

European demographic statistics

2011/0440(COD) - 20/12/2011 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to establish a common framework for the systematic production of European Union statistics on demography.

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

BACKGROUND: due to increasing and complex demographic challenges, a clear need for common legislation at European level on the subject of demographic statistics has emerged. The **European Commission needs high quality information on the population and vital events linked to the population in the Union.**

Annual statistical data on demography are fundamental for the study and definition of a wide range of policies, with particular regard to social and economic issues, at national and regional level. Statistics on population are an important denominator for a wide range of policy indicators. Demographic statistics on population constitute an essential component for the estimation of total population in the framework of the European System of Accounts (ESA).

- **The democratic process within the Union** demands annual population estimates of the highest possible quality. Every year, total population data concerning the Member States, which are collected and published by Eurostat, are used during the decision-making process of the Union (qualified majority voting in the Council).
- **The long-term assessment of the sustainability of the public finance** of the Member States is conducted, among others, on the basis of Eurostat population projections; these, in turn, require timely, accurate, reliable and consistent time series on population, births and deaths, together with sound assumptions concerning the future development of fertility, life expectancy and migration flows.
- **The monitoring of the EU sustainable development strategy**, launched by the European Council in Gothenburg in 2001 and renewed in 2006, is assessed via the Eurostat monitoring report which uses time series on old-age dependency ratios, fertility rates and life expectancy in the EU.
- **The monitoring of the progress made in the EU towards achieving economic, social and territorial cohesion** is assessed by means of a report based, among others, on Eurostat regional demographic data.

In order to ensure the quality, and in particular the comparability, of the data provided by the Member States, and in order for reliable overviews to be drawn up at European Union level, the data used should be based on the same concepts and refer to the same reference date or period. Moreover, the information on demography should be consistent with the relevant information collected pursuant Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection and Regulation (EC) No 763/2008 on population and housing censuses.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT: the proposed framework for European Union statistics on demography ensures that the data are timely, more coherent, comparable, consistent and thus more relevant for users at both European and national levels, in particular with the aim of counting each resident/birth/death only once in the statistics.

LEGAL BASIS: Article 338(1) of the TFEU.

CONTENT: the objective of this Regulation is to establish a **common framework for the systematic production of European Union statistics on demography**, through the collection, compilation, processing and transmission by the Member States of harmonised European statistics on population and vital events.

The aim of the proposal is to harmonise concepts, subjects covered and characteristics of the required information, coverage, quality criteria and reporting deadlines and results, to achieve relevant, timely, comparable and coherent European statistics.

The Member States will compile the data using their own national sources and practices, but are obliged to ensure the quality of the data and metadata transmitted, and to ensure that the chosen data sources and methodology meet common definitions. The Member States have to report on the data sources, definitions and estimation methods used to fulfil the obligations and must provide information on any changes thereto. They shall provide Eurostat with all the information necessary to evaluate the quality of the statistical information.

This Regulation ensures the right to respect for private and family life and to the protection of personal data, as set out in Articles 7 and 8 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATION: The proposal has no implication for the Union budget.