

Community statistics on migration and international protection

2005/0156(COD) - 20/09/2012 - Follow-up document

The Commission presents its first report on the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection, in accordance with the requirements of the Regulation. This report documents the degree of progress that has been made by Member States, together with the Commission (Eurostat), in the implementation of the Regulation. It examines the quality of the statistics produced, as well as the cost and burden of producing migration statistics.

The report finds that Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 has resulted in **very great improvements to European statistics on migration and international protection**. The data supplied by national authorities to the Commission are more complete and, in most cases, are now based on comparable statistical definitions. There has been a corresponding increase in the use made of these statistics by official bodies at European and national level, by non-governmental bodies and by the citizen. One important use of the statistics has been as part of the annual allocation of the budgetary envelope for each Member State for the [Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows Funds](#). In accordance with the legislation establishing the Funds, the annual budgetary allocation is based primarily on migration and asylum-related statistics collected by Eurostat. The statistics necessary for the Funds are now almost completely covered by the Regulation.

Given the wide range of statistics collected under the Regulation, and the conceptual and methodological complexities of the statistical topics covered, it was to be expected that the implementation process would take time and present a number of difficulties. Many of the problems identified early in the implementation of the Regulation have been solved. However, significant weaknesses remain in certain areas.

Data supplied by some Member States: this has occurred, for example, in the non-availability (or limited availability) in some Member States of age and sex information taken from administrative records related to immigration and asylum cases. A number of national authorities have introduced improved procedures to ensure that the necessary information is gathered as part of the immigration administrative process and better computing systems to allow this information to be readily accessed to be included in the statistical data.

Non-compliance follow-up measures have been launched by the Commission in response to the most serious cases of missing or incomplete data – where for example, no data have been supplied by a country in response to a data collection.

The report notes that completeness of the data is an issue mainly for residence permit information.

Provision of timely data for some domains: whilst certain problems have largely been overcome through the introduction of new statistical methods and procedures at national level, some systematic timeliness issues do remain in particular Member States and mainly for the enforcement of immigration legislation and for the residence permits data collections. Work is continuing to resolve these.

Incorrect application of the harmonised statistical definitions: definitional problems have been hardest to address with the migration flow and population stock statistics covered by Article 3 of the Regulation. It is for these data that the greatest differences occur between national systems in terms of the data sources used. For a few countries, it has been difficult even to identify appropriate data sources for these data.

Seven countries were unable to use the 12-month time criteria for defining immigration/emigration flows, for example, because the national statistical definition of a migration (as opposed to a visit) was based on a three- month criteria (a migrant needing a residence permit for a stay in excess of three months).

For Articles 5 and 7 on the enforcement of immigration legislation, 11 countries potentially deviated from the standard definition in that they were not able to confirm that the statistics counted persons instead of administrative decisions or/and that persons were counted only once in the same category within the reference year.

There must be renewed efforts to overcome the remaining problems with these statistics. This will require continuing communication and cooperation between the relevant national authorities and the Commission.

Costs and burden of migration statistics: since the types of statistics required under the Regulation are needed also for national purposes, the specific burdens placed by the Regulation on national authorities are related to the need to prepare particular disaggregations or tables that might not otherwise have been produced, and to the need to apply the harmonised statistical definitions and concepts. For some national authorities, this resulted in one-off costs associated with the necessary adaptations to methods, procedures and systems. In most Member States, the additional costs and burden are believed to be relatively limited and to be proportionate to the benefits obtained at both EU and national level of having more complete and harmonised migration statistics.

Lastly, the report notes that data required under the Regulation should reflect the evolving needs of the users, taking into account the capacity of the data providers. This could lead to **future amendments of the Regulation** in order to add new data categories or specific disaggregations and/or eliminate data requirements whenever they are considered less useful.