a consequence of the fact that the CS' management has been divided between the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Local Government and Decentralisation (MLGD), and from 2002 taken over by MLGD. For this reason no serious efforts have been undertaken for an organised training of the civil status employees. An immediate qualification is needed in this respect.
9. In many cases the working conditions are not appropriate.

3.6 The present activity of the Civil Status Offices (CSOs) in communes and municipalities

The main activity of the civil status offices is the registration of the civil status events and the issuing of certificates that certify the civil status of the citizens. The issuing of the ID documents (leternjoftimi) was interrupted in 1992 and not resumed.

3.6.1. The registration of the civil status events

The civil status events births, marriages, deaths, and changes of name, are initially registered in the respective books of acts (births, marriages, deaths) by handwriting and after that they are registered in the fundamental register by handwriting in the respective rubrics. The CSOs reflect changes such as divorces, adoptions and migrations directly in the fundamental register.

3.6.2. The issuing of certificates

The family, birth, marriage and death certificates are the most frequently requested. The civil status offices issue even other certificates for persons living abroad who have no more an Albanian citizenship.

The certificates are filled in by handwriting. After a stamp is put on the certificate, it is signed and sealed.

The tables 1 and 2 below give an indication of the volume of the work done by the civil status offices in Albania:

Table 1. Number of certificates issued in 2001 in the municipality of Tirana and different population figures

Adm. unit in Tirana	Number of certificates issued 2001	Population per 31 December 2001 CS figures	Population per 1 April 2001 Census figures	Discrepancy CS - Census	Percentage discrepancy from Census
1	60 000[3]	69 093[3]	23 040	46 053[4]	199.9[4]
2	31 280[3]	35 000[3]	42 784	- 7 784[4]	- 18.2[4]
3	31 500	32 000	28 831	3 169	11.0
4	55 080	55 977	33 583	22 394	66.7
5	58 650	53 700	41 831	11 869	28.4
6	37 400	46 121	30 948	15 173	49.0
7	46 000	45 569	38 283	7 286	19.0
8	35 160	35 182	23 719	11 463	48.3
9	30 000	40 630	29 544	11 086	37.5
10	40 000	23 775	13 084	10 691	81.7
11	48 168	54 000	35 806	18 194	50.8
Total	473 238	491 047	341 453	149 594	43.8

Sources: CS offices in Tirana and INSTAT (2001 Population and Housing Census).

Table 2. Number of vital events in Albania. Annual average.

Period	Live births	Marriages	Deaths
1975-1980	71 336	20 117	16 789
1981-1990	77 725	26 364	17 361
1991-2000	68 364	26 286	17 732
2001	52 715	25 717	15 813

Source: INSTAT.

3.6.3. Other services offered by the CSOs

- *The voters' register*. The updating of the voters' register is continuously done based on the forms filled in by the CSOs in handwriting. The updating covers persons 18 years old and more, deaths, migration in and out for each commune/municipality.

- *The central register of the Social Insurance Institute (ISSH).* The CSOs in communes/municipalities must every month fill in special forms for ISSH, reporting births and deaths. These data are used by the ISSH in order to assign social insurance numbers (personal identification numbers) according to law No 7845, dated 13 July 1994 "On social security number".

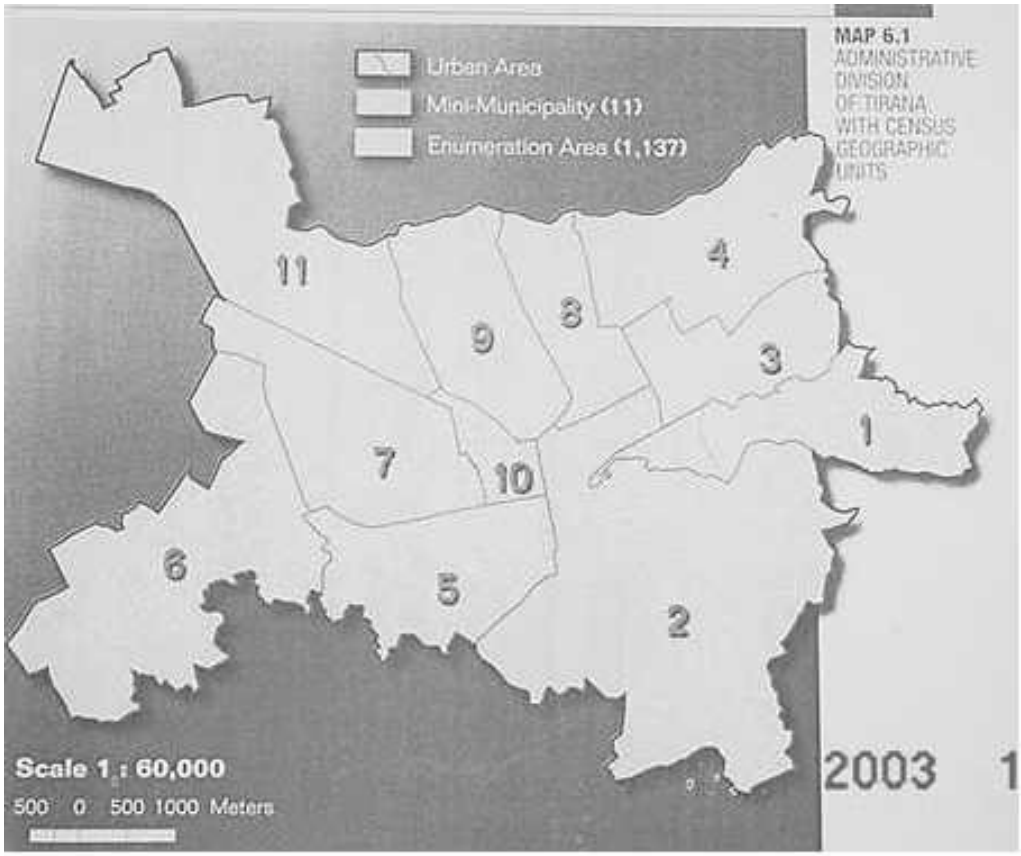
- *The Institute of Statistics (INSTAT)***.** The CSOs in communes and municipalities must every month fill in special forms for INSTAT regarding births, marriages, deaths and other information.

- *Military Office*. The CSOs in communes and municipalities must, upon request of the Military Office, prepare a list of new recruits.

[3] Figures are not given according to the correct borders between these two neighbouring administrative units.

[4] If Tirana no. 1 and 2 are considered as one unit the discrepancy is 38 269 or 58.1%.

Figure 2. Administrative division of Tirana



3.7 The start of the modernisation process of the Civil Status Service

The modernisation of the Civil Status Service is the priority of the Ministry of Local Government and Decentralisation. For this purpose an ambitious reform has been initiated. The main aspects of this reform are:

- Accomplishment of the necessary legal framework
- Reorganisation of the Civil Status Service
- Improvement of the content of the fundamental registers (family books).
- Computerisation of the Civil Status Service
- Training of the civil status employees

3.7.1. Accomplishment of the necessary legal framework

The new package of laws for the Civil Status represents the necessary legal base for the work of the Civil Status Service. Recently (13.11.2002) the new package of laws was approved. Consisting of the law No 8950, dated 10.10.2002 “On the Civil Status” and the law No 8951, dated 10.10.2002 “On the identification number of the citizens” and the law No 8952, dated 10.10.2002 “On the identification document of the Albanian citizens”. (The first and third laws have been in force from 28.11.2002, while the second one will be in force from 13.11.03.)

The elements of this package are:
Firstly, the introduction of the official identification (ID) number as a new component of the civil status, as a personal and unique number for each citizen (all residents). The ID number will be the main identification element. The introduction of the ID number will facilitate the work and will increase the confidence in the different state institutions. The existence of the ID number will make it difficult to abuse the identity of individuals.

Secondly, the new legislation has removed the obstacles for the computerisation of the Civil Status Service and the establishment of the National Register of Civil Status. The National Civil Status Register is a central database where components of civil status for every resident of Albania are included, based on information sent by the local offices of civil status through an "on-line" system or physical transfer of data on CD or diskette by mail.

A well established National Register of Civil Status will permit online access of the civil status data for many users who need civil status information as a data source, like taxation, customs, social and health insurance, justice, defence, Central Election Commission, INSTAT, and many others, including private users.

The sub-legal acts, regulations, manuals etc to be introduced will make this package more functional.

A comprehensive body of laws etc. with relevance for civil registration has been issued by MLGD recently (dated January 2003).

3.7.2. Reorganisation of the Civil Status Service

The work on the creation of the new structure of this service has been completed. This is explained in more detail under 3.8 Institutional settings and in Annex 3.

3.7.3. Improvement of the contents of the civil status registers

The improvement of the existing registers is a task that will be focused on in the Civil Status Service activity. Updating is a crucial point. The lack of updating is due to non-transfer of the documents from one CS office to another because of no reporting from the citizens who move or bad work done by the civil status offices or the postal service. The communes, municipalities and the prefectures have started organised work in order to improve this situation.

Another problem with the registers is the lack of street names and a numbering system of buildings. This is the competence of the council of the municipality/commune but they have not done their job properly. There is a need for a better institutional collaboration between the central and the local government. A national address system has to be considered, including numbering of houses/buildings.

The improvement of the registers' content will create a better base and will create more confidence in the computerised system.

3.7.4. Computerisation of the Civil Status Service

The computerisation of the Civil Status Service will be realised in phases because of the big volume and the high cost of the work. This issue will be explained further in chapter 4.10.

3.7.5. Training of the civil status employees

A deep reform of the Civil Status Service asks for qualified staff of the civil status offices, which is able to respond to the new requirements of the service and to the technology applied. The employees of the counsellor service and embassies abroad will also be subject of this qualification.

The Civil Status Service, being the responsibility of the central government, is a delegated function of local authorities.

3.8 Institutional setting

Until recently the administrative and methodological organisation of the Civil Status Service was distributed between different ministries at the same time, like the Ministry of Justice and the MLGD. This multiple responsibility has created a lot of difficulties and problems. Now only the Ministry of Local Government and Decentralisation is responsible. The restructuring of the Civil Status system is one aspect of the modernisation reform. During 2002 the MLGD has made serious efforts to transform the situation in this sector and to start the modernisation reform. The Directory of Civil Status was established within the MLGD in order to support this process.

A more detailed description of the Civil Status Service is given in Annex 3.

4. The Project

4.1 A national population register system

4.1.1. The Vision

The vision is a national population (civil) register system which would allow local offices to access a data base at any time to learn, for each individual and each family, their situation and history. Hence, they would be able to print demographic certificates needed for any purpose needed, at the time needed. The local offices would at the same time be the backbone of the system and contribute by receiving, checking and recording changes such as births, marriages, deaths, in- and out-migrations, and name changes.

A centrally coordinated civil register database will ensure that notifications about migrations are correctly recorded, i.e. that an out-migration from one commune/municipality is recorded as an in-migration to another commune/municipality (or as an emigration to another country). This can be taken care of by the central civil status register database. The computer will also do a number of checks of notifications of migrations and other events, for example, by checking that a mother is between 12 and 50 years older than her child, that a person who is getting married is not already registered as married, that the dates of birth of the parents of a child are correct, etc.

Regularly updated register information may be used for a number of administrative purposes, such as voters' lists, tax collection, social security benefits, health care, school enrolment and ID cards. Thus, modern civil registers are important for the development of democracy and good governance. They are also an important source for the production of updated demographic statistics at local and national level.

4.1.2. Development Objectives

The development objective is to have a well-functioning modern national population register that will be a substantial contribution to the stabilisation and further development of democracy and good governance in Albania. This contribution will find expression in a variety of modes and in various segments of the society and social life:

- Reliable civil registration (without duplicates or undercoverage) will secure the citizens' right to vote and contribute to fair elections.

- The register will make a reliable basis for issuing ID cards

- Timely and correct official statistics is an indispensable tool in both developing and developed societies. Updated population, vital and migration figures at local and national level are a prerequisite for efficient planning in the areas of public administration, industry, housing, schooling, transport, military service, not to mention the social sector, such as health care and education.

- Transparency in the civil registration at all levels, from national (reliable figures) down to micro level (correct family registration) will hamper shady activities and contribute in the fight against corruption and crime in general.

- In the end, by creating a more efficient central and local administration and improved conditions for public and private enterprise and civil society in general, reduced poverty and improved living conditions are envisaged.

4.2 Population registration: Useful for what?

In a modern society more than traditional civil status information is needed. Other information, which may change over time, is also often requested, for example, about where a resident lives, according to rules fixed by law and regulations. It is important to be able to identify, count or make lists of various groups of residents for different purposes, like school enrolment, health services, taxation, social benefits, etc.

Hence, such register data should be made available not only for Albanian government authorities, but also for other users - for a number of different purposes. The access to population register data has, however, to be strictly regulated by law, depending on the kind of user and purpose.

Each of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) has several thousands of online users of “population register” data. Among these users are national insurance administration, school enrolment authorities, military conscription service, police, directorate of roads (names of driving license holders), town treasurers, the national broadcasting corporation’s license office, hospitals (names of residents in the district), banks and insurance companies.

A modern society also needs information in the form of statistics as basis for decisions and planning. Civil registration – extended towards “population registration” - may serve as a very valuable source for population and vital statistics and also for migration statistics. This multi-purpose use is an important advantage of such a system, which may be called the Nordic or Scandinavian model. The possibility of extending civil registration by matching the register

with information from other registers or sources should be explored for Albania as well. The legislation should allow for the possibility for such extended use.

It would be a great advantage if civil registration and population registration could be dealt with by the same central (national) office and by the same local offices. Such registration activities should be closely integrated. With a central population register database, that is a national register organised according to the most efficient information technology (IT) principles, access to information about the total Albanian population could be established from any institution in Albania that has been authorised to do this.

In the future the usefulness of the population registration system could be expanded through the development of auxiliary registers, such as address registers. If each address has a unique numerical code in an address register, it is not necessary to enter the (long) address (written by letters) together with each person in the population register. Instead the address code could be entered for each person. The complete addresses could be obtained by matching the population register with the address register, using the address code as the key. An advantage of this is that in case an address is changed, for example, if a street is given a new name, it would not be necessary to change the address in the population register for all persons living in that street - only one street name in the address register would need to be changed.

4.3 An additional feature: An official personal ID number

To ensure that the national population register system is well coordinated, to avoid duplication and to simplify the recording of demographic changes, a unique personal identity number should be introduced. This may also be used as identity number for families.

Such a personal ID has the potential to serve other purposes as well, ranging from control of public service provisions to commercial purposes such as credit and bankcards. The ID number to be chosen should become the future official personal ID in Albania. The law “On identification number of the citizens”, which will be in force from 13 November 2003, prescribes a number according to the composition of the social security number. However, the decision whether the ID numbers already assigned by the Social Insurance Institute (ISSH) should be utilised or not still needs to be taken by the Council of Ministers..

4.4 More than traditional “civil status”

The proposed modernised system is based mainly on the “population register” approach that has been used in all Nordic and a few other countries (including Belgium) since the 1960s. The system will obviously have to be adapted to Albanian conditions. “Population registration” is in some ways a wider concept than “civil registration”. The traditional “civil status” covers primarily births, deaths, marriages and divorces. One of the most important differences is that “population registration” includes definition and registration of *place of residence* (address or area). Such geographical information is essential in a modern society, for administrative as well as for statistical purposes. This geographical dimension, which will include information at local as well as national and district level, will be particularly useful for local decision-makers, cf. the plans for decentralisation of power in Albania.

Traditional “civil status” registration implies a relatively stable (“passive”) listing of Albanian citizens, identified by name, father’s name, mother’s name, date and place of birth. Except for marital status and family name (for women), most information remains unchanged over time. The area of application of such registration is relatively limited, even after computerisation,

particularly if place of residence is not clearly defined and registered.

4.5 Computerisation

One aspect of modernisation is “computerisation”, which implies computerisation (data entry) of the information registered and received by all local registers. To do this it is necessary to introduce suitable computer hardware and software. In order to computerise the registration system so that manual routines could be avoided, all handwritten registers (books) should ideally be entered into the computer, preferably going back to 1974. Priority should be given to computerisation of the most recent demographic events (years) in order to make a basis for future updating. However, it should be noted that it is not enough just to enter the family composition according to the family book, which seems to have been the case in most or all of the local modernisation projects. The other books should be computerised also to allow for consistency checks to be carried out.

4.6 Structure and content

Modernisation includes much more than computerisation. Modern population registration differs from traditional civil registration also with regard to *structure* and *contents.*

While computerising the data, which includes the use of numerical codes in addition to text, makes it easier to store, edit and exchange information, the full advantage of a modern system will only be achieved if *all* local registries are modernised. The elements of this modernisation include appropriate hardware and software, a national personal identification number (ID), definitions of relevant concepts, legislation, regulations, instructions, inspections, etc. This will enable checking and matching of individual records, also at the national level.

The more variables that are included in the system the more useful the system will become as a source of information for the authorities, both for administrative use and as a basis for statistics. Examples of (additional) variables in modern population registration are: number of children and links to all of them from the parents; parents and links to them from the children, adoption, custody of children, address (place of residence), postal address, country immigrated from, country emigrated to, residence permit, work permit, loss of the right to vote, and change of name. Additional variables will give more possibilities for logical checks of completeness and consistency, which will contribute to improved data quality. However, it is advantageous to have many variables only if the quality is satisfactory and that necessary updating is done regularly.

In modern population register systems there are variables showing the date each event took place, for example, a marriage. In addition, every variable is accompanied by a technical variable with the date of *entry* into the register. Consequently, the chronological order of the events will in principle be correct in the database even if the reporting of some events is more delayed than others. In this way it is possible to give a more reliable description of the situation on a given date and it is easier to keep a correct history for each individual.

4.7 Batch versus on-line processing of data

A central computerised register (database) for all of Albania will make the local manual registries superfluous some time in the future. The individual data on vital events (births, deaths, etc.) for updating the central database may be entered locally through an online system

connected to the central register. Alternatively, such data may be entered through a batch system, which means transfer of a large amount of data via diskette, telephone or Internet. The modernisation has to be adapted to local conditions, such as electricity supply and office facilities. It should be noted that an online system is no “must” in order to have a well functioning system with a central register. For example, in Norway's population registration system, the local offices became fully computerised with online connection to the central register as late as in 1993.

4.8 National ID card

Several institutions have expressed a strong need for a national (official) Albanian identity card. Such ID cards could be an important outcome of the modernisation project, but it is essential that these cards not be issued until the quality of the civil registers has been sufficiently improved. The ID cards would have to be issued strictly according to registered data, preferably as direct printouts from the computerised central register. In order to improve the quality of the current civil register data the official personal ID number has to be introduced. Name, date of birth, sex, and father’s name have been proven insufficient as reliable identification criteria, as experienced when the voters' ID cards were prepared before the local elections in 2000.

4.9 History in brief

- The first initiative on this project was taken by Helge Brunborg of Statistics Norway in 1999, when he was member of a Council of Europe expert group for the Albanian 2001 population census. In particular, he had been asked to look at the relations between the census and other registers. While doing this he realised the strong need to modernise and update the existing manual book-based system.
- In connection with activities to prepare a basis for electoral lists for the Parliamentary elections in 2001 OSCE asked the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to fund technical support from Statistics Norway. This was granted and four Statistics Norway experts visited Tirana in January 2000.
- Since OSCE proved to be mostly interested in elections, and not in civil registration, a bilateral project funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was proposed. A project proposal for modernisation of the civil registration system (dated 8 November 2000) was sent from the Norwegian Embassy to the Government of Albania in November 2000.
- The project proposal was also presented to the Albanian authorities at a meeting in Tirana 21 March 2001, where it was well received.
- The draft Civil Status Law was discussed at a two-day meeting in the Ministry of Justice 19-20 March 2001, where experts from Statistics Norway and Council of Europe, as well as Albanian experts, gave oral and written comments.
- In April-May 2001 a large working group was appointed and the responsibility for the project was placed in MLG.
- In June 2001 the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs granted 4.0 million NOK to Statistics Norway to cover activities in 2001.
- On the basis of this grant Statistics Norway recruited a long-term resident consultant, who was established with an office and a project assistant (coordinator) in Tirana in October/November 2001. In 2002 Statistics Norway spent considerable effort on preparatory work, advice on the revision of the civil status and other relevant laws, and to establish Albanian ownership of the project.

- Due to various circumstances such as changing government and an unclear situation as to responsibility on the Albanian side, very little progress was made until March 2002, when a period of progress started with project discussions and work on the draft Law on Civil Status.
- A revised project proposal (dated 22 May 2002) was presented to MLGD and to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which funded the first part of the pilot project.
- In July 2002 a Directory of Civil Status was established in MLGD and a director and two employees were appointed. The draft Law on Civil Status was approved by the Government, together with laws on ID number and ID document.
- The laws were approved by the Parliament on 10 October 2002 and the laws on Civil Status and on ID document have been in force since 28 November 2002. The law on ID number will be in force from 13 November 2003.
- In August 2002 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway transferred the responsibility for the second part of the pilot project to NORAD, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation.
- During autumn 2002 much effort was spent on preparation of an agreement between MLGD and Statistics Norway and on a separate project document comprising the first part of the pilot phase. The agreement, called 'Protocol' was signed 13 and 16 January 2003, respectively. The Protocol gives flexibility as to timing, since it will remain into force until both parties have fulfilled their obligations.

4.10 A modernisation project

4.10.1. Project Objectives

The final objective of the current initiative is *an improved administrative and computerised registration system* for all of Albania. Thus, the outcome of the modernisation project to be funded by the Norwegian Government is a *system* and not a specific computer file with data for everybody living in Albania or having the right to vote.

For the entire civil status system in Albania to be functioning in a modern and efficient way all civil status offices need to be modernised. This is a large and time-consuming project, which would require additional funding from other donors as well as from the Albanian Government

The objectives of the pilot project – which is to be funded mainly during this application - is to develop a system that could be tested out on computerised data from a limited number of local registries in order to gain experience before starting the full-scale modernisation. This includes the modernised local pilot registries, a central register (database) and a network and system for exchange of data between local registries and the central register.

The pilot phase will comprise completion of computerisation of 16 local civil register offices, including routines for data entry, data checking, issuance of birth certificates, etc.

4.10.2. A project in three phases

Statistics Norway presented a proposal for modernising the Civil Status system to the Government of Albania on 21 March 2001 based on a memo dated 8 November 2000. In this project proposal three phases were outlined: The first is a planning phase, the second a pilot phase, and in the third phase the full (nationwide) modernisation of all civil status registers of Albania. The last phase was, however, considered to be too extensive for Norway to fund

alone and it was suggested that funding of this phase could be sought among international donors after the pilot phase had been implemented, reviewed and evaluated.

The main ideas of the proposal of 8 November 2000 are still valid, although the proposal has later been revised on 22 May 2002. However, due to developments since then the pilot phase may include more components than originally envisaged, in particular it includes more pilot offices. Moreover, due to administrative requirements in Norway the pilot phase had to be divided into two parts, 1.12.2002 - 31.3.2003 and 1.4.2003 - 31.12.2004. The reasons for this are explained below.

4.11 Why two parts of the pilot phase?

Based on the project proposal of 8 November 2000 and a revised budget the project was approved by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in June 2001. The two initial phases, the planning phase and the pilot phase, were initially planned to be finished in 2001. The total budget for these phases was originally estimated at 7.6 million NOK[5], of which the Ministry granted 4.0 million NOK to Statistics Norway to cover activities in 2001, according to the revised timetable, which assumed completion of the pilot phase in 2002.

Due to the delay in starting the project only a minor part of the grant was spent in 2001 and the remaining funds were transferred for use in 2002. The planned activities were further delayed in 2002, resulting in an unused amount of about 1.6 million NOK as of 1 December 2002. The MFA of Norway has agreed that the remaining part of this amount may be transferred to 2003.

A protocol about the planned activities for this amount for the period 1 December 2002 - 31 March 2003 was signed by the Ministry of Local Government and Decentralisation and Statistics Norway in January 2003.

The present document describes first of all the second part of the pilot phase - the period after 1 April 2003. However, since these two parts are very closely linked to each other, and since the first one started in January 2003, the present document is in fact presenting the whole pilot phase in order to give an overview of the project. In the presentation of the strategy even the last phase (nationwide modernisation) has been included.

Since the two first phases required more time and efforts for implementation than originally planned, a revised project proposal with a total budget of NOK 9.5 million was presented to the MFA of Norway in June 2002, including the 4.0 million NOK already granted to Statistics Norway for the project for the year 2001. However, the Ministry did not review the revised project proposal, since it in August 2002 transferred responsibility for implementing financial support to the project to NORAD.

4.12 Overview of the pilot phase

There have been several interesting developments since work started on this project in 2000, and also earlier, but which have not been subject to sufficient awareness:

- Software to computerise local civil register offices has been developed, implemented and used.

[5] With an exchange rate of 1 USD = 7.5 NOK, 7.6 mill. NOK is about 1 mill. USD.

- A total of 13 local civil status offices have been partly computerised, yielding valuable experience, which reduces the need for an extended pilot phase.
- The need for reliable voters' lists is becoming increasingly urgent. This need has been strengthened by the problems in creating reliable voters' lists from civil registry sources, door-to-door enumeration and population census data. It has now been agreed upon - in a round-table conference arranged by OSCE/ODIHR on 3 December 2002 - that future voters' list (except for the 2003 Election) should be based on the civil registry sources only.
- The project budget may cover more activities than originally planned since the Government of Albania will pay for most of the labour costs, the recurrent costs for register offices turn out to be considerably less than estimated, and also since the exchange rate of the Norwegian *krone* has strengthened significantly.

4.13 Other donor projects/involvement in the civil status modernisation

Some projects for computerising Civil Status Offices have been initiated quite some time back. During the last 6-7 years at least 13 local civil status modernisation projects have been initiated and partly implemented. For various reasons none of these investments have been fully exploited. One reason is the lack of co-ordination, even if the same software has been used in most of these projects. The primary cause for the lack of full utilisation of these attempts at modernising the registers is, however, that there has been no regular updating of them with information on new births, deaths, migrations, etc. since they were computerised. Thus, these registers represent nothing but a picture of a historical situation and not an up-to-date register that can be used for daily administrative and other routines. Consequently, this picture becomes more and more outdated as time passes and new events occur. A brief description of these projects is as follows:

The Social Insurance Institute (ISSH) has undertaken a related project of creating a computerised database of the - in principle - whole Civil Registry for the purpose of issuing a unique social insurance number (SIN) to all Albanians. This project has collected, on Optical Character Recognition (OCR) forms, the names and other selected data fields of 3.85 million Albanians from the nation's civil register books between September 1997 and December 1998. Data capture and validation of these forms have been completed. The problem with these data, in addition to incompleteness of the Civil Registers, is that essential fields have been left out, such as marital status and date of marriage. Finally, records of births in a period of maximum one year during the data collection period are lacking.

In 1994 the first such attempt was made by the European Commission's project known as the ALGTAF project, as part of an overall effort at modernising the regional public administration[6]. Initially this covered two civil registration offices – one in the municipality of Korça and another in administrative unit no. 10 within the municipality of Tirana. However, the computers for these units were stolen during the 1997 riots and the project should be looked upon abandoned. Suitable software was developed by the local company INTECH, as subcontractor of Euro-Services Development Company.

[6] Project #AL9404GTAF.

In 1996 **the Soros Foundation** through its Public Administration Program financed a project on computerisation of the civil registry in Shkoder. This project was interrupted during the events of 1997 but restarted in 2000. Soros Foundation considers this project as completed.

The Soros Foundation furthermore, through the same program, financed a project on computerisation of the civil registry in the municipalities of Gjirokaster and Pogradec in 2000 and in the administrative unit no. 11 in Tirana in 2001.

In 1998, with Dutch aid, a civil registry project was undertaken in March 1998 – February 1999 in administrative unit no. 10 in Tirana, with software developed by INTECH. This project was considered as completed, although there for a long time was no continuous updating of the register. However, since autumn 2002 some updating has been done.

In 1998 another pilot project, covering six locations, Vlore, Kavaje, Gjergjan, Dhiver, Koder Thumane and Lure, was undertaken by **ODIHR** (The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights)**.** Data on individuals were collected through door-to-door enumeration and subsequently entered into a computer database through appropriate software created by INTECH. Each local computerised database was compared with the existing records in the Civil Status register. During this process the quality of the database was considerably improved. These databases were handed over to the relevant local bodies in February 1999. However, they are not being used in the day-to-day operations of the local civil registries.

Taking all these projects into account it seems possible to do much more in the pilot phase than originally proposed, since a large part of the manual registers has already been computerised in these offices. In particular, it would be possible to complete the modernisation of all of Tirana, together with efforts by other donors. In addition the pilot project could provide technical assistance and equipment for the central office, the General Directory of Civil Status. See table 3 for the plan for modernising local offices during the pilot phase.

To sum up, the total budget for the two parts of the pilot phase is 6.9 million NOK (1.6 and 5.3 million, respectively). The amount of 1.6 million NOK is available from the original MFA allocation for 2001. The activities to be covered in the pilot phase have been worked out in collaboration between representatives of MLGD and Statistics Norway.

Table 3. Plan for modernisation of local civil status offices in the pilot phase[1]

Office	Prefecture (Qark)	District	Population[2] CS figures	Records to be entered	Total costs, USD	Data entry, USD
First part - to be started during 1.12.2002-31.3.2003						
Tirana 3	Tirana	Tirana	32 000	16 000	1 600	1 600
Tirana 7	Tirana	Tirana	46 000	23 000	2 300	2 300
Tirana 10[3]	Tirana	Tirana	24 000	-	-	-
Tirana 11[3]	Tirana	Tirana	54 000	-	-	-
Preza commune	Tirana	Tirana	5 900	-	-	-
Kavaja municipality[3]	Tirana	Kavaja	*24 800*	-	-	-
Klos municipality	Diber	Mat	13 000	11 700	1 800	1 800
Second part - to be started after 31.3.2003						
Tirana 1	Tirana	Tirana	70 000	112 000	29 800	16 800
Tirana 2	Tirana	Tirana	35 000[4]	56 000	21 400	8 400
Tirana 4	Tirana	Tirana	56 000	89 600	26 400	13 400
Tirana 5	Tirana	Tirana	54 000	86 400	26 000	13 000
Golem commune	Tirana	Kavaja	9 400	18 000	8 000	2 700
Kavaja District Centre	Tirana	Kavaja	.	-	6 200	-
Koder Thumane com.	Durres	Kruja	*13 100*	13 100	6 600	1 300
Total			ca 440 000	425 800	130 100	61 300
The Municipality of Padua has proposed to fund and advice on the modernisation of the following offices, probably starting after 31.3.2003						
Tirana 6	Tirana	Tirana	46 000	46 000	20 000	7 000
Tirana 8	Tirana	Tirana	35 000	35 000	16 500	5 400
Tirana 9	Tirana	Tirana	41 000	41 000	19 300	6 300
Total			122 000	122 000	55 800	18 700

1 Figures on costs and records to be entered do only cover the activities to be funded by NORAD. Tirana 3, 7, 10 and 11, together with Preza and Klos have partly or fully been funded from other sources.
2 Population figures in *italics* refer to the 2001 Population Census.
3 The data entry in these offices has already started or has been finished as part of separate projects funded or organised by other international agencies, such as ODIHR, IFES and SOROS.
4 The figure has been corrected from 85 000 in a previous version.

4.14 The first part of the pilot phase, 1.12.2002 – 31.3.2003[7]

The plan for the first part of the pilot phase was to contribute to the modernisation of the Tirana administrative units number 3, 7, 10 and 11 and Kavaja Municipality, as well as the rural commune of Preza and the mainly rural municipality of Klos in the Mat district.

During this period Statistics Norway has been providing technical and some financial assistance to the establishment of the General Directory of Civil Status. The financial assistance during this period was rather limited, however, since the Directory is not expected to move into permanent premises during the first half of 2003.

An important part of Statistics Norway's assistance to the Directory during this period has been to prepare a brief plan with cost estimates for the modernisation of the whole civil status service in Albania as well as to start designing the specifications for a tender for the software and hardware required for this. These specifications will include software for the local offices

[7] Dates according to planning mission in November 2002. Since activities started later than envisaged, this part has been prolonged in accordance with the Protocol, see 4.9, last ball point

and the Directory as well as for the exchange of information between the local offices and the central database.

Another important activity during this period was a study tour to Norway for senior people involved in the modernisation project. The tour, with a duration of one week, included visits to Statistics Norway, the Central Population Register, local population registers, and some users of population register data.

The principles behind the choice of the local offices to be modernised in the first part of the pilot phase were:

- Some offices (Tirana administrative units no. 10 and 11 and Kavaja Municipality) had already started or have completed computerisation of the "fundamental registers" (that include data on all persons registered by the office, organised by family). This saves money on data entry and enables an earlier start of modernising the daily running of a civil status office, such as using computer printouts for certificates (to be signed, sealed and stamped).
- For some offices there was an urgent need for computerisation due to a large discrepancy between the registered and the actual population (Tirana 3 and 7, according to Tirana Municipality).
- NORAD expressed a strong interest in modernising one commune in the Burrel region, since NORAD is involved in funding a water project in that area.
- There was a need to obtain experience from the computerisation of some rural communes. The proposed administrative units for this were Preza, northwest of Tirana, and the municipality of Klos near Burrel, which is an administrative unit comprising a small city and 13 villages.

4.15 The second part of the pilot phase, 1.7.2003 – 31.12.2004[8]

During the second part of the pilot phase, especially in 2003, Statistics Norway is willing to provide substantial technical assistance to the General Directory of Civil Status as well as preparation for and administration of tenders, and will procure the hardware and software that is required in the pilot phase.

Important tasks will be to assist in developing the General Directory of Civil Status and establishing the National Civil Status Register (the central database), to assist in improving routines, preparing sub-legal acts, manuals, regulations etc., and to design specifications for a tender for the software to be used after the pilot phase. Assistance will also be given on planning a service for distribution of Civil Status data from the National Civil Status Register and on improving the addresses, aiming at a uniform national system.

Statistics Norway will also help in setting up a computerised system for exchange of data between local offices and the central database and start implementing the procedures for doing this as the pilot offices complete the modernisation process.[9]

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[8] In previous versions designed to start 1.4.2003.

[9] There will be a period when some local offices have been modernised whereas others have not yet started this process. This interim period will present special challenges, for example, for cases of transfer of civil status documents (family moves) from a traditional to a modernised CS office or vice versa.

As to the remaining work on the (brief) plan, including cost estimates, for the *nationwide* modernisation of the Civil Registration System MLGD has decided to have an open international tender.

In the second part of the pilot phase the plan is to contribute to the modernisation as follows:

- The administrative units number 1, 2, 4 and 5 of Tirana, which have the most severe civil status register problems, at least when comparing with census figures, see table 1, chapter 3.6.2. This would, probably, complete the computerisation of Tirana, since the Municipality of Padua in Italy has proposed to modernise Tirana administrative units number 6, 8 and 9 with funds from the European Commission, if granted, and possibly also their own funds. An application for funding the proposal from Padua has been sent to the European Commission by Associazione di Cooperazione allo Sviluppo on behalf of a partnership, but no answer has been received yet.
- Modernising the commune of Koder Thumane, which has an urgent need for a new civil register since the existing register was burned in 1997. There was door-to-door enumeration in 1998 to collect new data but this will probably have to be repeated. Statistics Norway is, however, not planning to contribute to the data collection as such in Koder Thumane, only to the modernisation process.
- Gaining experience from the transfer of data from a rural commune (Golem) to a district centre (Kavaja) and from the district centre to the national database.
- After data entry the CS data need to be checked and cleaned. Possible checks during the data entering process should be carried out as a part of the data entry. Clearly, as long as all CS data have not been transferred to the central database, this cannot be done in full scale. But checks against computerised records of births, deaths and marriages are expected to increase consistency considerably. Hence, in the second part of the pilot phase the books containing these records will be computerised as well.
- In the budget is also included hardware, software, data entry and training for Tirana no. 6, 8 and 9, in case the Municipality of Padua will meet problems in getting funding in due time. In this way the advantage of covering the whole of Tirana in the pilot phase will be secured. However, these budget figures do not cover the books of births, deaths and marriages.

The *real* modernisation of a civil status office begins only *after* the data in the fundamental registers ("family books") have been computerised. This is when all new births, deaths, marriages, divorces, name changes, transfers from other offices, etc. need to be entered into the computer on a regular basis, preferably daily, to keep the register continuously updated. Moreover, the existing Civil Status data need to be checked for errors, including duplicates, and technical and legal procedures for corrections need to be worked out. This is the stage where technical assistance from Statistics Norway, based on almost forty years of experience with the Norwegian Central Population Register, probably will be of the greatest value to Albania.

4.15.1. Outputs

To achieve this, the selected local offices will be equipped with computers, printers and other hardware to secure power supply. Available software will be installed, and the employees will be given the necessary training.

A central office (General Directory of Civil Status) will be equipped with the necessary hardware and software to establish a national database, manage and supervise the local

registries as soon as permanent premises are ready. The central office will be the distributor of mass information to governmental and other users.

The software specifications for the local offices and the Directory as well as those for the exchange of information between the local offices and the central database will be finished.

4.15.2. Indicators

Indicators are suggested to monitor the attainment of the objectives at the different levels. Examples of such indicators are: Work load/cost per certificate, waiting time to get a certificate, degree of update as to reporting of births, deaths etc, accuracy as to registered address.

A comprehensive list is presented in Annex 1.

4.15.3. Activities

The main activities will be planning, preparation of by-laws and instructions, procurement, administration of tenders, training, computerisation of CS registers (books), checking and cleaning of data, testing different methods of transferring information between offices, and study visits.

4.15.4. Inputs

Inputs will comprise consultancy service for planning, design, supervision, technical assistance, training of employees, deliveries of equipment, hiring opererators for data entry.

4.15.5. IT hardware, other equipment

Statistics Norway will procure hardware and other computer equipment needed for the General Directory of Civil Status and the local pilot offices, if necessary or appropriate through tender procedures.

4.15.6. Software

Statistics Norway will prepare specifications for the tender of software, partly based on experience from the first part of the pilot phase. The plan is to assess the two software products that have already been developed by the Albanian firms Intech and Infoshkodra, and used in local modernisation projects.

4.15.7. Training

To increase the understanding of the Nordic model, possibilities and limitations, some study visits to Norway are planned, as indicated in the budget. The study visits are relevant not only for Civil Status directors and staff, but also for staff from other institutions which will use civil status data, such as INSTAT and ISSH. The local personnel in pilot offices need software training and possibly general PC training.

4.16 Costs and budget

The costs for the phases to be covered by the Norwegian Government were early (2001) roughly estimated at about USD 840 000 or NOK 7.6 million. As mentioned earlier, the Norwegian MFA has already contributed NOK 4.0 million to the project, of which 1.6 million was unused as of 1 December 2002, available for the first part of the pilot phase.

Based upon additional knowledge and a slightly modified approach, the budget for the second part of the pilot phase has been recalculated, and to finalise the second part of the pilot phase an amount of NOK 5.3 million or USD 741 000 will be needed. In the updated calculationsan exchange rate of 1 USD = 7.20 NOK is assumed, corresponding to the rate as per April 2003.

An explanation of cost estimates (unit costs) is given in Annex 4.

5. External effects

5.1 Relevance

Rehabilitation and improvement of infrastructure services are priority areas in the programs prepared for rebuilding of the South East European countries.

Modernisation of the Civil Status Service has very high priority by the Albanian Government. The political parties and the Central Election Committee (CEC) have for a long time underlined the need for a better basis for the voters' lists. At a round-table arranged by OSCE/ODIHR on 3 December 2002, it was agreed that the basis for voters' lists for futureelections (from 2005 on) should be civil status registers only.

The whole Albanian community has for more than a decade suffered from poor civil registration. Around 1997 there was no control of the registration and even later the quality is said to be insufficient. A lot of false certificates have been issued. There are huge discrepancies between population figures based on CS registers and figures from the last population and housing census. The need for improving the existing civil status registration is obvious.

The described Project will improve the civil registration to an acceptable level with regard to service to the citizens as well as data quality. The latter aspect is important for many reasons, among them the preparation of voters' lists.

5.2 Institutional Aspects

Besides the big advantage for the Civil Status Service of having reliable information on the resident population it will be of great importance for governmental as well as for other users of CS data to get good access to and share this valuable data source. The computerisation of the CS data, together with the database structure of the national register, will ensure a lot of different approaches for utilisation of the data, opposed to the present situation with manual books. With online connection to the database, at least in the future, different official authorities could easily share these data, and achieve a more effective management.

Consequently the residents would not need to ask for and present to the authorities so many certificates as is the case now. This again will reduce the need for service to the public in the local CS offices.

5.3 Sustainability

After the modernised Civil Registration System has been established, it should be able to continue "on its own", without international support. The potential for this should be promising, since there is a strong will and need in the Albanian Government to modernise the CS system and since a central and direct structure has been established. The local structure exists already. However, the central structure needs to be strongly supported by the Government in the future in order to survey and secure a well functioning Civil Status service. The project should also be financially sustainable, given that the local employees are already in place and being sufficiently paid. A critical question could be whether the Albanian Government will be in an economic position to fund further expansion and renewal of hard- and software at the local and central level.

There is a clear trend that new software versions will need more hardware capacity over time. In order to secure that hardware procured for the pilot phase will still be sufficient even when the nation-wide modernisation will take place, the technical specifications chosen are expected to meet these needs.

5.4 Financial Analysis

Present revenues from user fees are considerable because of the large amounts of certificates issued (in Tirana Municipality almost 500 000 a year, corresponding to 25 million lek). The fee per certificate is low, 50 lek, corresponding to 40 cent. However, with improved service to the public it will be possible to instil awareness among the citizens that good quality services should be paid for at a fair price, which would be considerably higher than 50 lek.

The public still has to pay for reporting of migration (transfer of CS documents) to another municipality/commune. Up to end 2002 the tax to be paid per household varied from 2 000 to 6 000 lek, with the highest tariff (46 USD) for in-migration to Tirana Municipality. Tirana's total revenues from transfer of documents in 2002 were at the same level as the revenues from issuing of certificates. Revenues from transfers made a large share, up to 75% of the total income of the administrative units in Tirana. However, to have to pay fees for reporting is against generally approved principles for population registration. Since this tariff also is relatively high in important areas, this payment is considered an obstacle for reliable reporting of change of residence.

After pressure from Statistics Norway MLGD tried to remove this payment, but since this was a tax based on a law, it was not up to municipalities to remove it or to refrain from collecting the money. However, in December 2002 a new law on local taxation removed this tax on transfer of documents. Since then some municipalities are collecting a reduced payment, until "tariffs on the Civil Status Service" are approved by the Council of Ministers, according to the Law on Civil Status. The provisional tariff in use for central parts of Tirana is reported to be 5 000 lek, justified by the large needs for income to the administrative units.

The provisional tariff short time after MLGD's attempts to remove the previous payment was a disappointment from The Project's point of view, being much concerned about the quality of information about place of residence. In Tirana, where these revenues play the most important role as to income, the same amount, 25 million lek, could have been obtained just by doubling the tariff for certificates, i. e. up to 100 lek (80 cent). Such a solution is not supposed to reduce the quality of the CS data, as the existing payment does. So a challenge will be to fight for approval of a tariff on the Civil Status Service with payment on certificates

only, not on transfer of Civil Status Documents. Anyhow, the modernisation of the Civil Status Service may change (remove) for need to transfer paper-based Civil Status documents.

Recently the GDCS has proposed to the Council of Ministers that the tariff in the law on Civil Status for transfer of documents should be 500 lek, corresponding to "self cost", pointing out that this payment should be removed completely in the future. From now on such revenues will go to the Central Government, no more to communes, municipalities or administrative units in Tirana.

5.5 Environmental Aspects

The project will basically include rehabilitation and improvement of existing offices and infrastructure facilities. Transfer of civil status information will take place via telephone lines or by floppy disks or paper sent by ordinary mail. Thus, implementation should not impact negatively on the environment. Because of the current situation with instable and insufficient power supply, which most likely will remain in the near future, alternative energy sources and stabilising equipment are needed. Such alternatives may be inverters with batteries or gasoline or diesel generators. This will, however, have only insignificant impact on the environment.

Since the data are expected to be transferred electronically over Internet in the future, between local offices and the central office, this should reduce the need for transportation of forms etc. by car or other forms of transportation.

5.6 Gender Aspects and Socio-Cultural Aspects

It is a basic human right to have documents that identify a person's name, date of birth, citizenship, etc. This is particularly important for girls and women who are often exposed to abuse, such as trafficking. Thus, development of an efficient Civil Status system will strengthen the position of girls and women in this respect. On the other hand, it is hard to see that there should be any gender bias connected with modernisation of the civil status offices. Normally, personal presence is necessary to get a certificate, so less waiting time due to modernisation should be expected to affect both genders equally. However, since most heads of families are males, reporting of migration (transfer of documents), which has to be done by the head of household, males may gain more from modernisation than females. On the other side, if mothers more often report births than fathers, they will gain more than males in these cases.

5.7 Beneficiaries

The project aims to improve the Civil Status Service considerably. This will mean less waiting time and frustration for the public, contributing to better living conditions. Computerised routines where every registration may be traced, showing which employee did what and when, will remove the possibility for illegal manipulation and corruption. This should lead to increased trust of the public in civil servants.

Now the main responsibility to report births and deaths to the local civil registry remains on the parents and the next of kin, respectively. Even if the new law did not transfer this main responsibility to maternity clinics and some official involved with deaths and burials, a future development towards such a solution is expected, being an advantage for the residents.

Authorities and other users of individual civil register data will welcome better access to civil status data and an improved quality. Another important user is the central statistical office, INSTAT, that needs reliable data for population, vital and migration statistics.

5.8 Technology

The project will be based on modern technology, which has proved to be useful in civil registration in the Nordic countries, but adaptation to existing conditions is necessary. Since the physical infrastructure in Albania in general is unsatisfactory, but improving, and varies geographically, a flexible solution needs to be chosen. A full on-line system can only be introduced gradually, according to the improvements in the infrastructure.

Later on, when telecommunications have become adequate, it is possible to change to a more modern solution, where local offices are linked to the central database via secure lines over Internet (VPN - Virtual Private Network). In this way, the number of installations may be reduced gradually, giving the local offices a better solution as they have online connection with the central database. This will give the same functionality and also keep the authority at the local level. Security will be far better as there will be only one database, and only one application installation to maintain.

During the pilot stage different methods of transferring data will be tested out, ranging from on-line connection to CD/diskette sent by ordinary mail. In the pilot phase existing software used in local civil status offices will be utilised together with necessary additional software to gain experience before a tender for the final software. This software should be written in Albanian and should be developed by an Albanian company to secure good access to service, maintenance and further development. The Government (MLGD) should be the legal owner of the software.

5.9 Maintenance and Operation

The MLGD will become the owner of the modernised civil registration system (including hardware, software and network) and will be responsible for maintenance and operations, but with possible subcontractors. Users of the data will pay according to regulations and tariffs set by the General Directory of Civil Status/the Council of Ministers.

5.10 Project Risks

Conditions for sustained operations in the future would be:

i) Continued political stability in the area/region.
ii) That capable Albanian companies find it attractive to compete for software, hardware, and service delivery for the system.
iii) That the authorities are able and willing to set tariffs and collect user fees on certificates that cover the costs of operations and maintenance.
iv) That the physical infrastructure will be improved, or at least not deteriorate, which could have a serious impact on the running of the civil registries.
v) That the MLGD/General Directorate of Civil Status will have the capability to manage the system in a cost-effective way, including safe-guarding offices and equipment.
vi) That the relatively high payments on registration of new residence (transfer of documents) will be removed when deciding on tariffs in the law on the Civil Status, to avoid the present consequence that many moves are not reported.

6. Review and Appraisal

6.1 Mid-term meeting and review

At the end of 2003 there will be a meeting between General Directorate of Civil Status/MLGD and NORAD/the Norwegian Embassy, possibly with assistance from Statistics Norway to the General Directorate/MLGD. The General Directorate/MLGD will prepare a report with assistance from Statistics Norway to be presented to NORAD/the Norwegian Embassy at least two days ahead of the meeting.

6.2 Post-pilot review and appraisal

After finalisation of the pilot project an appraisal will be conducted by a team including an independent consultant and one consultant from each of the General Directorate of Civil Status/MLGD and Statistics Norway.

7. Annex 1 Project matrix

Development objectives: A well-functioning modern national population register. Such a register will contribute to the stabilisation and further development of democracy and good governance in Albania, by • facilitation of fair elections through correct voters' lists and thereby securing the citizens' right to vote (depoliticisation of the preparation of voters' lists) • being a reliable basis for the issuing of ID cards • providing the Albanian society with reliable information about the population for administrative purposes • developing easy (but regulated) access to CS information for official authorities, reducing considerably the need for certificates • being a basis for timely and correct official statistics • indirectly improving general living conditions	**Indicators:** • The Civil Registration Service is trusted, i.e. considered correct (reliable), making it easier for Albanians to get visa • Occurrence of false certificates • Occurrence of abuse of authority by CS employees • Satisfactory service to the public as to certificates • Access to CS information for Government and other authorised users • ID cards issued • CS data is the major data source for population as well as vital statistics
Project objectives (purpose): A well-functioning modern civil registration system comprising a General Directory of Civil Status, district offices and local CS offices: • Improved input (notifications) of data on vital events (births, deaths, marriages and other changes (of residence, name etc.) to the local CS offices • Updating of the central register (and possible local registers) is done continuously without much delay • The service to the public (issuing certificates) is substantially improved • Reports on registrations done (births, deaths etc.) can be printed	**Indicators:** • Workload/cost per certificate • Waiting time to get a certificate • Coverage of reporting of vital events, change of residence etc. • Degree of update as to reporting of vital events and other changes • Accuracy as to registered place of residence (address) • Accordance with relevant population census data • Waiting time when crossing border for Albanian citizens working in Greece

Outputs: • The General Directory of CS (GDCS) established and equipped with computers, servers, network and other necessary hardware and software • Central database established (prototype with pilot phase data) • Pilot CS district and local offices equipped with computers, printers and necessary hardware • GDCS staff, district and local CS staff given training • CS registers in pilot offices computerised	**Indicators:** • Hardware for GDCS purchased and installed • Hardware for local and district pilot CS offices purchased and installed • Software for local and district pilot CS offices provided and installed • CS employees in local and district pilot CS offices trained • All pilot CS registers computerised
Activities: • Technical advice on population registration systems, legal, practical and technical issues: - on measures aiming at preventing citizen de-motivation and civil registry office corruption - improvement of transparency, more systematic checks, stricter respect of obligation to record, and penalty system - enhanced cooperation from other administrations for recording equirements - assistance in harmonisation, standardisation and streamlining of internal rules and procedures for recording of civil status information and filling of documents - training in methods of General Directory of Civil Status staff (train-the-trainers program) - work planning and methodology - preparation of by-laws and work instructions (manuals) • Training of CS officers: - Basic PC training - Tailored CS software training	

- Computerisation of local CS registers (books)
- Development of routines
- Testing of applications used in the pilot phase
- Procurements and working arrangements with service providers installations, testing and networking
- Testing of different methods of transferring information from local offices to the central register and to district offices
- Checking and cleaning of pilot office data in order to gain experience for the large round to be carried out in the central database after the nationwide computerisation of CS registers
- Improvement of measures for more efficient permanent updating of the records
- Study/training visits
- Consultancies

Inputs:

- Procurement of computers, printers and other hardware for the local offices
- Procurement of computers, servers, network, printers and other hardware for the General Directory
- Procurement, supply and instalment of software, along with maintenance and support agreements e.a.
- Long-term resident consultant
- Local assistant (coordinator)
- Short-term consultants
- Operators for data entry (in addition to employees)
- Procurement and installation in CS offices to secure necessary level of physical conditions

8. Annex 2 Time Schedule

Time schedule presented quarterly	2003		2004			
	3rd Q	4th Q	1st Q	2nd Q	3rd Q	4th Q
General Directory of Civil Status (GDCS):						
Procurement of hardware and software	xx					
Training/study visits of permanent and development staff	xx	xx	xx	xx		
Database development and testing		xxxxxx	xxxxxx	xxxxxx		
Reference Group meetings	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x
Technical support	xx	xxxxxx	xxxxxx	xxxxxx	xxxxxx	xxxxxx
Local CS offices:						
Tirana 3 and 7						
Remaining data entry	xx	xxxxxx				
Quality check and cleaning		xx	xxxxxx	xxxxxx		
Klos municipality						
Remaining data entry (births, deaths, etc.)	xx	xxxxxx				
Quality check and cleaning		xx	xxxxxx	xxxxxx		
Tirana 1,2, 4 and 5[10]						
Procurement of hardware and software	xx	xx				
Staff training		xx				
Data entry		xx	xxxxxx	xxxxxx		
Quality check and testing			x	xx	xxxxxx	xx

[10] And 6, 8 and 9 if the funding proposal by The Municipality of Padua is not accommodated.

Golem commune						
Procurement of hardware and software	xx	xx				
Staff training		xx				
Data entry		xx	xxxxxx			
Quality check and testing			xx	xxxxxx		
Kavaja district center						
Procurement of hardware and software	xx	xx				
Staff training		xx				
Quality check and testing		xx	xx	xx	xx	
Koder Thumane commune						
Procurement of hardware and software	xx	xx				
Staff training		xx				
Data entry (partly by employees)		xx	xxxxxx	xx		
Quality check and testing			xx	xxxxxx	xx	
Project report					xxxx	xxxx
Annual meetings and mid-term review		xxx				xxxx

9. Annex 3 Structure of the Civil Status Service

After approval of the new Civil Status legislation the structure of the Service is as follows:

- General Directory of Civil Status
- Civil Status branch in each prefecture
- Civil Status office in each municipality and commune
- Civil Status Service in each Albanian embassy and consulate abroad

This new structure creates new premises for the establishment of a unique state institution, making possible improved methodologies and facilitating access to civil status data from interested authorities.

9.1 The General Directory of Civil Status

The General Directory of Civil Status comes under the Ministry of Local Government and Decentralisation. It is composed of two departments: The Department for Methods and Inspection and the Department of National Register.

The Ddepartment for Methods and Inspection will draft the acts related to the legislation on the Civil Status Service, draft methods, regulations, manuals, programs of qualification for the CS employees, and will control the execution of these functions in communes, municipalities, prefectures and counsellors' services in order to ensure a better service for residents of Albania and Albanian citizens abroad. The idea is to have two sectors included in this department: the sector of Methods and Qualification and the Sector of Inspection.

The Department of National Register will take care of the establishment and administration of the National Register. The National Register should be a database covering all residents of Albania where the civil status components for each citizen are collected and kept updated in a digital way. This department will follow up the Civil Status Service computerisation process, the establishment, updating and protection of the National Register database. The idea is to have two sectors included in this department: the Sector of Information Technology and the Sector of System Management.

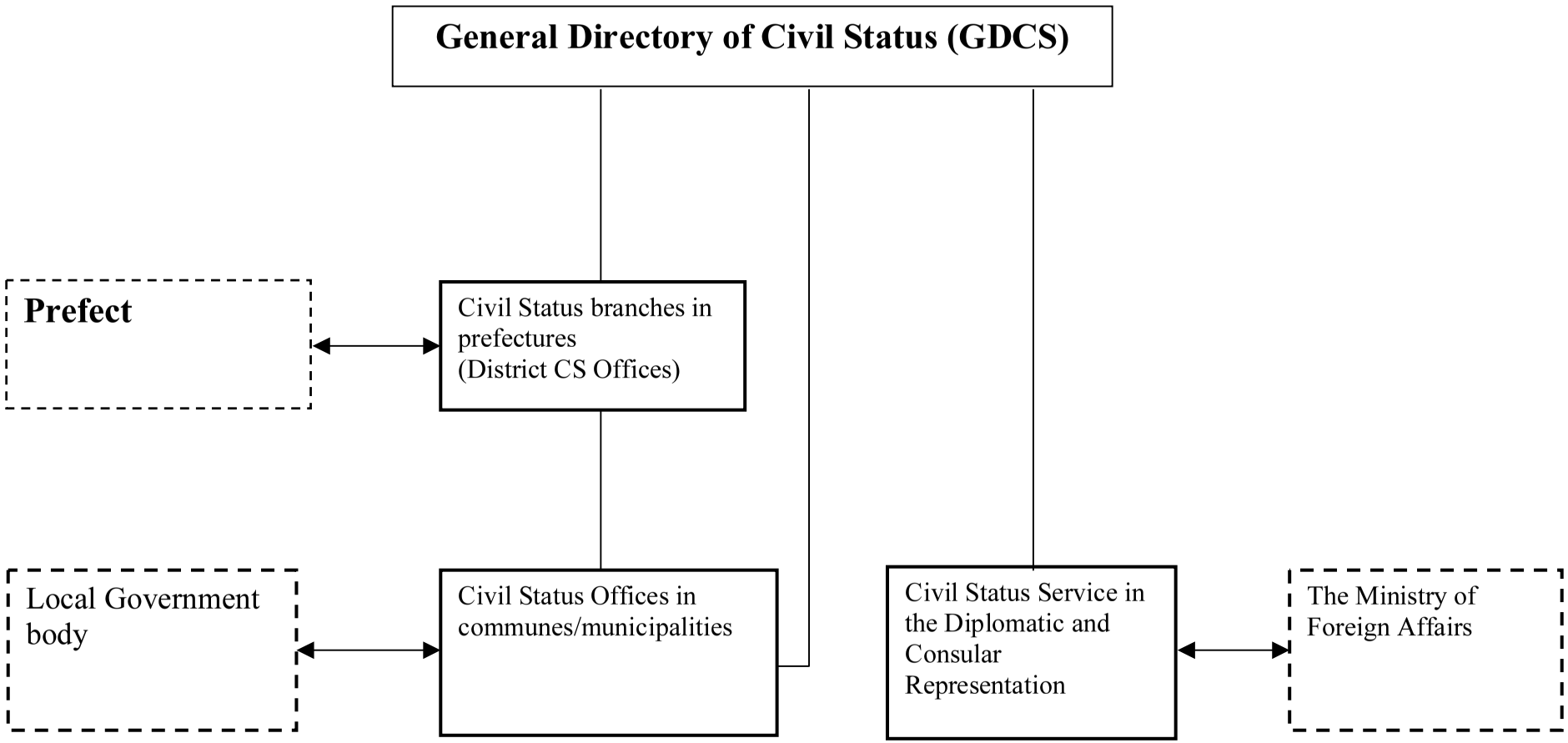
The employees of the General Directory of Civil Status will have status as civil servants. The civil status branch in each prefecture is functioning within the prefect administration and it has one civil status employee in each district. The civil status employee in the prefecture is appointed and may be dismissed by the prefect.

Based on the new Civil Status legislation the functionality of the civil status branches in the prefectures is well established from the legal point of view. Besides their present functions which include maintenance and administration of the archives of the civil status registers and the issuing of certificates from this information, they will control the work of the civil status offices in communes and municipalities. They will coordinate the job between local offices, the General Directory of Civil Status and other state institutions operating at prefecture or district level that are users of the civil status data. When the process of computerised updating starts, the civil status branches in each prefecture will collect data from local CS offices which are not yet computerised, and transfer the data to the General Directory of CS.

Finally, it should be emphasised that in the proposed modernised system the local civil status offices will continue to be the only institution that has legal competence to make changes in

the civil status register. The central register or database will only serve as a clearinghouse for transferring records between local offices when people are moving, and for detecting errors and producing statistics. If an error is found, the General Directory of Civil Status should request the relevant local office(s) to look into the problem and seek to make the necessary changes according to the law. Thus, if it is discovered, for example by comparison with other sources, that a certain family is not registered where they are living, the local office should inform the family and/or the office in the municipality/commune where they are registered to request a transfer.

The Structure of the Civil Status Service in Albania



The Structure of the General Directory of Civil Status

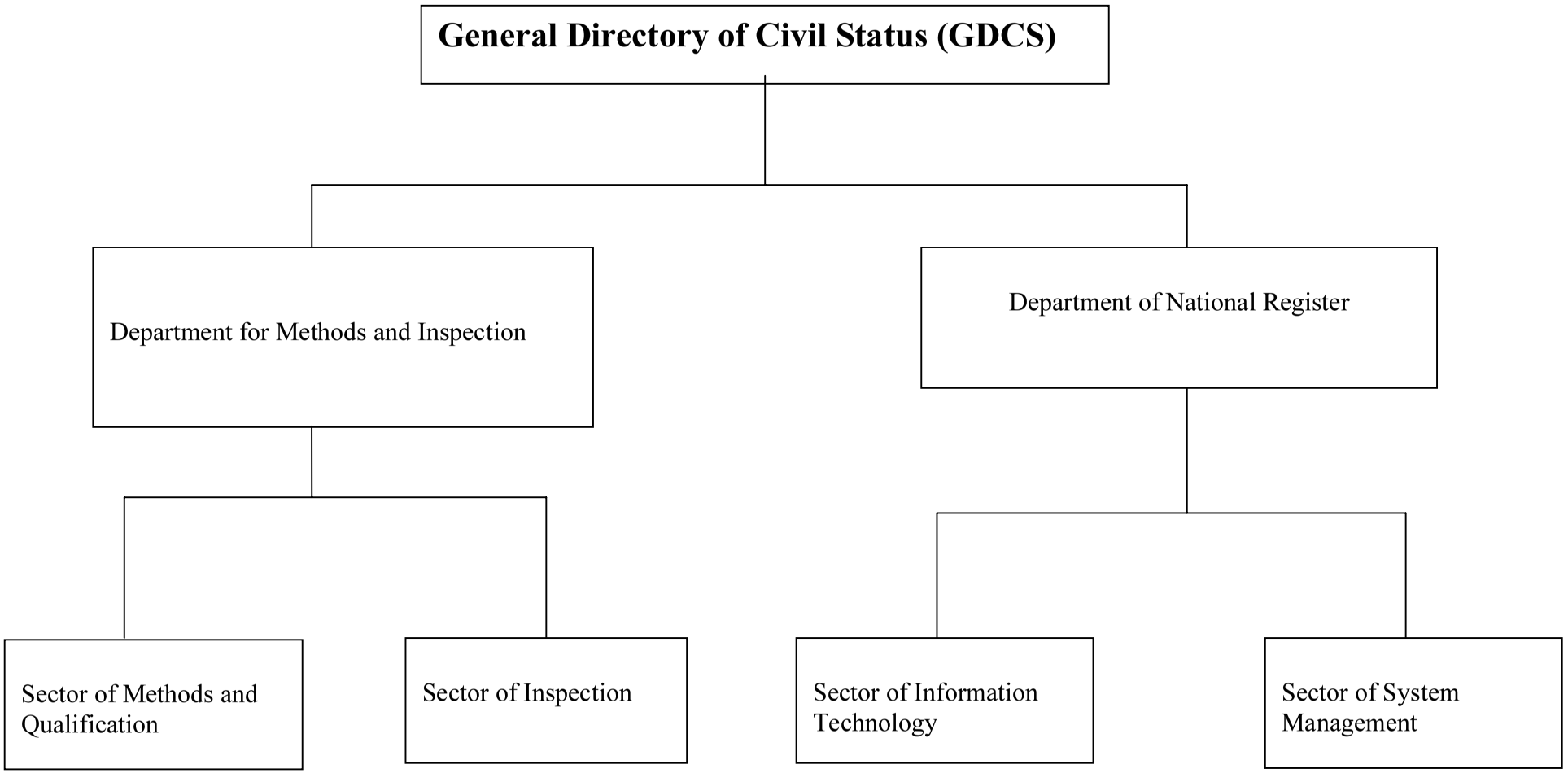


Table 4 Civil Status Offices (CSOs) in municipalities and communes according to prefecture and district

No.	Prefecture	District	CSOs in municipalities	CSOs in communes	CSOs total
1	BERAT	Berat	4	10	14
		Kucove	1	2	3
		Skrapar	2	8	10
2	DIBER	Diber	1	14	15
		Mat	2	10	12
		Bulqize	1	7	8
3	DURRES	Durres	8	6	14
		Kruje	2	4	6
4	ELBASAN	Elbasan	7	20	27
		Gramsh	1	9	10
		Peqin	1	5	6
		Librazhd	2	9	11
5	FIER	Fier	6	14	20
		Lushnje	3	14	17
		Mallakaster	1	8	9
6	GJIROKASTER	Gjirokaster	2	11	13
		Tepelene	2	8	10
		Permet	2	7	9
7	KORCE	Korce	5	14	19
		Kolonje	2	6	8
		Pogradec	1	7	8
		Devoll	1	4	5
8	KUKES	Kukes	1	14	15
		Has	1	3	4
		Tropoje	1	7	8
9	LEZHE	Lezhe	1	9	10
		Mirdite	2	5	7
		Kurbin	2	2	4
10	SHKODER	Shkoder	5	16	21
		Puke	2	8	10
		Malesi e Madhe	1	5	6
11	TIRANE	Tirane	13	16	29
		Kavaje	2	8	10
12	VLORE	Vlore	8	9	17
		Sarande	2	7	9
		Delvine	1	3	4
Total	**12**	**36**	**99**	**309**	**408**

9.2 The CS offices in communes and municipalities

Local offices are included in the administrative structure of the respective commune/municipality. Tirana Municipality and 8 other larger cities (municipalities) have several civil registration offices, so there are in total 408 local CS offices in communes and municipalities, while the total number of municipalities (65) and communes (309) is 374.

Table 5 explains the distribution of CS employees in communes/municipalities. The CS employees in each commune/municipality are appointed and dismissed by the mayor of the commune/municipality.

The tasks of the civil status offices in communes/municipalities are maintenance and administration of the civil status registers, issuing of certificates, and the accomplishment of the legal obligations towards institutions asking for the CS information, as well as communication with the General Directory and the district CS office.

Table 5. The personnel of the Civil Status Offices in communes and municipalities

No.	Prefecture	Municipalities		Communes	
		Offices	Employees	Offices	Employees
1	Berat	7	11	20	20
2	Diber	4	7	31	31
3	Durres	10	18	10	10
4	Elbasan	11	17	43	43
5	Fier	10	18	36	36
6	Gjirokaster	6	8	26	26
7	Korce	9	15	31	31
8	Kukes	3	6	24	24
9	Lezhe	5	9	16	16
10	Shkoder	8	15	29	30
11	Tirane	15	52	24	24
12	Vlore	11	19	19	20
Total		99	195	309	311

The 408 CS offices in communes and municipalities have a total number of 506 employees. About 40 per cent of these CS employees have a university diploma while 60 per cent have finished high school. Some 24 per cent of them have more than 10 years of experience in CS offices, 33 per cent have 5-10 years experience and 43 per cent less than 5 years experience.

10. Annex 4 Budget Information and Unit Costs

10.1 Budget estimates

The pilot phase of the project is designed to start the modernisation process by establishing modern register capacity for some local register offices. The current budget estimates are based upon the following assumptions:

- The Albanian Government will contribute office space and permanent staff in kind.
- The project will cover the costs of a long-term consultant from Statistics Norway and local project assistant.
- The project will cover costs for additional staff, either to ensure data entry of existing information such as from family books, to develop the systems or to replace permanent staff during training, etc.
- The budget is based upon local salary rates.

10.2 Three types of costs

The budget outline comprises three types of costs:

- Local costs for modernisation, supervision and cooperation with selected local civil register offices. The costs are estimates for capital and recurrent costs for staff and other expenses. It is assumed that the Albanian local authorities continue to fund the local civil status registers at the same level as today.
- Local costs for establishing the central register office. These are hardware and software register investment costs and recurrent costs to establish and run this co-ordination office.
- Costs of Statistics Norway to visit Albania and conduct work in Albania and also in Norway to assist in establishing and supervising the running of the civil register system.

It is envisaged that resources within each of these budget lines will be reallocated across components as the project develops and the needs are re-evaluated.

10.3 National costs for local civil register offices and a central office

The following costs and cost estimates (mostly offers as per April 2003) are included:

Central register office

- Hardware investment:
    1. Server for central Oracle database, approx. 5 500 USD
    2. One PC per employee (13) à 1290 USD (256 MB RAM)
    3. Internal CD-Writer, one per PC à 80 USD
    4. Power supply equipment (Inverter + batteries, 1 300 USD)
    5. 2 8-port HUB, 60 USD
    6. Networking, 65 USD per workplace (PCs-printers)
    7. Advanced Laser Printer, 1 300 USD
    8. Ordinary Laser Printer, one per 4 PCs à 310 USD
    9. Miscellaneous (Machine room, mail server), approx. 10 000 USD
- Software investment:
    1. Windows 2000 Server Operating System, 5-user licenses a 1 110 USD
    2. Tailored CS Application, installation: 1 500 USD + 300 per PC > 1, and support for one year: 20 % of installation of application
    3. Oracle 8i Standard Edition, 5-user licenses à 750 USD
    4. Configuration: 100 USD
    5. Miscellaneous (Double firewall, etc.), approx. 6 000 USD
- Training:

1. Training, one week, 100 USD per person
2. Travel and per diem, 10 USD per person per day

- Training/study visits to Norway, up to NOK 25 000 per person/visit (approx. 3 475 USD)
- Running costs for the central office, up to NOK 3 600 per month (500 USD)

Local offices, including Kavaja District Centre

- Hardware investment:
  1. One PC per employee à 1290 USD (256 MB RAM), of which one PC 512 MB RAM per office, à 1 470 USD
  2. One printer per 2 PC à 310 USD
  3. Power supply equipment (Inverter + 2 batteries), 1 110 USD per office
  4. Backup equipment, internal CD burner, 80 USD per PC
  5. 8-port HUB, 30 USD per office
  6. Networking, 65 USD per workplace (PCs + printers)
- Software investment:
  1. Tailored CS Application, installation: 1 500 USD + 300 USD per PC > 1, and support for one year: 20 % of installation of application
  2. Oracle 8i Personal Edition, 200 USD per office with one PC; Oracle 8i Standard Edition (5-user licenses), 750USD per office with 2-4 PCs
  3. Windows 2000 Server Operating System, 5-user license a 1 110 USD
  4. Configuration: 100 USD per office
- Training:
  1. Training, one week, 100 USD per person
  2. Travel and per diem, 10 USD per person per day
- Trained operator, for data entry, monthly salary NOK 1 100 (150 USD)

10.4 International Costs for technical co-operation with Statistics Norway

The following costs are included:[11]

- Long term consultant
- Local project assistant
- Local project car, etc
- Short term consultants working in Albania or Norway
- Short term consultants, subsistence allowance
- Short term travels (visits)
-

10.4.1. Back up support from Norway

A budget line is included for general follow-up work by Statistics Norway. The average standard consultancy rate of Statistics Norway is applied.[11]

10.4.2. Contingency

A physical contingency of three per cent is applied and in addition a price contingency of three per cent to be added per year for the second year and onwards.

10.5 Precondition

It is a precondition for the support that the Albanian Government is committed to cover the running costs in full at the end of phase 3 (nationwide modernisation).

[11] Business information. Rates can be obtained upon inquiry to Statistics Norway

Statistisk sentralbyrå
Statistics Norway

17 March 2003 **Second draft**

Nation-wide modernisation of the Civil Registration System in Albania – A brief plan with cost estimates

Summary
This plan describes briefly what still has to be done after the pilot phase – the Norwegian funded modernisation project - is finished. The plan covers data entry and data cleaning, assigning of official ID numbers, training of staff, hardware, software, network and international expertise.

The total costs have roughly been estimated to 4.39 million USD, with the following distribution on main activities and equipment:

Data entry and data cleaning (incl. ID no.), family books	870 000 USD
Data entry and data cleaning (incl. ID no.), other CS books	640 000 USD
Training of staff	240 000 USD
Hardware, network	1 410 000 USD
Software	1 020 000 USD
International expertise	210 000 USD
Total	4 390 000 USD

This full-scale project is expected to take at least 1 ½ year. The crucial activity as to timing will be the data cleaning, which will need minimum 12 months. In order to carry out the project within less than two years good coordination of activities is required.

The situation after the pilot phase
The output from the Norwegian funded modernisation project will be a modernised nation-wide *system* (instrument) for civil (population) registration. The system is expected to be operative, at least the prototype. This includes an official ID number system and all necessary routines for systematic exchange of data between local registers and the central database.

However, this nation-wide system (including the database) will initially comprise personal information for 13 local civil registration offices (”CS offices”) in the pilot phase, or about 11 per cent of the population. Later it will be extended with data from previous data entry projects, amounting to a total of 740 000 persons or 18 per cent (see table). Thus fairly big data sets will have been available for pilot studies, such as for testing the system (software, routines etc.) and in order to get useful experience for the full-scale modernisation, for example for choosing good solutions and to estimate total resources needed.

Remaining tasks:

Nation-wide data entry
The handwritten books (CS registers) in about 390 remaining local CS offices need to be computerised. The main task is the data entry of all up to date information in the family books. However, even the other books (births, deaths and marriages) should be computerised: One reason is to check the quality of the computerised family books thoroughly, particularly as to

consistency (mentioned later), another reason that it is expected to be advantageous to have even these records computerised for administrative as well as statistical reasons. Only these books show the demographic changes (births, deaths and marriages contracted) *explicitly*, and could take care of the demographic history beyond (in addition to) what just the *updated* family book is able to. In order to be useful for consistency checks these books for all Albania have to be computerised before the big cleaning process.

The need to computerise other books than the family book has to de discussed more thoroughly. In case only parts of the books (including data back to 1974) are going to be computerised, priority should be given to the most recent data, for example those referring to events after the 1989 population census.

The costs will depend of who is doing the data entry, the method used and the extent of data entry:

- Data entry done by CS employees or professional operators
- Data entry done *directly* from CS books or manual transfer of data as done by IFES in Kavaja, Durrës
- Data entry of the family books (actual situation) only, or even other books (births, deaths, marriages), and how far back?

The volume to be computerised is larger than the total population figure from the Population Census 2001, 3 069 000, indicates, because the CS registers also include many Albanian citizens who live abroad, together with duplicates, about 4 050 000 at the end of 2002.

Calculation of costs for data entry <u>and</u> data cleaning of family books

Projects of data entry already finished or to be covered by the Norwegian funded pilot project[1]

Project organisation/ funding	Municipality/ commune/office	Records entered or to be entered beforehand
IFES/CEC	Durrës[2]	117 000
	Kavaje	35 100
Soros	Pogradec	35 200
	Shkoder	106 400
	Gjirokaster	33 500
	Tirana 11	54 000
Other	Tirana 10	24 000
Statistics Norway	Tirana 1	70 000
	Tirana 2	35 000
	Tirana 3	32 000
	Tirana 4	56 000
	Tirana 5	54 000
	Tirana 7	46 000
	Preza	5 900
	Klos	13 000
	Golem	9 400
	Koder Thumane	13 100
Total		**739 700**

One record represents one registered person.

[1] Population according CS registers 2002,
[2] Population 18 years and over (voters) estimated as 70% of population.

1. If data entry is done by operators directly from the books to the PC:

Assumed costs per record of data entry + data cleaning: 0.20 USD
Assumed costs per record of data cleaning only: 0.12 USD
(0.20 USD is based on the figure 0.15 USD for entry + cleaning used by Financial Information Center (FIC) in connection with voter lists before the 2000 elections. The increase to 0.20 has been done in order to cover assigning of ID numbers and general increase of costs.)

Records left to be computerised: 4 050 000 – 740 000 = 3 310 000

Estimates:
Costs for records left to be computerised: 3 310 000 x 0.20 USD = 662 000 USD
Costs for records to be cleaned only: 740 000 x 0.12 USD = 88 800 USD
Total 750 800 USD

2. If data entry is done by the CS employees directly from the register to the PC:

Assumed costs (extra salaries) per employee per month: 150 USD
Assumed duration of work: 5 months
Number of employees at local CS offices: 506

Estimated costs of data entry: 506 x 150 USD x 5 = 379 500 USD
Estimated costs of data cleaning: 4 050 000 x 0.12 = 486 000 USD
Total 865 500 USD

3. If data entry is done by operators in 2 steps (through forms filled in manually):

Assumed costs (extra salaries) per employee per month: 100 USD
(This salary is 50 per cent of what IFES is willing to offer over 1 month)

Estimated costs filling in forms (by the CS employees)
1.5 months x 100 USD x 506 = 75 900 USD
Estimated costs for data entry and cleaning:
3 310 000 x 0.20 USD = 662 000 USD
Estimated costs for data to be cleaned only
740 000 x 0.12 USD = 88 800 USD
Total 826 700 USD

It is however hard to see how data entry could be done by the ordinary CS employees in the bigger cities, because of heavy work load with serving the public and because the office facilities in most cases are not sufficient for this extra activity.

Calculation of costs for data entry and data cleaning of other books (births, deaths and marriages)
The number of records (acts) for 1974-2003 is (according to statistics from INSTAT) calculated to 3 200 000). It seems that one record in these books is of about the same size as one record (line, person) in the family book. Therefore the same assumed costs for data entry and cleaning (0.20 USD per record) have been used for cost estimation.

Estimate (data entry done by operators directly from the books):
Costs for births, deaths and marriages back to 1974: 3 200 000 x 0.20 USD = 640 000 USD

Training of staff

All CS staff at local and district level need appropriate training – in CS procedures as well as to operate the PC, most of them even basic PC training. One week's PC training is considered a minimum per employee. Follow-up training will be necessary, at least for new employees. PC training has to be worked out in accordance with the software developed for the nation-wide system. The employees need sufficient knowledge about CS legislation, such as by-laws etc., and manuals.

Calculation of costs for training:

Assumed fee per person for 5 days at the software company's training center: 100 USD
Assumed other expenses per person per day (transport, DSA etc): 30 USD
Number of employees (including district offices): 506 + 36 = 542
Regional training sessions: 20

Estimated training costs:

Fee for 5 days: 100 USD x 544	= 54 200 USD
Transport, DSA etc. 30 USD x 5 x 544	= 81 300 USD
Renting space (for training sessions) 20 x 100	= 2 000 USD
Miscellaneous	= 3 000 USD
Total, PC-training	140 500 USD

Training CS procedures (up to 5 days) = 100 000 USD

Hardware, software, network

Overall strategy of hardware and software implementation
The preferred system would be to have one single database for the whole population, or a distributed database system (all changes are updated in all locations). The local offices could then log on to the central database in a traditional client/server solution, or an Internet based three-layer application. The reasons for having only one central database is mainly that such a system is easier to maintain, and the whole population is available for updates (useful when migration between communes). With such a system it is not necessary to distribute updated versions to the local offices etc. and no local version of databases and database systems are needed.

A full-scale operating system like that mentioned above will probably need a long establishing period. The main reasons are lack of stable telecommunications and of stable supply of electricity. Because of this it will be necessary to have complete installations and maintenance of database systems in every local office. *The full-scale operating system is, however, an alternative that should be introduced gradually as infrastructure/conditions change. All equipment, PC's and laser printers, can still be used.*

The offices are proposed to be equipped with PC's and laser printers. As most of the offices have only one or two employees, there is not much need of a local network, common laser printers or client server versions of applications, and of database systems to be installed at this stage. This means that Personal ORACLE is sufficient at this first stage.

The distribution of PC's and other equipment may be done gradually. The set up of PC's and installation of database system, loading of data, installing applications, should be done

centrally before installing the equipment locally. This will reduce training and travel costs, and ensure a correct and working set up of the systems.

Equipment needed

The estimated number of PC's, printers and other equipment needed at local as well as district level is shown in separate detailed spreadsheets. These have been based on spreadsheets from MLG showing in detail all offices and their staff.

According to the spreadsheets each employee will have his/her own PC. Based on Albanian advice (experience) each PC will be furnished with its own laser printer. In the spreadsheet equipment installed already, because of local projects or to be installed as a part of the ongoing pilot project, has not been included.

There are separate spreadsheets for local offices and district offices, and a "sub-specification" for Tirana municipality.

It should be emphasised that the spreadsheets have been prepared for the main purpose to come up with a cost estimate, not to make a detailed plan as such. Final solutions have to be discussed at a later stage.

Regarding software just an offer for the pilot phase has been used as a unit price since no other figure is available. The figure per installation is considered a maximum alternative, as a lower price should be reached when the Government buys software after a call for tender.

Total costs estimate: 2 430 000 USD, of which 180 000 USD for district offices.

Total cost estimate for hardware: 1 410 000 USD.

Total (maximum) cost estimate for software: 1 020 000 USD.

Data checking and cleaning, assigning of ID number

After data entry the CS data needs to be checked and cleaned. The central database (the central register) comprising data for all residents of Albania, will be the most important tool for *internal* checking the data as to duplicates, consistency etc. Every individual record in the database needs a unique numerical identifier even at this stage. A provisional ID number assigned during the data entry is recommended for this purpose.

Possible checks during the data entering process should be carried out as a part of the data entry. As long as all CS data has not been entered and transferred to the central database, the main necessary checks of the data cannot be carried out. (Consequently, the quality of the CS data cannot be significantly improved until data entry for *all* local offices has been finished and comprehensive checks have been implemented at the national level.) Checks against computerised records of births, deaths and marriages are expected to increase consistency considerably, so these books should be computerised as well.

It should be emphasised that computerised civil register data available for the 13 pilot offices may not be fully checked before all CS offices have been computerised, at least not with regard to duplicates. Checking by means of the central database should start as soon as the data entry is finished. Consequently good timing and coordination at the end of the data entry is important.

Checks to identify duplicates should firstly be based on automatic matching of first name, surname, date of birth and father's name. Then a very heavy task of manual comparison and

investigation of possible duplicates, other checks is necessary in order to meet quality standards. Much manual work (visual controls) can not be replaced by the computer, even using advanced software. Incorrect or suspicious registrations will to a large extent be recovered by means of the central data base, but in most (maybe all?) cases these findings have to be shown to local employees for taking the right decisions.

A valuable external data source to check CS data against is the database of the Social Insurance Institute (ISSH). This database is valuable not because the ISSH data may be authorised as or easily relied upon for CS purposes, but because of their ID number. The reason is that the ID number, which ISSH has already been assigned to almost every resident of Albania, is probably going to be the official Albanian ID number. If this is the case a final decision has to be made, the ID numbers have to be transferred to each individual included in the CS data. So besides to be a basis for assigning ID numbers to the correct individuals (records) the ISSH database is expected to be very useful as an *additional* data source, especially as to verify the identity of individuals. In this procedure as much information as possible is very useful.

The process of checking and cleaning of the CS data, together with the assigning of ID numbers, is the most important and challenging part of the modernisation process, besides of keeping the computerised registers updated afterwards.

The assigning, mostly transfer from ISSH, of ID numbers to the CS data has to be done *after* the large cleaning task is finished. The data cleaning, including assigning of ID numbers, is expected to take minimum one year. Contact with local offices, where decisions about correct registrations are going to be taken, will be an important part of the cleaning task. The duration of the whole cleaning process will depend on whether time limits put up are respected or not.

An important success criterion is to be able to update the local register directly (and continuously) based on the CS "acts" (notifications) without manual updating of the family page first. Between the initial data entry of the books and the start of direct updating there will be a certain time lag. Because it may a problem to fill this gap, the time lag should be as short as possible.

The process of checking and cleaning the data is very difficult to estimate as to resources needed. It is mainly calculated together with data entry (see above).

Even if data cleaning does not constitute a large share of the total costs of the total modernisation costs, this task must be given very high priority. This is essential for obtaining CS registers of good quality. It must not be any "balancing item" neither with regard to funding/costs nor to time limits. In case of lack of funding it would be better to postpone introduction of advanced communication between offices.
It is a must to finish data cleaning before issuing ID cards.

International technical expertise

Besides the central administration and the central Albanian technical expertise available (in the General Directory of Civil Status and elsewhere) there may be a need for international technical competence, provided by a long time international adviser. Among the issues for an adviser to deal with will be data quality, utilisation of data for statistical purposes, comparison with population census data and statistics as a means of checking and improving CS data.

One international adviser is included in the cost estimate: 1 ½ year – 210 000 USD.

Physical conditions

In local CS offices physical conditions have to reach an acceptable level before technical installations can function properly. It is assumed that this is a responsibility for the Albanian Government, including the necessary funding. So no such costs are included.

Unofficial translation[1]

REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
THE ASSEMBLY

LAW

No. 8950, dated 10.10.2002
ON THE CIVIL STATUS

In reliance on articles 78 and 81 point 1 and 83 point 1 of the Constitution, upon proposal of the Council of Ministers,

THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
DECIDED

CHAPTER 1
GENERAL DISPOSITIONS

Object
Article 1

This law determines the meaning and composition of the Civil Status of the Albanian citizens and persons with no citizenship, the organization and functioning of the Civil Status Service in the Republic of Albania.

Definitions
Article 2

In the meaning of this Law:

1. "The National Register of Civil Status", is a state document where are reflected all the civil status components for every citizen.
2. "The fundamental register" is the book with open pages, kept separately for every family, where are reflected for every individual all the civil status components.
3. "The components of civil status" are all the elements defined in this law, which serve to complete the data, to clarify and to define precisely the identity of every citizen.
4. "Presumed components", are components of the civil status, which are considered correct until the moment when the contrary is proved.
5. "An omission in the acts" is considered the process of data completion, which is missing in the acts.
6. "The special local government charged person", is the mayor of the commune/municipality or his authorized person on written.

The meaning of the Civil Status
Article 3

1. The civil status of the Albanian citizens is the comprehensive sum of personal data that certify the birth, existence, individuality of the citizens and their relationships. These data serves for the practice and protection of their rights in relation with the society and Albanian state, as well as for making possible the activity of the state institutions.
2. The civil status of the Albanian citizens of residence outside Albania is certified on compliance with the requirements of this Law, for the Albanian citizens of residence in the Republic of Albania.

[1] Translation from Albanian to English by OSCE and project staff.

The civil status of foreign citizens and persons with no citizenship
Article 4

1. The foreign citizens and the persons with no citizenship but of permanent residence in Albania enjoy all the rights according to this law with the exemption of the rights closely related to the Albanian citizenship and the documentation method and characteristics.
2. The civil status of the foreign citizens of permanent residence in Albania is determined upon the documents of the respective state. Whereas that of the person with no citizenship is determined upon the documents of the state where the person is born or comes from.
3. The foreign citizens and the persons without citizenship of permanent residence, visitors or in transit have the right to confirm through the Civil Status Service their juridical evidence taken place in the territory of the Republic of Albania the same as any Albanian citizen unless there is an obstacle or special procedure by law or international agreement.

The personal nature of the data
Article 5

1. The individual and family data of the Civil Status are of a personal nature. The acts, the data and confirmation documents in this respect are given only to the relevant person, the custodian, legal representative or prosecutor and after death, to those that have the legitimacy to request the legal inheritance or heirs as well as to all persons of the same family file.
2. The individual and family data of the civil status components might be requested and obtained by the institutions and organs that have the right which is recognized by special law.
3. The subjects that ask and obtain the civil status data directly from the Civil Status Service use them only for the purpose they were obtained for restricting their publication only when authorized by law.

The juridical value of the data
Article 6

1. The civil status data are valid when given by officials of the civil status service in the way and format foreseen by this law and in the sub legal acts issued pursuant to the law.
2. The civil status officer should write his/her full name, family name, signature, and use the official seal of civil status service, in all the acts and documents provided to the citizens, institutions and the organs authorized by law.

Incompatibility of actions
Article 7

In the Civil Status office where appointed, the civil status officer cannot carry out actions related with civil status on his/her personal or other people's like his/her spouse and children, parents, grandfather and grandmother, brother and sisters, parents in law. In such cases the actions are carried out by another officer of the civil status service, or another person authorized by the director of the institution where this person is working.

CHAPTER II
THE CIVIL STATUS

The components and characteristics of the Civil Status of the citizens
Article 8

1. The components of the civil status are, name and surname, the identity number, date of birth, place of birth, residence, sex, the paternity, maternity, death and declaration of disappearance and other facts foreseen by law.

2. The Albanian citizenship as a component of the civil status is the only differentiating element from the foreign citizens and persons with no citizenship in terms of the rights closely related to it.
3. The component elements in the civil status service documents has priority over any other state or private act and is binding to compliance.

The ID number
Article 9

1. The ID number is an unrepeatable, unique number determined by the civil status service for every Albanian citizen, foreign citizen with permanent residence, foreign citizen with relevant economic relations and persons with no citizenship.
2. The composition of this number is decided by a special law.
3. For the foreign citizens or the persons with no citizenship, the ID number is provided as for Albanian citizens.

Characteristics of some of the components of the Civil Status
Article 10

The birth, sex, name and surname, the paternity, maternity and citizenship are personal not property rights. They are recognized and, with the exemption of "sex", they can be removed, changed, or passed to third parties, only in the cases and the manner expressively provided by this law or the Family Code.

Family registration
Article 11

1. The civil status components of the family and its members are reflected in the family page of the fundamental register of the civil status office of the permanent cohabitation territory. This page is unique.
2. Every adult individual, as foreseen in the family Code, has the right to be separated and set up his/her own separate family or he/she can also join another family, acting in full compliance with the rules for the fundamental register established in this law.

The transfer and family unification
Article 12

1. The transfer of the civil status data to another status office is made at the request of the head of the family when he legally certifies that he has secured permanent residence in its territory for a period not less then 1 year.
2. Particular major members can ask the transfer of their data in another civil status office only after their separation into a separate family or their unification with another family.
3. The unification of a person or a family with another family is made only with the consent of all major members, declaring in the presence of the civil status officer, except the unification because of marriage.
4. The admission of an individual or a family into another family is allowed when the requirement of the minimum residential space of four square meters per capita is fulfilled, with the exception of cases of unification through marriage or adoption.
5. Every head of family is under obligation to transfer the civil status of the family to the new CS office no later than 45 days from the arrival of the family to the new residence
6. In every case of separation, unification with another family or transfer of the Civil Status, the foreign citizens or persons without citizenship and with permanent residence in Albania inform the relevant body, in conformity with the Law No. 8492 dated 27.05.1999 "On Foreigners."
7. The rules and the activities made in the civil status offices and the obligations of citizens on the transfer of the civil status data are determined by the Council of Ministers.

The Civil Status
Article 13

1. The family status of a citizen can be:
   a. Celibate
   b. Married
   c. Widowed
   d. Divorced
2. "Celibate" is the citizen who has not accomplished (consume) the act of marriage.
3. "Married" is the citizen who has done the act of marriage.
4. "Widowed" is the citizen who has done the act of marriage but one of the spouses has died.
5. "Divorced" is the citizen, whose marriage has been invalidated by court decision.

Components stemming from natural events
Article 14

The birth, time of birth, sex, motherhood and death are regularly certified as juridical acts by official or private persons who are present in the event.

Presumed components or components stemming from the own actions of the persons
Article 15

The following are certified to be juridical presumed facts or juridical facts stemming from the own actions of the persons: juridical capacity to act, relations of fatherhood, motherhood and family.

Components stemming from acts of other bodies
Article 16

The adoption, citizenship, cancellation or limitation of the capacity to act, as main components, stem and are documented only on basis of and in compliance with the act of the relevant state authority, as required by law. They also determine the other main components when they changed in compliance with the law.

The confirmation (verification) of the marriage
Article 17

The juridical act of marriage is born and certified with the document reflecting the will of the persons in the presence of the civil status employee, special person in charge, two witness and is compiled in accordance of the requirements of the Chapter V of this Law.

Other sources
Article 18

Other components are certified, in compliance with the law, by state bodies and institutions or juridical state or private entities or directly by special law and acquire the quality of Component when reflected in the civil status documents.

CHAPTER III
NATURE AND DOCUMENTATION OF THE COMPONENTS OF THE CIVIL STATUS

The general types and characteristics of the documents
Article 19

1. The civil status of the citizen is certified and documented in the basic documents of civil

status, prepared by the civil status service based on the acts compiled by the civil status employee or on the basic documents received from a third party according to the law.

2. The civil status registers are:
   a. Fundamental Register of Civil Status
   b. National Register of Civil Status
3. The civil status acts for the completion of civil status registers are:
   a. The act of birth
   b. The act of marriage
   c. The act of death
   d. Other basic documents according the Article 25.
4. The documents issued by the civil status office are:
   a. ID document
   b. Family certificate
   c. Birth certificate
   d. Marriage certificate
   e. Death certificate
5. The format, component elements, the way of filling, the term of usage of the documents and basic acts kept on the civil status office, of the documents issued by these offices as well as the rules of issuing such documents are decided by the Council of Ministers.

The ID Document
Article 20

1. The ID document is the permanent basis for the identification of the citizens.
2. The elements, the format and the way of supply of the citizens with the ID document is determined by special law.
3. The persons not eligible for the ID document because of their age are supplied with the birth certificate with photo by the civil status office.

Fundamental register of the civil status
Article 21

1. The fundamental register of the civil status is the summary document of all components of the civil status of the citizens, arranged for every family based on the address.
2. The foreign citizens and the persons without citizenship with permanent residence in the territory of the republic of Albania are recorded in separate fundamental registers.

National Register of Civil Status
Article 22

1. The National Register of Civil Status (NRCS) is a unique state document, where are reflected all the civil status components for every citizen.
2. The creation and administration of the NRCS is done by the General Directory of Civil Status, based on the information sent by the civil status offices in communes/municipalities, as well as by the civil status service in the Albanian embassies abroad.
3. The creation, content and the way of (compilation) maintenance of the NRCS are determined by the Council of Ministers.

The act of birth, marriage and death
Article 23

1. The births, marriages and deaths after being reflected in acts compiled for every case and chronologically ranked in special books, are registered in the fundamental register of citizens.
2. The acts of birth and death of an Albanian citizen are compiled in the Civil Status office, in which this citizen has his/her fundamental registration, whereas the marriage act in any civil status office.
3. The births and deaths of the foreign citizens or the persons without citizenship, as well as the marriage of foreign citizen, are generally reflected in special books compiled by the

chief of the civil status office of the relevant place in which these citizens are registered or the marriage took place.

4. The acts of birth, marriage and death compiled abroad for Albanian citizens, foreign citizens or persons without citizenship and with permanent residence in Albania are sent with diplomatic procedure to the relevant office of the Albanian Civil Status which has the fundamental register of these persons within three months.

Way of filling registers
Article 24

1. The newly compiled fundamental registers are filled by the office clerks according to the previous register or the decision of the relevant authority, as required by this Law. The newly compiled register does not mention the sources of the data of the previous register; it only makes a general reference to that register. Each family sheet is filled by the civil status employee and he/she certifies it by indicating the date and name and by putting his signature and seal.
2. The Civil Status registers are filled in handwriting only by the civil status clerk after he/she has directly administered the basic documents or has personally accepted the declarations about the facts of birth, marriage or death, pursuant to the requirements of this law.
3. The components of the civil status of the employees, local government's representatives, witnesses and the declarer are reflected in the books of the acts similarly to the identity documents, whereas of those for whom the act is compiled only according to the fundamental register, directly or with certificate issued by the relevant office.

Other basic documents
Article 25

1. Other basic documents are official or private acts, which certify other juridical acts on basis of the law, or change the juridical facts certified with the books of civil status acts. Their content following their reflection in the fundamental register, become components of the civil status of the citizen.
2. The basic documents and all other documentation of an administrative character are filled and administered in compliance with the legal criteria relevant to the particular kind of document.

Signing of the acts
Article 26

1. The civil status clerk, the relevant person and the persons, who should be present if required by these Law, sign by using the same pencil used to compile the act and by putting name, fatherhood and surname. The signature of the civil status clerk is always supported by the name, family name and the civil status office seal. Contrary the action is considered invalid.
2. If the person does not know to sign, or it is not physically capable of signing, this is indicated by mentioning the reasons, certified with the signatures of the employee, the other participants in the action and an official of relevant local government authority.

Errors in compilation of acts
Article 27

1. While completing the fundamental registers every error in facts, figures, words, sentence or position is rectified by drawing a line across it and marked "cancelled" by the employee certified by his name, family name signature and seal and it is rewritten accurately. Otherwise, the cancellation and the rectified text are invalid.
2. When there is no space for rewriting the text, a clarifying note is made in the remarks column, certified as above.
3. In the filling the books of acts the errors in facts or in writing are not rectified, but, rather, the whole relevant sheet is cancelled by crisscrossing lines and with a note "cancelled"

made by the employee, certified with the relevant signature and it remains in the register and an act with the same number is compiled in the next page.

4. When material errors are observed in the registers or books of acts, the note "cancelled" is accompanied with the clarifying explanations.
5. The content of the family sheet in the fundamental register is invalid when the component belongs to a period before the register was prepared and there is no signature of the first person who filled the sheet, or, despite the period it belongs to, it is not supported by a register of acts or basic documents reflected as source on the relevant page of this family sheet.

Omissions in the civil status documents
Article 28

1. When a column in the fundamental register does not reflect the relevant component, this component is added with the approval of the head of the civil status office:

    a. When the component is in the register of the acts of this office or the place from which the transfer has been made for any reason.
    b. The relevant person submits the basic document issued by the relevant source, as required by the law.
    c. In all other cases when it is certified with a court decision.

2. When a column in the register of acts does not reflect the relevant component, the completion is made based on the act of origin or with a court decision.
3. The acts of the basic documents issued abroad, which have the aforementioned omissions, are not accepted for use by the civil status service.
4. When the relevant person proves that the relevant foreign office refuses to complete the acts, or when these completion is impossible due to objective reasons, and when the component required by the Albanian legislation is not recognized in that country, the completion is made with a court decision.

Obligations of other bodies
Article 29

1. All bodies, which on the basis of this law or a special law, have the authority to determine, certify or change a component of the Civil Status, are obliged to officially and directly sent a copy of the decision to the office in which the person is registered in the fundamental register within 15 days from the day on which the act was issued or a final decision has been made.
2. When in the cases anticipated by this law, the act is made for persons who are registered in the fundamental register of another office, the relevant certificate is sent officially and directly to this office within five days.

Administration of the documentation
Article 30

1. The fundamental register, the books of the acts and their data are filled and used in compliance with this law and other specific laws.
2. The fundamental registers are kept for use in the relevant office together with the additional volumes. A new register should be created after census. As soon as the new register is created, the old register is handed over to the prefecture's branch archive. The Fundamental register of the civil status is kept permanently.
3. The annual books of the acts are closed at 31 December of each year and handed over to the prefecture branch archive not later then 10 January of the next year and are kept permanently.
4. The basic documents are handed over to the branch archive of the civil status office of the commune/municipality in the first month of the successive year and are kept for 10 years.

5. The civil status service applies the general rules for the administration of the entire documentation to the extent that is not anticipated otherwise and does not run counter to this law.

The identification and utilization of the registers' content with information systems
Article 31

1. The content of the registers, books of acts, acts on them should be done even by IT techniques.
2. The establishment, the rules for use of the technology and the information network are determined by the Council of Ministers.

CHAPTER IV
REGISTRATION OF BIRTH ACTS

Basic documents of the Birth
Article 32

1. The births as fact, time, place, sex and motherhood are certified by a medical report or protocol issued by the medical personnel who were present, or local government officials, as well as the chief or captain of the traveling train, ship, or airplane, the commander of the prison or the military unit, officials of the diplomatic service abroad. The aforementioned document serve for filling in the act of birth.
2. When the birth does not take place in the presence of the aforementioned persons, the authentication is made by a medical report only after he/she gets into contact with the mother and child.
3. When the genetic organs of the baby have disorders, the sex is determined only with medical report.
4. When Siamese twins with alive attached bodies are born, they are registered as separate births.

Basic documents of persons that are found
Article 33

1. The baby that is found and whose parents are not known is presumed of being born in the place where it was found, at the time determined with medical report.
2. The baby that is found and whose parents are not known is provided with a certificate issued by the relevant organs of Public Order and the medical report issued by the doctor of the area where the baby was found.
3. At the request of the civil status service or mainly at such a request of the mayor of the commune/municipality where the baby is found, puts the name and surname and provisional parents' names, which can be changed at the request of the child when he/she becomes adult or with the legal certificate of the parents.
4. The aforementioned rules are also valid for someone who has been found and who has lost the memory or is mentally incapable and cannot be identified, with the difference that this person can make the changes if his/her memory is restored, when he/she is mentally cured or when he/she is identified in another way.
5. In all the cases described in this article, the found person is registered as separate family in the fundamental register of the place where he/she takes residence, with the exception of the adult person who is found and who speaks only in foreign language and is registered as person without citizenship.
6. The criteria laid down in this article are also applied for the adult person who has lost his/her memory, is incapable mentally, or when his parents are not known or when they are found with dead, unidentified parents, except when they speak only in foreign language, in this case they are treated as person without citizenship.

Birth declaration
Article 34

1. The birth of the citizen is declared to the Civil Status employee by the parents, the adult members of the family, legal or custodian representatives of the parents and, when this is not possible and in their absence, by persons who have the right to certify the birth. The declaration can also be made by representatives who have authorization from the mother. The declaration of the birth of the baby who is found is made by the representative of the relevant local government authority, by the Public Order organ of the place where the baby is found.
2. The declaration is made at the Civil Status office in the location of the parents, whereas the declaration of the found baby is made at the place where the baby is found. For those who are born by Albanian citizens with permanent residence in Albania, outside the territory of the Republic, the declaration is made at the Albanian consular service of the country of the birth or of a country that is closer than Albania and when this is impossible the declaration is made at the Civil Status service of that country.
3. In special cases when the mother is physically incapable to make the declaration, she can authorize another person.
4. When there is cause for suspicion the Civil Status employee should see the newly born baby physically before compiling the act of birth, it is compulsory to reflect this action in the act.
5. The declaration of birth should be made within 15 days in special cases not later than 30 days from the day of birth. If these deadlines are expired, the birth is certified only with a court's decision.

Act of Birth
Article 35

1. The act of birth certifies legally the birth of the citizen.
2. The acts of birth are compiled chronologically according to the date of the declaration in the relevant register of the Civil Status Office of the parents. In justifiable cases, in the Civil Status of the place where the birth took place.
3. The act of birth is a protocol for everyone who is born, signed by the Civil Status employee and the person who makes the declaration and contains:
   a. Ranking number, date and Civil Status Office
   b. Temporary ID number of the child
   c. Identity, ID number and quality of the person who has made the declaration.
   ç. Mother’s ID number and mother's identity
   d. The full date and the hour of birth
   dh. The birthplace
   e. Sex
   ë. The fact whether he/she was born normal, twins or Siamese
   f. Fatherhood and father’s ID number when it is known according to this law
   g. The citizenship when it can be determined according to the law No.8389, dated 5.8.1998 “On the Albanian citizenship”.
   gj. Name and surname determined according to this law.

Name and Surname
Article 36

1. The civil status employee reflects in the act of birth the name, which is the wish of the child's parents, with the exception of unsuitable names of insulting, immoral, or racist nature.
2. The refusal to register the chosen name can be opposed in the court.
3. When the parents do not agree with each other the Civil Status employee writes a name with the note "temporary" in brackets, until the conflict is resolved by the court.
4. There is no unsuitability, according to this law, when the cause has emerged after the name's registration.

5. When a conclusion about the unsuitability of a name is reached later, the General Director of Civil Status Service may demand the change with a court decision, which is effective for all the persons who have it in their components due to their family links.
6. The surname is that of the parents. When each of them has a different surname the father's surname is registered and, at a mother's request, both surnames. When the father is not known, that of the mother. The extramarital child or the child of the widowed woman acquires the maiden surname of the mother.
7. When the parents are dead, do not have the physical or the mental capacity or are not found, the name is designated respectively by members of the family, other relatives, and, in their absence, like in the case of the baby who is found.
8. The criteria of this article concerning the name's unsuitability are also used for the new surname, which is different from that of the parents.

The change of the name and surname
Article 37

1. The name and surname can be changed in the cases described in this law or for reasonable reasons. There can be no change in the name and surname of a person, who has been charged or is subjected to criminal proceeding until the end of it.
2. The name and surname of the adult can be changed only at his own request or of the entities specified in this law for the cases of unsuitability.
3. The name of the person may change after the death at the request of the persons who have this name in the components of their Civil Status, and are registered in the same family page of the fundamental register of the civil status office were they live, only due to reasons of unsuitability.
4. The service makes a list of the unsuitable names according to the meaning of this law after having preliminary consultations with the Academy of Sciences. The names that are considered unsuitable by court decision are directly included in the list that is made available to every civil status office.
5. The change of the name and surname of the parents is reflected in the minor child, while in the case of the major child this is done at his request, with the exception of the cases of unsuitability.
6. For the change of the name and surname at the request, after the approval of the request by the head of the Civil Status office, where he/she has his/her fundamental register. A protocol is compiled in the remarks' column of the fundamental register, indicating the reason for the change and the changed name or surname and is signed by the Civil Status employee, the applicant and all the adult members of the family, who have the name and surname in their components and who accept the change, as well as by the head of the Civil Status office.
7. On basis of the protocol or the court decision, the rectifications are made in the family sheet for the persons who have signed and for the minors, whereas for the other adult members only after they have given their consent with a signed addition of the protocol, with the exception of the cases decided by the court.
8. The persons who have the name or the surname in their components, but who live in separate families make the change at their own request with a special protocol in the relevant register, whereas in the cases of the unsuitability they are obliged to reflect the change within 1 month of being notified.
9. Besides the above-mentioned changes, the name and the surname can be improved or corrected because of some spelling mistakes made during data transfer. These changes are made based on the documents that certify the identity of the same person.
10. The changes, corrections and the improvements done in the civil status office where is the fundamental register as above mentioned, needs to be transfer to the civil status office where the act of birth and act of marriage are registered.

Absence of data
Article 38

1. When the data required in the act of birth cannot be regularly certified by the declarer, a line is drawn in the relevant part, except the cases of provisional remarks according to this law.
2. Following the confirmation of the data or the final decision the additional remark is made only in the fundamental register by indicating the source.

Value and Opposition to Act of Birth
Article 39

1. The act of birth is fully invalid when it is not compiled by the Civil Status Service, is not included in the relevant register and is not signed regularly. In other cases, the act of birth is partially invalid, inaccurate or fictitious.
2. No other content other than that of the act of birth can be confirmed without proving the full invalidity or the invalidity, the inaccuracy or the falsity in the disputed aspect of the relevant act.
3. The citizen, legal representative or the custodian and any other person who claims to have his right violated or deprived of certain juridical consequences, may raise the claims for invalidity, inaccuracy or falsity only with the court by filing a lawsuit against the Civil Status office where the act has been compiled and the declarer when he/she is not the accuser.
4. The recognition or the opposition to the fatherhood and the motherhood is made only in conformity with the criteria of the Family Code.

Change of the data in the act of birth
Article 40

The content of the act of birth, reflected in the fundamental register can be directly changed by the Service in the cases expressly described in this law in regard to the name, surname and provisional nationality, whereas, at the request of the relevant citizen, within 1 year after reaching the adulthood and after this with a court decision.

Completion of the data in the act of birth
Article 41

1. The fundamental register reflects the data as they are and to the extent they are in the act of birth, accompanied with the remark for the provisional data or the deficiencies.
2. When the date, hour, place of birth and sex are not indicated in the act of birth, the data is completed in the fundamental register on basis of medical report or documentary evidence.
3. When the date and place of birth cannot be identified, such are considered the time and place of the meeting of the declarer with the dead woman who has given birth or the time and place where the child was found.
4. When the act of birth has a temporary name, the sex, surname or nationality are not indicated, the remark can be written at any time if both parents make a joint declaration and sign, if there is a medical report or a court decision. When the child becomes adult, this right can be exercised only by him/her, except when he is stripped of his capacity to act or when this capacity has become limited.

CHAPTER V
REGISTRATION OF MARRIAGE ACTS

The form of the act of marriage
Article 42

1. The act of marriage is a protocol compiled by the civil status office employee, which reflects the agreement of the future husband and wife, concluded in the presence of the Civil

Status employee by fulfilling the requirements of the Family Code. The act of marriage is signed by the mayor of the municipality/commune or a person authorized by him.

2. When the requirements for the declaration of the marriage are not fulfilled, when there are causes for suspicion or when there are legal obstructions to marriage and irregularities in the identity documents of the parties, the acts are interrupted and the office head is notified. When it is possible, the verification is made immediately and continue only when the causes that led to the interruption are eliminated with the approval of the office head with him, too, putting his signature on the marriage act.

The way of filling the act and the required documentation
Article 43

1. The marriage act is compiled directly in the sheets of the relevant register, according to the chronological order in every case and is signed by husband and wife and all those who are present, not less than 2 persons. When the husband and wife do not know to sign or are not physically fit to sign, the cause is indicated in the act.
2. The marriage is concluded when for each the identity and the family status is certified with the birth certificate, which is valid when it is has the note "For marriage" and is issued in the country no less than 15 days before.
3. The marriage of the foreign citizen or without citizenship, who lives abroad or who is temporary resident in Albania, with an Albanian citizen is made on basis of the documents of the state, whose citizenship he has or where he has permanent residence, certified by the notary and confirmed by the Foreign Ministry of that country, no less than 1 month from the date set for the marriage, except when there are other procedures and deadlines specified in multilateral or bilateral agreements.
4. For the foreigners with asylum or refugees, the act of marriage can be based on personal documents confirmed within 15 days by the relevant Albanian authority in charge of the foreigners or directly by the data provided by this authority.

The content of the marriage act
Article 44

The marriage act indicates:

a. Civil Status Office and the relevant employee
b. Date and hour of the compilation of the act
c. Identity, identification number, the residence and the family status of the parties
ç. The identity of those present
d. The acquaintance of the parties with the rights and obligations, according to the Family Code
dh. The kind of marriage concluded according to the Family Code
e. The expression of the will to conclude this kind of marriage
ë. The surname that will be used by the parties after the marriage is concluded
f. The recognition of the fatherhood of the wife's children born before the marriage

Place where marriage is concluded
Article 45

1. When the husband and wife are Albanians or when only one of them is Albanian, the act of marriage is compiled in one of the offices or in the office in which they are registered in the fundamental register or in one Albanian councilor service abroad.
2. The act of marriage between two foreigners with permanent residence in Albania is compiled in one of the civil status offices in which they are registered in the fundamental register.
3. Foreign citizens or persons without citizenship with permanent residence in Albania or in transit may conclude marriage between them in the Civil Status only when a medical report proves the danger of death or when one or both parties are imprisoned in Albania as well as when they cannot conclude marriage in their country with the legal criteria of Albania or they cannot go there due to objective reasons.

The institution where the marriage is concluded

Article 46

1. The marriage is regularly concluded in the Civil Status offices or in places outside these offices and particularly designated for conclusion of marriages, in any case in the free presence of the public.
2. The marriage can also be exclusively concluded in the country or institution where one of the partners or the two of them are hospitalized or imprisoned, when the doctor or the prison director does not allow him/her or them to go out from the respective institution.
3. In special places, when he thinks it proper, the Director of the Civil Status in prefecture can also allow the marriage to be concluded in other places.

The juridical value of the act of marriage

Article 47

1. The inexistence of the marriage stems from the failure to compile the act, when the spouses are Albanian citizens or only one of them, even if the citizen is shown to be married in the fundamental register. This case indispensably leads to the rectification of this material error, according to this law.
2. In addition to the criteria for the invalidity of the marriage according to the Family Code, the marriage is invalid when the act is not compiled by the Civil Status employees, does not reflect the identity of the parties and their willingness for marriage and it is not signed regularly.
3. When the text of the act is such that it does not provide guarantees for the identity and willingness of the parties and even if the act is complied by the Civil Status employee, the court may not declare its invalidity if it observes only formal irregularities.

Actions with acts of marriage

Article 48

1. The act of marriage is reflected in the fundamental register of each one when they have it in the same office. When one or both have the family sheet in another office, the copy of the marriage act is sent to the relevant office for the same action.
2. The Civil Status office of the wife, after filling the card, takes the initiative and transfers it to the husband's family, except when it has been decided otherwise in the act of marriage.
3. When the registration of a marriage concluded outside that office shows that there have been legal obstacles, no action has been taken or the action has been in violation of the law, the documents are returned to the sender office without action with the relevant clarifications.
4. When convinced of the marriage's invalidity or that there is a need for the rectification of material errors and legal violations, each office may demand the prosecution office of the place where the marriage is concluded to file charges with the court.
5. The marriage act, translated and notarized, on expenses paid before the conclusion of the marriage by the future husband and wife, is sent through the Foreign Ministry to the relevant authority of the state, in which one or the two partners have their registration.

CHAPTER VI
REGISTER OF THE ACTS OF DEATH

Act of death

Article 49

1. The act of death, which legally certifies the death of the citizen, is a protocol compiled in the relevant register by the Civil Status employee in the presence of the declarer and signed by them.
2. The act of death has the following information:

a. The ID number and identities of the employee and the declarer
b. The identity and the identification number of the dead or the confirmation of the local government authority for the bodies that were found and that had no identity
c. The ID number and the identity of the doctor or the expert who has issued the report
ç. The place, time and cause of death according to the report
d. The number and date of the Prosecution document, which has authorized the action if necessary

3. In cases when the death is not buried in the place where he/she has his/her fundamental register and the funeral permit is issued by another civil status office, the last one should inform about the funeral permit, the civil status office of the person's fundamental register.

Declaration of death
Article 50

1. The declaration of the death is made by every member of the family or a relative and, in his or her absence or in case of persons without relatives, by a representative of the local authority in which the dead person has lived or has been found.
2. The declarations are valid when they are supported by medical report.
3. The declaration of the death should be made within 3 days of the occurrence or the discovery of the body and within 1 month in case when the death has occurred abroad.
4. If these deadlines have expired, the act of death cannot be compiled, only as an omitted act with a court decision at the request of the declarer or the prosecutor.
5. The declaration of the death can be made even after the funeral when it cannot be made within 12 hours of the death due to weekly holidays or other objective reasons, in these cases it is made by the end of the first working day of the relevant office.
6. After the funeral the declarer of the death is obliged, within a week and when the funeral is made abroad no later than one month, to document the fact, accurate time and the place of the funeral in the Civil Status office, these data are reflected in the act of death.

Factual authentication of the death
Article 51

1. The citizen is considered dead in fact when it is certified with medical report that indicates the fact of death, the time, place and cause of death. The citizen is considered dead even in cases when the person and the interested organ, General Directory of Civil Status, certify it in legal way according the provisions 15-23 of the Civic Code.
2. For the sudden deaths and the deaths in hospitals or in prisons, the report is issued only by the anatomic-pathological service with autopsy, except when the husband/wife, parents or children of the dead person are opposed to this in writing.
3. When the body cannot be identified, and when there are signs or suspicions for a violent death, the report is issued by the medical-legal doctor. In these cases, despite the beginning or not of the legal proceedings, the actions in the Civil Status are made only with the permission of the prosecutor.
4. The causes of death in the report are qualified as medical, accidental or criminal causes.
5. The decision of the court, which declares the citizen as dead, is reflected only in the remark column of the fundamental register without compiling an act of death.
6. The deaths abroad are certified in accordance with the law of the country in which they have taken place, with the exception when they take place in the territory of the diplomatic representations or in the Albanian airplanes and ships traveling in international space or waters, for which this law is applied.
7. If the civil status service is informed that dead persons are still registered in the fundamental register, it might sue in the court to certify the facts.

Authentication of death
Article 52

The death is certified by the doctors appointed for special areas for a period of one year by local government authority, if required together with the doctor who has removed the organ or part of the body. In case of violent and suspicious deaths as well as in cases of death while serving prison time the certificate is invalid if it is not confirmed by the medical-legal expert and countersigned by the prosecution. The certificate by the doctor of the dead person or others is invalid.

The invalidity of the act of death
Article 53

1. The act of death is totally invalid when the person is not dead in fact is certified with his presence or his living existence after the date of the act of death in any case with absence of the body or with the body of another person.
2. The act of death is invalid when another person from the one described in the act has died and in this case it is obligatory to compile a special act for the person who has died in fact.
3. The act of death is declared partially invalid when it is not accurate in regard to the time, cause and place of death, when the inaccuracy has juridical consequences.
4. The invalidity, according to the first paragraph of this article, is examined by the court at the request that can be submitted at any time by the person about whom the act of death is compiled. When the person is a minor, deprived or restricted of his capacity or is not in the mental and physical state, this right is exercised by his legal representatives or custodians and when they are not available or refuse, even by the prosecutor.
5. In the case of the second paragraph of this article, in addition to the person who comes out to be alive, the invalidity is also required by persons who have juridical consequences from the absence of the act of the dead person in fact. When this person is a minor, is deprived of his capacity to act or is not in a mental and physical state and the legal representative or the custodian does not submit a request or when they are not available and when the consequences fall on the state, the request is submitted by the prosecutor.
6. The prosecutor submits a request even when the person, who comes out to be alive, refuses to make a request or deliberately avoids it even he has the possibility to do this.
7. In the case of the second paragraph of the aforementioned article, when the identity of the person who has realistically died cannot be determined, the case is separated in this aspect and is examined separately while making or refusing to make the identification but in every case by ordering the compilation of another act of death.
8. The invalidity according to the third paragraph of this article is required by the relevant persons who have juridical consequences or by the prosecutor when the consequences fall on the minor persons, adult persons who have been deprived or restricted of the ability to act, when it is not exercised by the legal representatives or the custodian or when such persons are available and when the consequences affect the state.
9. Following the identification or the declaration of the invalidity, the remarks in the family sheet of the fundamental register are canceled or changed, as is the case, reflecting the act in the remark column or in the act of death.

The funeral permit
Article 54

When the declaration and the act of death can be compiled on the working day within 12 hours from the death the funeral permit is issued by the same office employee, otherwise the document, which certifies the death according to article 51 has the same value.

Funeral expenditures
Article 55

1. In any case, the state budget has some funds for the state contribution on the family expenditures of the funeral.
1. 2. The Council of Ministers decides on the amount, procedures to be followed by different institutions in charge, to meet the expenditures for the funerals of Albanian citizens died in Albania or abroad.

CHAPTER VII
CIVIL STATUS SERVICE

Nature and function
Article 56

The Civil Status Service is a unique state institution. In the meaning of this law, the civil status service is practiced as a delegated function even by the local government bodies. The Civil Status Service organizes and keeps the Civil Status registers, prepares the civil status acts as specified in this law, issues certificates for their content, makes preliminary or additional actions regarding the registers as specified in this law, keeps, publishes or provides statistical data to the state bodies and institutions or to private judicial entities in the cases and in the way specified in the law or in sub legal acts.

The organization of the civil status service
Article 57

The Civil Status Service is organized as follows:

a. General Directory of Civil Status (DPGJC)
b. The Civil Status Branch of Prefecture
c. The Civil Status Office of commune and municipality
ç. The civil status service in the Albanian Embassies and consular services abroad.

The revenues, expenditures, structure and staff
Article 58

1. The revenues collected from services are delivered to the state budget.
1. 2. The expenditures of the civil status service are covered with funds specifically allocated by the state budget as a separate budget line through the Ministry of Local Government and Decentralization budget.
3. The number of the employees of the civil status service, the structure and the staff for every local governmental unit are determined with a Council of Ministers' decision.

The General Directory of Civil Status
Article 59

1. The General Directory of Civil Status (DPGJC) is the highest organ of the civil status service.
2. The General Directory of Civil Status (DPGJC) is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Local Government and Decentralization.
3. The General Director of the Civil Status is recruited through a competition according to the law No. 8549, dated 11.11.1999 “On the Civil servant status”.
4. The employees of the General Directory of Civil Status have the status of civil servants.

The tasks of the General Directory of Civil Status
Article 60

The General Director of Civil Status has the task:

a. To draft acts in the execution of this law
b. To prepare and propose for approval to the minister of Local Government and Decentralization, the methodology and regulations for the operation of the civil status service offices.
c. To create and manage (administrate) the National Register of Civil Status.
ç. To publish periodic statistical bulletins.
d. To give the methodology and to control the activity of the civil status service in prefecture, commune and municipality as well as in the Albanian Embassies abroad.
dh. To prepare programs and take all the necessary measures for the modernization of the civil status service.
e. To collaborate with donors or institutions interested in civil status issues and ac cording to the procedures he present for approval to the Minister, the draft agreement.
ë. To prepare and apply programs for the civil status staff qualification.
f. To propose the documentation's model used and issued by the civil status offices as well as the software to be used by this service.
g. To fix professional criterions to be meet by the civil status employees.
gj. To complete the tasks fixed by the Minister according to this law and other acts related with the civil status service.

The Prefecture's Civil Status Branch
Article 61

1. The Prefecture's Civil Status Branch, is included in the administrative structure of the Prefect.
2. The appointment and the dismissal of the civil status employees of prefecture, is the competency of the prefect after the preliminary approval of the General Director of the civil status.

The duties of the Prefecture's civil status branch
Article 62

The duties of the Prefecture's civil status branch are:

a. To put into practice the methodology prepared by the DPGJC
b. To administer the archives of the civil status registers at prefecture level according to this law.
c. To issue certificates of the civil status service in compliance with the documentation administered by the branch itself, based on the request presented by the person or by the civil status office of commune/municipality.
ç. To provide information for the public institutions and private juridical persons according to the law.
d. To report to the Prefect and the General Director of the civil status service for the branch activity and the commune and municipality activity.
dh. To accept and distribute to CS offices of other communes and municipalities information coming from other public institutions.
e. To observe (control) the activity of the civil status offices in municipalities and communes and to propose to the relevant organs the necessary measures.

The civil status office in commune and municipality
Article 63

1. The civil status office in commune and municipality is included within the administrative structure of the respective commune or municipality.
2. The appointment and the dismissal of the civil status employees in commune and municipality, is the competency of the mayor of commune/municipality according to the criterions de fined by the General Directory of the Civil Status.
2. 3. The General Director of CS might propose to the mayor of commune/municipality the dismissal of the civil status employees, in case of abuse.

The duties of the civil status offices in commune and municipality
Article 64

The civil status offices in commune and municipality have the following duties:

a. To take care of the fundamental register of the citizens in the territory of its activity.
b. To register the act of birth, marriage and death in the respective books.
c. To issue certificates of birth, marriage, death and family according to the law.
ç. To carry out activities of civil status service according to this law and other relevant sub-legal acts.
d. To accomplish the obligations defined by legal and sub legal acts, in relation with other public institutions and interested subjects.
dh. To inform the council and the mayor of the commune /municipality in relation with the of the office's operation at the request or periodically according to the relevant rules.
e. To accomplish all the obligations defined by acts of the mayor or the council of commune/municipality, according with the legislation.

The civil status of the Albanian citizens permanently resident abroad
Article 65

The Albanian diplomatic and counselor service must keep the books of acts of the civil status, carry out civil status operations for the Albanian citizens permanent resident abroad and administer the documentation according to this law and other legal provisions.

The officer (registrar) of the civil status service
Article 66

According to this law, only the registrar has the competencies on the operations with the civil status registers.

The tariffs of the civil status service
Article 67

The civil status services are provided in every case upon payment by the petitioner or declarer based on tariffs approved with the decision of the Council of Ministers.

The control of the civil status service
Article 68

1. The internal administrative audit is made by the relevant leaders according to the sectors.

2. The State Control bodies exercise their legal competencies over the activity of the civil status service, according to relevant fields.

Administrative violations

Article 69

1. The violation or failure to implement the rules specified in the articles 12/5, 34/5, 37/8, 50/3 of this law constitute an administrative violation and is fined by the Civil Status employee only at the moment when the act is performed with up to 5000 lek for every case. The act is suspended until the fine is paid.

2. An appeal can be lodged against the administrative measures within 10 days, to the Prefect. The Prefect should express his opinion on these measures within 15 days. An appeal can be lodged to the court against the prefects' decision, within 30 days from the date of decision.

3. When circumstances exist for penal offence, the procedures of Penal code needs to be applied and this case should be under a penal prosecution.

CHAPTER VIII
FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 70

1. The rules concerning the criteria for registering residence in the fundamental register of the persons who are in the fundamental register as separate families transferred after 31 December 1990, are applied 1 year after this law has become effective.

2. Within this period they are obliged to prove that they have residence pursuant to this law.

Article 71

The civil status branches at prefecture level should serve as mediators between the civil status offices in commune/municipality and the office of the National Register of Civil Status until the complete modernization of the civil status system.

Article 72

The temporary ID number assigned to the act of birth of the new-born by the civil status office in commune or municipality, is valid until the moment when the Office of the National Register of Civil Status will issue the final ID number. The composition manner of the temporary ID number should be done by the civil status service.

Article 73

1. The Law No 5840 dated 20.02.1979 "On the registration of the Civil Status acts" is cancelled.

2. Within 3 months after becoming effective, the Council of Ministers should issue the bylaw acts for its implementation in execution of the article 12 point 7, 19 point 5, 23 point 3, 31 point 2, 55 point 2, 58 point 3 and article 67 of this law.

Article 74

This law becomes effective two weeks after publication in Fletorja Zyrtare.

Unofficial translation[1]

REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
THE ASSEMBLY

LAW

Nr. 8951, dated 10.10.2002

ON
THE IDENTITY NUMBER OF CITIZENS

On the basis of articles 78, 81/1 and 83/1 of the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, on proposal of Council of Ministers,

THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA

DECIDED

ARTICLE 1

The purpose of this law is to determine the purpose, manner of formation and use of the identity number, as one of the specific components of civil status that determine and serve for the identification of the Albanian citizens, persons with no citizenship and foreign citizens with permanent residence within the territory of the Republic of Albania.

ARTICLE 2

1. The identity number is unique and is determined from the service of civil status. It is composed of ten elements with coded information and has the following structure:

Element	1-2	year of birth
Element	3-4	month of birth and sex
Element	5-6	date of birth
Element	7-9	periodic number within the same date
Element	10	check character

[1] Ttranslation from Albanian to English by OECD.

2. The identity number is emitted by the Civil Status Service.

ARTICLE 3

The identity number serves:
1. For the National Register of Civil Status.
2. For the Identity Document.
3. As the Social Security number for identification, registration and to request social security benefits, medical insurance and other programs of social protection.
4. For the National Register of Voters.
5. For taxation system.
6. For the driving licence
7. For needs of other bodies and institutions: justice, public order, prosecutor's office, defense, education bodies and Property Registration Office.

ARTICLE 4

Manners of codification of Identity Number, measures and duties of state structures to provide citizens with identity number are defined by decision of the Council of Ministers.

ARTICLE 5

The first and the second paragraph of the Article 1, article 2, article 3, article 6, article 7, and the third paragraph of the article 13 of law nr. 7845 dated July 13, 1994 "On Social Security Number", is repealed.

ARTICLE 6

This law comes into force 12 months after the publication in the Official Gazette.

Declared by the decree No. 3541, dated 7.11.2002 of the President of the Republic of Albania,

Alfred Moisiu

PROTOCOL

between

THE MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND DECENTRALISATION, ALBANIA

and

STATISTICS NORWAY, NORWAY

regarding

Modernisation of the Civil Registration System in Albania

The Ministry of Local Government and Decentralisation ("the Ministry") and Statistics Norway ("SN") have agreed as follows:

Article I

Scope and Objective

This Protocol sets forth the terms and procedures for the SN implementation of the technical and financial support to the Modernisation of the Civil Registration System in Albania ("the Project"), as hitherto granted by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

1. The Project is outlined in a Project Document with a budget originally dated 22 May 2002, and revised 22 November 2002. The modernisation Project is organised in three phases: A preparatory phase, a pilot phase and a full scale modernisation phase.
2. This Protocol covers the first part of the pilot phase of the Project ("the Pilot"), the period 1 December 2002 – 31 March 2003. In case of unforeseen circumstances this period can be extended.
3. The total amount for this part of the pilot phase of the Project is 1.6 million Norwegian kroner (210,000 US dollars) as of 1 December 2002.
4. The Objective of the pilot phase is to gain experience for creating a computerised national civil registration system (incl. a database), based on main modern principles and adjusted to local conditions. To obtain this objective the parties shall implement activities as outlined in the document "Modernisation of the Civil Registration System in Albania: The pilot phase", including a budget, dated 22 November 2002.

Article II

Cooperation – Representation – Administration

1. The Ministry and SN shall cooperate fully to ensure that the Objective of the Pilot is successfully accomplished. To that effect each Party shall furnish the other Party with all such information as may reasonably be required pertaining to the Pilot.

2. SN will provide technical consultants and backstopping regarding technical issues on long and short terms. SN will prepare technical specifications for software and hardware equipment.
3. The costs connected with meetings of the reference group appointed by the Ministry shall be covered by SN.

Article III

Contributions of Statistics Norway

1. Any funds not fully utilised for one activity may upon written agreement between the Parties be utilised for the benefit of other activities within the Project.
2. SN will provide technical assistance to the General Directory of Civil Status, on issues such as definitions, standards, legislation, rules for civil registration (regulations and instructions), computer software and hardware, and training. Specifically, SN will provide technical assistance on the specifications for a tender for software and hardware for a nationwide civil registration system.
3. SN will procure software and hardware for the local offices for the Pilot.
4. SN will assist on working out a detailed project proposal for the further work on the modernisation of the civil registers in Albania, including a timetable and a budget to be sent to NORAD for funding the second part of the pilot phase.

Article IV

Contributions and Obligations of the Ministry

The Ministry shall make all reasonable efforts to facilitate the successful implementation of the Pilot, and shall hereunder:

1. have the overall responsibility for the planning, administration and implementation;
2. provide sufficient adequate office space for project staff, including the SN long term consultant and other project personnel, within the permanent premises of the General Directory of Civil Status;
3. provide sufficient qualified local personnel for the successful implementation of the Pilot;
4. provide the long term consultant and other project personnel with access to such data and information, including visits to local sites, as may be reasonably requested to ensure the successful completion of the Pilot;
5. ensure the personnel's security at local sites and during duty travels;
6. promptly inform SN of any condition which interferes or threatens to interfere with the successful implementation of the Pilot;
7. assist representatives of SN to obtain permission to visit any part of the areas for purposes related to this Protocol and examine any relevant records, equipment and documents;
8. in the event of the arrest or detention, for any reason whatsoever, of any non-resident person made available under this Protocol, or of criminal proceedings, being instituted against them, notify the Norwegian Embassy in accordance with internationally established practice and, without delay, give the Norwegian Embassy the right to visit the arrested or detained person(s).

Article V

Procurement

1. SN undertakes to effect all procurements of goods and services for the Pilot, as specified in the attached budget. All procurements shall be performed in accordance with generally accepted principles and good procurement practice. Procurement agreements shall include a clause stating that the agreement will be cancelled, in case any illegal or corrupt practices have been connected with the award of the execution of the agreement. No offer, gift, payments or benefits of any kind, which would or could be construed as an illegal or corrupt practice, shall be accepted, either directly or indirectly as an inducement or reward or execution of procurement agreements. Any such practice will be grounds for cancellation of this Protocol and/or the procurement agreement concerned.

Article VI

Reservations

1. The Parties agree to cooperate on preventing corruption within and through the Pilot. The Parties further undertake to take rapid legal measures in their respective countries to stop, investigate and prosecute in accordance with national law any person suspected of corruption or other international misuse of resources.

Article VII

Information – Evaluation – Reviews

1. Project reviews shall be carried out at the request of either Party.
2. SN shall have the right to carry out any technical or financial mission that it considers necessary to follow the execution of the Pilot. To facilitate the work of the person or persons instructed to carry out such a monitoring mission, the Ministry shall provide all relevant assistance, information and documentation.

Article VIII

Disputes – Entry into Force – Termination

1. If any dispute arises relating to the implementation or interpretation of the present Protocol, there shall be consultations between the parties. In case of failure to reach an agreement the dispute shall be solved through diplomatic channels.
2. This Protocol shall enter into force on the date of its signature and shall remain in force until both Parties have fulfilled all obligations arising from it, or it is replaced by an Agreement covering all activities in the second part of the pilot phase of the Project. Whether the obligations shall be regarded as fulfilled shall be determined in consultations between the Parties.
3. Notwithstanding the previous clause both Parties may terminate the present Protocol by giving one month's written notice to the other Party.

In witness whereof the undersigned, acting on behalf of their respective institutions, have signed this Protocol in two originals in the English language.

….....…….	.....…….
Place and date[1]	Place and date[2]
_____	_____
For the Ministry of Local Government and Decentralisation	For Statistics Norway

[1] Signed in Tirana 16 January 2003, by Sokol Lamaj, Secretary General.
[2] Signed in Oslo 13 January 2003, by Svein Longva, Director General.

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