

# Quarterly statistics on Community job vacancies

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The Commission presents a report on the implementation of the Regulation (EC) No 453/2008 on quarterly statistics on Community job vacancies. Job vacancies are generally regarded as an important factor when it comes to analysing the demand side of the labour market. Regulation (EC) No 453/2008 established the framework for the production, transmission and evaluation of quarterly job vacancy statistics. It requires the Commission to report to the European Parliament and the Council on its implementation by 24 June 2010 and every three years thereafter. This report assesses the quality of the statistics provided by Member States and the quality of the European aggregates, and identifies potential areas for improvement.

Its main conclusions are as follows:

Following the adoption of Regulation (EC) No 453/2008, two implementing Commission Regulations were approved, covering a number of detailed aspects:

- Commission Regulation (EC) No 1062/20082 defines: (i) the seasonal adjustment procedures in the Regulation; (ii) the structure, contents and transmission dates of the quality reports that Member States are required to provide to the Commission;
- Commission Regulation (EC) No 19/20093 covers the following aspects: (i) definitions related to 'job vacancy'; (ii) the reference dates for collecting quarterly figures, transmission deadlines and the date of the first reference quarter. The transmission deadline is fixed at 70 days after the end of the quarter. A limited number of Member States, representing more than 3% of the total number of employees in the European Union, should send at 45 days the total number of job vacancies and occupied posts. The first reference quarter is the first quarter of 2010.

Member States have received financial support in 2008 and 2009 to prepare for the transmission of data on quarterly job vacancies relating to the first quarter of 2010. The financial support will continue during 2010-2012, as stated in the Regulation (EC) No 453/2008. A call for proposals (restricted to the European Statistical System) was launched in 2010. The total amount to be awarded to beneficiaries is put at EUR 800000.

Eurostat co-organised two methodological workshops, one in Nuremberg (Germany) in December 2008 and one in Neuchâtel (Switzerland) in November 2009. Some twenty Member States took an active part, along with other countries like Norway, Switzerland and Israel, and International Organisations (European Central Bank and OECD). The purpose was to exchange best practices and experiences in collecting job vacancy statistics and to discuss methodological issues.

All Member States reported being broadly able to report the required data collection for the first reference quarter 2010. However, the following difficulties are likely to be experienced for the first reference quarter: a) coverage issues; some Member States will have difficulties covering NACE Rev. 2 sections O to S, especially for section O, and business units with fewer than 10 employees; b) lack of detailed methodological guidelines; c) low precision of estimates of the number of vacancies for the breakdown by economic activities.

These difficulties can be expected to clear up over time as Member States become more experienced in collecting vacancy statistics and fine-tune their production systems. Eurostat will develop, together with Member States, clear methodological guidelines to be followed.

For the next report to the European Parliament and Council, in June 2013, more detailed information will have been gathered through the national quality reports and from official data transmission exercises. This will enable a more complete assessment to be made of the quality and relevance of the quarterly statistics on job vacancies.