

Population and housing censuses

2007/0032(COD) - 20/02/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the report drafted by Ona **JUKNEVIEN** (ALDE, LT), and amended, in the first reading of co-decision, the Commission proposal for a regulation on population and housing censuses, and strengthened data protection measures on statistics. The amendments were agreed with Council, and the resolution was adopted with 579 votes for, 41 against and 18 abstentions.

The main amendments were as follows:

Type of statistics: a new part recital states that there is a need to collect detailed information on housing in support of various Community activities, such as the promotion of social inclusion and the monitoring of social cohesion at regional level, or the protection of the environment and the promotion of energy efficiency. Nor did it make any amendments regarding same-sex and mixed-sex partnerships on the list to be compiled regarding derived topics.

Data sources: this will include a combination of register-based census and sample survey and conventional census.

Data protection: Member States shall take all measures necessary to meet the requirements of data protection. The Member States' own data protection provisions shall not be affected by this Regulation. Article 4(4) requires Member States to inform the Commission (Eurostat) of revisions and corrections to the statistics supplied under this regulation, as well as of any changes in the methods and data sources used, no later than one month before the release of the revised data. Member States must make continuous efforts to increase the extent to which the chosen data sources and methodology meet the essential features of population and housing censuses.

Data quality: a new Article 5(a) on quality assessment is inserted, and defines terms such as "relevance", "accuracy", "timeliness", "accessibility", "comparability" and "coherence". Member States shall provide the Commission (Eurostat) with a report on the quality of the data transmitted. In this context, Member States shall report on the extent to which the chosen data sources and methodology meet the essential features of population and housing censuses as defined in the text. In applying these quality dimensions to the data covered by the Regulation, the modalities and structure of the quality reports shall be defined in accordance with the regulatory procedure. The Commission (Eurostat) shall assess the quality of the data transmitted, and, in cooperation with the competent authorities of the Member States, shall provide methodological recommendations designed to ensure the quality of the data and metadata produced, acknowledging, in particular, the Conference of European Statisticians Recommendations for the 2010 Censuses of Population and Housing.

Reference date: each Member State shall determine a date to which its data refer (a reference date). The reference date shall fall in a year specified on the basis of the Regulation (reference year). The first reference year shall be 2011. The Commission shall establish subsequent reference years in accordance with the regulatory procedure with scrutiny. Reference years shall fall during the beginning of every decade. Member States shall provide the Commission (Eurostat) with final, validated and aggregated data and metadata within 27 months of the end of the reference year.

Housing: "housing" is defined as living quarters and buildings as well as housing arrangements and the relationship between the population and living quarters at the national and regional levels at the reference date. Parliament defined "buildings" as permanent buildings that contain living quarters designed for

human habitation, or conventional dwellings that are reserved for seasonal or secondary use or that are vacant. It added that the following persons only should be considered as usual residents of the geographic area in question: those who have lived in their place of usual residence for a continuous period of at least twelve months before the reference date; and those who arrived in their place of usual residence during the twelve months before the reference date with the intention of staying there for at least one year. The word “local” has been added to the definition of “population”.

Lastly, a new clause states that the Commission shall adopt the technical specifications of the topics as required by the Regulation as well as of their breakdowns, in accordance with the regulatory procedure.