

# Agricultural statistics: permanent crops

2010/0133(COD) - 21/05/2010 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to update the common framework for the systematic production of permanent crop statistics.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

LEGAL BASE: Article 338(1) on the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

BACKGROUND: Council Regulation (EEC) No 357/79 on statistical surveys of areas under vines and Directive 2001/109/EC concerning the statistical surveys to be carried out by Member States in order to determine the production potential of plantations of certain species of fruit trees provided for the establishment of an information system on the most important permanent crops statistics at European level. These legal acts have helped create national systems for collecting data on the production potential of these crops, from a business perspective and as regards structural characteristics of the production units. However, both users and producers of the data have underlined the need for an update. On the one hand, changes in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and market situation of these products since the existing legislation entered into force have created new or different user needs in terms of variables and breakdowns and more timely data. On the other hand, there is still scope for improving the comparability and completeness of the framework by doing more to harmonise the variables and concepts and to allow Member States more freedom to choose the methods and sources they use, including administrative sources, to collect the basic data needed to produce such statistics.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT: the following options were examined:

- **Option 1** (baseline option, i.e. no new EU). If the EU were to take no new action, the comparability and harmonisation of permanent crop statistics across Europe would be weakened and, in a setting where the share of permanent crops is predominant in a big part of EU regions, the opportunities to make efficient use of statistics compiled by partner countries on the basis of common concepts and reporting formats would not be fully exploited. Where permanent crop statistics from official sources are not harmonised or not available, or are only partially available because they are provided voluntarily, other sources must be used (stakeholders and traders' organisations). As a result, the quality of the data might suffer and this might have an adverse impact on policymaking.
- **Option 2** (EU involvement as proposed). The proposed framework for European statistics makes the data more comparable and thus more relevant for users at both European and national level. Additionally, the use of common concepts and reporting formats can help to make the collection and use of permanent crop statistics more efficient.

CONTENT: the aim of this proposal is to update, simplify and optimise the existing legal framework for European statistics on permanent crops replacing the existing two legal acts mentioned above by a single one. The proposal revises some variables, greatly simplifying the breakdown of production and regions, and takes into account **recent changes in the categories of wines**. From a supply side perspective, the proposal responds to changes in user needs, e.g. for data on olive plantations. It also **updates the data transmission deadlines**.

The proposal further simplifies the variables and concepts and significantly adapts the permanent crop statistics to actual user needs by **cancelling the annual statistics on changes on plantations** and very detailed breakdown of wine production. Due account is taken also of the necessary trade-off between user needs and the burden on respondents and national statistical institutes. New variables or breakdowns are offset by some requirements under the existing legislation being dropped. The level of additional

requirements, especially information from businesses, is intended to lower the overall burden. As regards the information to be collected from respondents, the burden is lowered by **introducing thresholds at farm and territorial level** that are expected to entail smaller samples.

**Simplification:** the proposal provides for simplification of administrative procedures for public authorities (EU or national) and for private parties. The reduced breakdown of supply-side data by regions, varieties, density classes, age classes and the withdrawal of production classes, the possibility of limiting the scope in terms of the size of the farms producing permanent crops and the withdrawal of transmission of annual data for changes in the vineyard area for wine will simplify the work of EU and national administrations.

The possibility of limiting the scope of data collection in regard to permanent crops will reduce the burden on respondents, especially micro-enterprises. Giving Member States the freedom to produce the necessary figures by using a combination of sources (surveys, but also administrative data or estimation procedures) is intended to lighten the burden on respondents – enterprises and households alike.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:** the proposal has no implications for the budget of the European Union.