Farm structure surveys and the survey on agricultural production methods

2007/0084(COD) - 21/05/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted, by 649 votes to 28 with 11 abstentions, a legislative resolution and amended the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on farm structure surveys and the survey on agricultural production methods and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 571/88. The report had been tabled for consideration in plenary by Gábor **HARANGOZO** (PES, HU) on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development.

The amendments were the result of a compromise between Parliament and Council. The main amendments were as follows:

-the implementation of the farm structure survey in 2010 and the decennial population census in 2011 would place a heavy burden on the statistical resources of Member States if the periods of fieldwork for these two major surveys overlap. Provision is made for a derogation which allows Member States to implement the farm structure survey in 2009;

-the use of the agricultural holding's location by the Commission should be limited to statistical analyses and should exclude drawing samples and carrying out surveys. The necessary protection of confidentiality of data should be ensured, among other means, by limiting the precision of the location parameters and by appropriate aggregation when publishing statistics;

-it is recognised that the requirements of the satellite recognition and identification of agricultural holdings present significant methodological and technical difficulties in many Member States. Upon the entry into force of the Regulation, the Commission shall provide the necessary technical and advisory assistance in respect of the satellite recognition of agricultural holdings to those Member States which submit applications;

-Parliament inserted new definitions for 'livestock units' and 'location of the holding';

-if a Member State decides to use an administrative source other than those specified in the proposal, the Member State shall inform the Commission in advance and shall provide details concerning the method to be used and the quality of the data from this administrative source;

-in duly justified cases the Commission shall allow Member States exceptions to the precision requirements for specific regions;

-the farm structure survey data shall not be used by the Commission for drawing samples or for carrying out surveys;

-with regard to survey characteristics, if a Member State determines that a characteristic has a low or zero prevalence, the characteristic may be excluded from the data collection. The Member State shall inform the Commission in the calendar year immediately preceding the survey year about any characteristic excluded from the data collection;.

-in Article 11 (Survey on agricultural production methods), Parliament's amendments state that This survey may be carried out as a sample survey. For each holding surveyed, Member States shall also provide an estimation of the volume of water used for irrigation on the holding (in cubic metres). The

estimation may be produced by means of a model. The Commission shall provide Member States with methodological and other support in order to construct the model. In addition, the Commission shall promote the necessary cooperation and sharing of experiences between Member States in order to obtain comparable results.

If a Member State determines that a characteristic has a low or zero prevalence, the characteristic may be excluded from the data collection. The Member State shall inform the Commission in the calendar year immediately preceding the survey year about any characteristic excluded from the data collection. The data on agricultural production methods shall not be used by the Commission for drawing samples or for carrying out surveys;

-in addition to the National Methodological Reports required at the end of each survey, Member States shall provide the Commission with any additional information that may be required concerning organisation and methodology of the survey;

-Member States shall receive a maximum financial contribution of 75% (rather than 50%) from the Community towards the cost of carrying out the surveys defined in the Regulation;

-for the combined costs of the Farm Structure Survey 2010 and the Survey on Agricultural Production Methods, the maximum Community contribution of EUR 0.15 million each for Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia and the Slovak Republic is deleted;

-for the Farm Structure Surveys in 2013 and 2016, the maximum amounts specified in the text shall be reduced by 50% (rather than 60%);

-the financial envelope for the implementation of this programme, including the appropriations necessary for the management, maintenance and development of the database systems used within the Commission to process the data supplied by Member States under the provisions of this Regulation, shall be EUR 58 850 000 (rather than EUR 54.27 million) for the period 2008 – 2013;

-Parliament made some amendments to Annex III (List of farm structure survey characteristics). Amendments were also made to Annex IV (Precision requirements) and Annex V (list of characteristics for the survey on agricultural production methods).